# Promoting Students' Autonomy in Online Classes: A Study on First-Year Non-English Major Students at Thuongmai University

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## Abstract

Vietnam's higher education has experienced considerable changes due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. When schools are closed, online classes become the inevitable mode of teaching, and Information Technology shows its indispensable role. In response to significant challenges, not only do teachers have to upgrade themselves with new teaching forms and techniques, but students also need to adapt to a new remote learning environment. Classes occur outside the classroom and only via a computer screen, which means many difficulties faced by the teachers in giving good lectures and promoting students' active learning. Different tactics have been used to deal with these problems, bringing both positive and negative results. This study is aimed to investigate strategies that English teachers at Thuongmai University have been employing to improve students' autonomy in their online courses and the results they have achieved. To collect data for the study, five English teachers and fifty first-year non-English major students at Thuongmai University are invited as participants, while questionnaires and interviews are used as the main data collection tools. The research findings reveal that a wide range of IT tools have been employed in English online classes, and they show a great help in promoting students' autonomy. Among the listed IT tools, Padlet and Quizizz are the most preferred.

**Keywords:** online classes, Thuongmai University, students' autonomy, strategies

## 1. Introduction

The year 2020 witnessed unpredictable changes and unforeseen challenges in every aspect of life due to the emergence of a virus called SARS-COV-2. What is called the "Covid-19 pandemic" has been exerting negative effects on almost all countries worldwide. Undoubtedly, the three sectors that most severely suffered from the pandemic are health, economy, and education.

In response to the pandemic, numerous changes have been made in education, including the replacement of online classes for offline ones. All aspects of teaching are conducted through the screen, which causes significant difficulties for both teachers and students. Getting exposed to a new learning environment, that is, virtual learning requires students' more active participation and strong determination.

There is no doubt that fostering students' motivation and self-study plays a vital role in achieving learning objectives regarding English language teaching. Promoting students' engagement in a face-to-face class is never easy, and this level of difficulty increases when it comes to online classes. Globally, many recommendations have been proposed, and they have proved to be of various influences. Among the ways suggested, IT tools are considered a great help.

As one of the first universities in Hanoi to shift from the offline mode into an online one, Thuongmai University has made significant attempts to prepare teaching and learning resources that can serve the new situation. The school renovated its facilities by installing a new WIFI connection system, purchasing learning management systems, and upgrading the classroom equipment. Numerous training courses and webinars on the application of IT in teaching and research were offered to both teachers and students. The very first days of online teaching and learning saw undeniable struggles and difficulties for different reasons; however, things got better over the next few months thanks to the non-stop efforts made by participants. As for the question of promoting learner autonomy inside and outside the classroom, it is time for us to look back and have some evaluation of what we have been doing and achieving. This paper serves as a minor study contributing to developing students' autonomy in online learning at Thuongmai University. Due to the limited time and effort, the study only focuses on online English classes, investigating the current situation of promoting learner autonomy and students' perceptions of the strategies their teachers have applied.

## 2. Literature review

In a traditional view, the focus of teaching language is imparting knowledge and developing skills instead of guiding how to learn. Nevertheless, students' learning outcomes are different because of distinctions in teaching curricula, course books, or teaching styles but due to their studying methods. In other words, students take primary responsibility for their own learning and decide how good their learning results are.

Obviously, autonomous learning has received increasing focus because it is closely linked to student development in language learning. Over the past decades, many scholars have attempted to define what learner autonomy, also called autonomous learning, is.

Learner autonomy derives from the concept of life-long learning, which has been regarded as a significant goal since the early 1960s (Gardner & Miller, 1999). In the 1970s, learner autonomy was first introduced into the field of second language teaching. According to Holec (1981), who is considered a father of autonomous learning, it is "the ability to take charge of one's learning" (p.3). Included in this definition is the management of various aspects of the learning process, which means monitoring one's learning progress, setting goals, and self-assessment. Dickinson (1995) states that an autonomous learner "takes complete responsibility for all of the decisions concerned with learning and implementation of those decisions" (p.11).

Similarly, Little (1991) is of the opinion that autonomous learners are cast in a new perspective and have a capacity for detachment, critical reflection, and decision-making. He adds that these kinds of learners take independent actions and are expected to assume greater responsibility for and take charge of their own learning.

Learner autonomy is not related to students only but is looked at in a relationship with the teacher. As for the teacher's roles, Scharle and Szabo (2000) suggest that it is very important

for teachers to find out students' level of knowledge and attitudes, their level of motivation, the learning strategies the students use, and to get students to think about their own learning style. Harmer (2007) said that teachers need to offer them choices in learning strategies if they train the learners to be autonomous. Dornyei (2001) shows how important learning materials and technology-based approaches are to the development of learner autonomy, which emphasizes independent interaction with educational technologies. In Zhong (2018), it was stated that apart from the psychological factors of the learner, environmental factors, e.g., the guidance from the teacher and learning conditions, also play a critical role in the formation of different dimensions of learner autonomy.

There have been numerous studies on learner autonomy in the context of online education. Indonesian researcher, A study was conducted by Sung, Chang, and Yang (2015), whose results supported the benefits of the use of e-media in mobile learning. It is claimed that e-media are quite effective in enhancing learner autonomy in language learning. The reasons are mobile learning allows students to personally control learning by deciding the preferable time, place, and pace. Also, it boosts students' interaction and cooperative learning between teachers and students or even peers.

Regarding language teaching and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, Muhammad (2020) investigated how Schoology – a learning management system – successfully promoted students' active participation by logging in and commenting on others' ideas. The finding of his research also revealed that some shy students in EFL classes showed better confidence in Schoology. Dutton (2021) conducted an auto-ethnographic work on teaching French online during the COVID-19 confinement, which demonstrated that negotiating the balance between autonomy and community is the key to teaching and learning a language during that time. Other studies on voices of the emerging context of online learning platforms over learner autonomy, including teachers' and students', could be found in Onyema et al. (2020), Ariebowo (2021), and Ningsih and Yusuf (2021).

When it comes to the English language teaching and learning in Vietnam during the coronavirus outbreak, Nguyen (2021) studied home-based teaching and practice at Ton Duc Thang University with three-period online lessons. The study revealed that studying through IT-based tools, such as Zoom and Google Classroom, made it difficult for English teachers in class facilitation, control, and feedback giving in spite of geographical convenience and time flexibility. Nguyen et al. (2022) had a closer look at the use of Quizlet to enhance autonomous learning of vocabulary for first-year and second-year students at a university in Ho Chi Minh

City, which indicated that this learning application is a tool that plays an important role in motivating students' self-study. A study by Tran & Nguyen (2022) was about non-English major college students' attitudes towards learning English at Saigon University under the COVID-19 restrictions, while another was to investigate the utilization of digital resources to foster young learner's engagement in online learning classrooms (Ho & Nguyen, 2022).

In short, it can be inferred from the above-mentioned that learner autonomy is a complex concept that involves the responsibilities of teachers and students. To become autonomous learners, students need to develop their own awareness of their self-study, improve their learning techniques and increase their learning independence. Teachers are supposed to let students make their own learning choices, instruct and provide them with a learning environment where they can think, do, act, achieve and assess. Technological advancements are believed to make a considerable contribution to fostering students' motivation and learner autonomy.

### Research Questions

To fulfill the purpose of the study, the survey was seeking to answer the following research questions:

1. What IT tools are used to promote students' autonomy in online classes for first-year non-English major students at Thuongmai University?

2. How do IT tools help promote students' autonomy in online classes for first-year non-English major students at Thuongmai University?

## 3. Methods

### 3.1 Pedagogical Setting & Participants

The study is to investigate how to promote students' autonomy in online classes at Thuongmai University. The main participants of the study are 50 first-year non-English major students partaking in the two English classes, namely Class 1 and Class 2. The students come from the Faculty of International Training, and they are taking part in the course English 2, the second of the English preparation series with four courses in total. They all have a 5-day-a-week learning schedule, and they encounter different teachers for different learning sessions of the week. These students are believed to provide reliable responses to the study as they are in the second semester of the first year at university and may not be masters of online learning methods but are getting familiar with the new teaching and learning styles. Moreover, five teachers of English, who are in charge of these classes, are invited for email interviews.

### 3.2 Design of the Study

Online survey questionnaires were sent to the students to collect data for the study, while email interviews were conducted with the teachers. This study acts as primarily quantitative research whose focus is to find out the current situation of online classes, ways to promote

learner autonomy in online classes, as well as teachers' and students' perceptions of these ways.

*3.3 Data collection & analysis*

At the end of the eighth week of the course of English 2, the researcher delivered the questionnaires and the interviews with students and teachers. The questionnaire consists of 4 parts with 68 items about students' personal information, their understanding of learner autonomy, the use of IT tools in their online classes, and perceptions of the use of IT tools to promote learner autonomy in their classes. The Likert scale with 5 degrees was employed to measure the frequency of using different learning activities and IT tools and investigate students' opinions on how IT methods helped develop their learner autonomy. After the survey questionnaires were collected and analyzed, ten students, including five from Class 1 and five from Class 2, were selected for email interviews to clarify some details collected from the questionnaires. At the same time, teachers were invited to get involved in email interviews.

Having had all the data needed, a careful analysis was made to find out answers to the research questions raised above. Methods used for the data analysis could be named as synthesizing, selecting, grouping, counting the percentages, presenting, explaining, comparing, and concluding.

## 4. Results/Findings and discussion

As presented above, participants of the study are first-year non-English major students from the Faculty of International Training of Thuongmai University who are taking part in the course English 2, where they are trained in English at the Pre-Intermediate level. The coursebook they use is Life, Pre-Intermediate, published by National Geographic Learning. The first six units of the book cover the topics of *Lifestyle*, *Competitions*, *Transport*, *Challenges*, *Environment*, and *Stages in life*.

Students involved in the survey are asked to give their opinions about learner autonomy. The results collected from the questionnaires show that the majority of students, accounting for 60%, responded that learner autonomy means learning outside the classroom. More than three-quarters of the students agreed that students become autonomous when they are allowed to choose their own learning materials and learning methods. All the students surveyed proposed that they feel more independent in their learning if they could make and then evaluate their own choices in classes. Furthermore, half of the students suggested learner autonomy means students work individually, while the others argued that it means they have to work in pairs or groups. With regard to the teacher's roles, only 20% of students strongly agreed that they need the teacher's help and guidance in their self-study, while 50% showed their uncertainty. Finally, over 80% of students responded that learner autonomy is of great importance in modern learning, especially in online classes.

In general, most student participants gain some common understanding of what learner autonomy is, but some present their own opinions. In line with the theories suggested by

researchers (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012), students agreed that learner autonomy means they can make their own decisions inside and outside the classroom, and they are centered in their learning process. As for the time to have learner autonomy, a minority of students seemed to think that it is mandatory for them to work during the class as to the teacher's requirements and evaluation, and this is not learner autonomy. They suggested that their level of learner autonomy is only shown and measured through their self-study at home. In this way, the concept of learner autonomy is misunderstood by a number of students surveyed. Moreover, the fact that nearly 5% of the students, who disagreed on the important roles of teachers in learner autonomy, indicated that they viewed learner autonomy as their complete self-study; in other words, they are fully responsible for their study progress, and the support from the teachers seems to make them less autonomous. Thus, this idea is opposite to the theories presented previously.

## *4.1 The use of IT tools in online English classes for first-year non-English major students at Thuongmai University*

An investigation into the general situation of online classes for first-year non-English major students at Thuongmai University was conducted. For online classes, the university used the platform of Zoom Meetings as the main tool for lesson delivery. This platform brought some advantages for English teachings such as screen sharing, Chatbox, Breakout Zooms, Note-taking, and Highlighting.

Students were asked about activities during and after online classes. The majority of students surveyed, with over 90%, agreed that their teachers not only taught things in the coursebook only but gave them further exercises for practice. All students suggested that their teachers had a mix of Zoom Meetings techniques and others such as Google Docs, Padlet, Mentimeter, Quizizz, and Canva. As for the interviews, all students from Class 1 stated that their teachers only gave exercises in the workbook as homework assignments after the online classes, and those from Class 2 presented that they were given various types of exercises to do at homes, such as journal writing, magazine designing, and video making.

Responses to the questions on the use of IT tools used during or after online classes show that teachers from the two classes employed a variety of IT techniques in their teaching, which are illustrated as follows:

**Table 1**: The frequency of IT tools used in online English classes

| Technologies | Always | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Zoom technologies*** | | | | | |
| 1. Chatbox | 10% | 30% | 30% | 30% | 0% |
| 2. Breakout Rooms | 0% | 30% | 50% | 10% | 10% |
| ***Other technologies*** | | | | | |
| 1. Google Docs | 0% | 10% | 80% | 10% | 0% |
| 2. Padlet | 20% | 30% | 0% | 20% | 30% |
| 3. Mentimeter | 10% | 10% | 40% | 30% | 10% |
| 4. Quizizz | 10% | 60% | 20% | 10% | 0% |
| 5. Canva | 0% | 0% | 40% | 20% | 40% |
| 6. Others | 0% | 0% | 10% | 50% | 40% |

As can be seen from Table 1, Zoom technologies were always used by the teachers in the two classes. 60% of the students stated that their teachers used Chatbox quite often. Over 30% claimed that Breakout Zooms was often used, while half of the students surveyed presented that their teachers sometimes used it. For non-Zoom technologies, it is clear that Quizizz was the most popular tool employed during online classes, while Padlet ranked second. Google Docs and Canva were sometimes used, which were agreed upon by 80% and 40% of the students, respectively. Students from Class 2 noted that their teachers also occasionally used some other techniques, such as *liveworksheet.com* or Google Forms, while those from Class 1 claimed that their teachers used no other tools.

To be more specific, students were surveyed on the frequency of IT tools in different learning activities during and after online classes. These activities included Brainstorming, Giving opinions, Multiple choice questions, Gap-filling, Short-answer questions, Discussion, Writing sentences, and Writing letters/ short emails.

Chatbox was most frequently used regarding Zoom technologies when teachers wanted students to give short answers to questions. It was also used quite often for students to brainstorm ideas, give opinions, or write short sentences. Breakout Rooms proved to be very helpful in activities of interviews, and discussions, especially for group work. As for other technologies, teachers showed a particular preference for each tool, in line with a particular activity, for example, Google Docs for collaborative writing, Mentimeter for brainstorming ideas, Quizzes for Multiple choice questions, and Gap-filling, Canva for Mini-projects, and Google Forms for mini-tests. Padlet was reported to be helpful for different activities. It was used for Brainstorming ideas, Giving opinions, Short-answer questions, and Writing sentences.

A comparison of responses from the two classes showed that teachers in Class 1 used fewer IT tools than those in Class 2. The frequency of using non-Zoom technologies for class activities in Class 1 was also lower than that of Class 2. Results from email interviews with teachers of the two classes showed a great match when those from Class 1 admitted that they were not able to use technology tools flexibly as their IT skills were not good enough. They were only confident with Zoom tools, which they got familiar with and were well-trained. They sometimes used some other techniques like Padlet or Quizizz as their colleagues had shared them. In contrast, teachers from Class 2 showed their considerable interest in using different IT tools in their teaching. They were all younger than 35 years old, so they seemed to be quick and efficient at performing IT tasks. In addition to learning tasks designed in the coursebook and workbook, these teachers assigned extra tasks to students as homework. A striking example of this was a mini-project of designing a travel poster or magazine using Canva. They used this mini-project as a preparation for the topic 8: *Holidays*.

### 4.2 Teachers' and students' perceptions towards the use of IT ways to promote learner autonomy in online classes

As for the students' opinions on how learner autonomy was developed in their online classes when asked whether the level of their autonomy in online classes, most of them agreed

that they were given more independence compared to offline classes. Nearly half of the students agreed that student talking time increased while teacher talking time decreased during online classes. Over 30 students surveyed claimed that they were encouraged to work in pairs or groups. About the opportunity to make decisions, three-quarters of the students stated that they were free to make their own choices of learning materials and methods and to raise their voices well. Half of the students agreed that teachers sometimes let them do peer checking, especially in collaborative writing or discussions. Regarding learning activities after online classes, the level of learner autonomy was reported to be high because students were totally responsible for their assignments. With around 70%, the majority of students responded that their teachers gave them some group work to be done at home, and they had to decide all things related to their homework. Individual work was assigned for completing exercises in the workbook. Over half of the students agreed that their teacher gave constant help and feedback on their assignments, while the others stated they received infrequent assistance.

The findings from email interviews with teachers reveal that they did all their best to promote their students' autonomy in online classes. Although they always tried to give support to all students, they could not make it as constant due to the fact that they had to be in charge of different classes, most of which were in big size. One more thing is that the teachers sometimes applied the peer assessment prior to giving their feedback on students' final work. It was the reason why students sometimes did not receive their comments and feedback.

As regards to the effects of using IT tools in online classes to increase learner autonomy, findings from questionnaires are shown below:

**Table 2**: Opinions on the use of IT tools to promote learner autonomy

| Opinions | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Uncertain | Agree | Strongly agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The use of IT tools gives me opportunities to develop my learning independence. | 0% | 10% | 40% | 20% | 30% |
| 2. IT tools help me develop my language skills. | 10% | 30% | 50% | 10% | 10% |
| 3. The use of IT tools helps me develop my learning skills. | 0% | 0% | 20% | 50% | 20% |
| 4. The use of IT tools helps me develop my critical thinking. | 0% | 30% | 20% | 30% | 20% |
| 5. The use of IT tools helps me develop my IT skills. | 10% | 0% | 40% | 30% | 20% |
| 6. The use of IT tools helps me develop my teamwork skills. | 0% | 20% | 30% | 10% | 40% |
| 7. The use of IT tools helps me develop my presentation skills. | 20% | 10% | 30% | 20% | 20% |
| 8. The use of IT tools helps me develop my confidence and determination. | 0% | 20% | 20% | 40% | 20% |

It is noticeable from the table that students give the most positive feedback on the use of IT tools to develop learner autonomy in online classes. Teamwork skills rank the most greatly benefited thanks to the use of IT tools, with about 40% of the students strongly who agreed. Similarly, 30% of the students strongly agreed that IT tools give them opportunities to develop their learner independence, while only one out of ten disagreed. Almost half of the students stated that through the use of IT tools, they could develop their learning skills and their confidence. In the interviews, nine of ten students presented that they felt more confident to raise their voices in online classes compared to offline ones. Assignments that included the use of IT tools made them work hard to complete their learning duties, such as researching, collecting, selecting, and analyzing data. Hence, their learning independence and learning skills were considerably enhanced.

Meanwhile, a third of the students agreed to develop IT skills and critical thinking to be other important help that the use of IT tools brought to them. 20% of students stated that the employment of IT tools helped them develop their language skills, while half of them admitted that they were not sure. In the interviews, they explained that they did not know how to count and measure the level of their English proficiency before and after they got exposed to IT tools in their online classes.

Four out of ten students, mostly from Class 2, claimed that they could develop their presentation skills thanks to the use of IT tools as they had to present their mini-project products - their travel magazines. Results from teachers' interviews showed an excellent match with their students'. They all agreed that increased learner autonomy was advantageous for both teachers and students.

When asked about what they expect to develop learner autonomy, 80% of student interviewees agreed that the teachers should increase their roles by giving clearer and more frequent instructions and guidelines. In addition, flexible use of learning materials and IT tools is highly recommended, with all students strongly agreeing. Students from Class 1 expect their teachers to use more technologies and assign learning tasks in a greater variety, while those from Class 2 suggested they were so happy with the support they had had from their teachers. However, some students from Class 2 admitted that they found that having too many homework assignments with the use of IT tools with strict deadlines was quite stressful at times. Furthermore, students from the two classes were willing to constantly have feedback from the teachers.

In the interviews with teachers, they shared that they should have better use of technology in their teaching by updating new IT techniques in order to promote learner autonomy in online classes. Also, they should make a careful plan for the whole course and for each lesson so that their learning tasks can be given in a more systematic way and in a greater variety of forms. Regarding the class size, they expected the school to reduce the number of students in each class so that they could manage and supervise them more effectively.

## 5. Conclusion

The covid-19 pandemic has caused various problems, but education has done its best to solve them. With the new mode of online teaching and learning, both teachers and students at Thuongmai University have made great attempts to improve their situation. Admittedly, promoting learner autonomy is a big challenge in online classes, and different strategies are used to deal with it. Results of the study show that IT tools are a great help.

Fifty students from the two English classes were selected to be the participants of the study, and most of them agreed that learner autonomy was of significant importance in online classes, and they were given opportunities to develop it. During the online classes, teachers had a mixed use of Zoom techniques and non-Zoom ones, such as Padlet, Quizizz, Google Docs, Mentimeter, and Canva. Tools were particularly used for activities they served best, namely brainstorming ideas, giving opinions, short answer questions, multiple-choice questions, collaborative writing, and peer checking. When each other tool was commonly used for a certain activity, Padlet was helpful in different ways. As for opinions on ways to promote learner autonomy in online classes, the majority of students had positive feedback, while some of them suggested that online classes with stricter requirements on self-study made them quite stressed and anxious. Responses from the two classes also showed differences. While students from Class 1 admitted that their teachers sometimes used some new IT tools, those from Class 2 reported that their teachers were able to use technologies flexibly and at high frequency. Learning activities in Class 2 also presented a greater variety than in Class 1; as for homework assignments, teachers from class employed mini-projects and collaborative writing, which are believed to strongly foster learner autonomy in their online classes.

The use of IT tools was reported to bring improvements in all aspects of learning in online classes. When students become more autonomous, their confidence, determination, and learning skills were also sharpened. Besides, soft skills like IT, presentation, teamwork, and critical thinking were strengthened when students' autonomy was enhanced. As for the better promotion of learner autonomy in online classes, some suggestions have been made, namely increasing teachers' roles, the use of IT tools, and frequent feedback given to students.

In spite of fruitful attempts, the limitations of the study cannot be avoided. Owing to the limited time and ability, the study focuses only on some IT tools used as a way to promote learner autonomy in online classes. The number of participants is only fifty, which may not ensure the reliability of the study findings. All these limitations leave a gap for further studies to fulfill, which can go for an investigation into ways to promote learner autonomy through the use of a greater variety of tools and with data collected from a larger number of participants.

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## Biodata

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## APPENDIX 1

## SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

## Promoting Learner Autonomy in Online Classes: A Study on First-year Non-English Major Students in Thuongmai University

Hello, everyone!

My name is Pham Thị Tuấn, a teacher of English from English Faculty, Thuongmai University. I'm conducting a research titled "**Promoting Learner Autonomy in Online Classes: A Study on First-year Non-English Major Students in Thuongmai University**". This questionnaire is designed to collect data for the research.

I would be very grateful if I could receive responses from you. I ensure that All the information you provide will be only used for the research and strictly kept confidential.

It should take about 15 minutes to complete this questionnaire. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at tuan.pt@tmu.edu.vn

Thank you for your time and support!

## PART 1: PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Full name

2. Age

3. Faculty:

4. Class:

5. Name of English course:

6. How many English classes do you have per week?

7. How many teachers do you have for this English course?

8. Which course book do you use for this English course?

## PART 2: OPINIONS ON LEARNER AUTONOMY

**Please tick the answer that can show your understanding and perceptions of learner autonomy** (1 = strongly disagree => 5 = strongly agree)

| Statements | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Learner autonomy means learning outside the classroom. | | | | | |
| 2. Learner autonomy means that students can choose their own learning materials. | | | | | |
| 3. Learner autonomy means that students can choose their learning methods. | | | | | |
| 4. Learner autonomy means that students can make their own choices and decisions. | | | | | |
| 5. Learner autonomy means that students can evaluate their own learning tasks. | | | | | |
| 6. Learner autonomy means that students work individually. | | | | | |
| 7. Learner autonomy means that students work in pairs and in groups. | | | | | |
| 8. Learner autonomy means that students can learn without a teacher. | | | | | |
| 9. Learner autonomy means that students learn with teachers' help and instructions. | | | | | |
| 10. Learner autonomy is important, especially in online classes. | | | | | |

## PART 3: THE SITUATION OF ONLINE CLASSES FOR FIRST-YEAR NON-ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS

**Please tick the answer that can show the general situation of your online classes** (1 = strongly disagree => 5 = strongly agree)

| Statements | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *During the online classes* | | | | | |
| 1. The teachers only teach things in the coursebook. | | | | | |
| 2. The teachers give further exercises. | | | | | |
| 3. The teachers use the Zoom techniques only. | | | | | |
| 4. The teachers use a mix of Zoom techniques and other techniques. | | | | | |
| *After the online classes* | | | | | |
| 1. The teachers only give exercises in the work book. | | | | | |
| 2. The teachers give further practice exercises. | | | | | |
| 3. The teachers ask to make mini-projects. | | | | | |
| 4. The teachers use different techniques for giving and collecting homework. | | | | | |

**Please tick the answer that can show the use of technologies in your online classes** (1 – always, 2 – often – 3 – sometimes – 4 – rarely – 5 – never)

| Technologies | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Zoom technologies* | | | | | |
| 1. Chatbox | | | | | |
| 2. Breakout Rooms | | | | | |
| *Other technologies* | | | | | |
| 1. Google Docs | | | | | |
| 2. Padlet | | | | | |
| 3. Mentimeter | | | | | |
| 4. Quizzes | | | | | |
| 5. Canva | | | | | |
| 6. Others …. ………………………. | | | | | |

**Write the numbers 1-5 as for the frequency of using the technologies for learning activities in your online classes** (1 – always, 2 – often – 3 – sometimes – 4 – rarely – 5 – never)

| | Brainstorming ideas/ Giving opinions | MTC questions | Gap-filling | Short answer questions | Interview/ Discussion | Writing sentences | Writing paragraphs/ letters | Peer-checking |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *During the online classes* | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Chatbox | 5 | 2 | 3 | 10 | 1 | | | |
| 2. Breakout Rooms | | | | | | | | |
| *After the online classes* | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Google Docs | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Padlet | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Mentimeter | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Quizzes | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Canva | | | | | | | | |
| 6. Others ………... | | | | | | | | |

**PART 4: PERCEPTIONS ON THE USE OF IT TOOLS TO PROMOTE LEARNER AUTONOMY IN ONLINE CLASSES**

**Please tick the answer that can show your opinion for each statement.** (1 = strongly disagree => 5 = strongly agree)

| Statements | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Opinions on activities during online classes* | | | | | |
| 1. The teachers talks most of the class time. | | | | | |
| 2. Students talk most of the class time. | | | | | |
| 3. The teachers encourage students to work independently. | | | | | |
| 4. The teachers encourage students to work in pairs or groups. | | | | | |
| 5. The teachers let Ss make their own choices and decisions. | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6. The teachers let Ss freely give their opinions. | | | | | |
| 7. The teachers encourage Ss to think critically. | | | | | |
| 8. The teachers let Ss peer check. | | | | | |
| *Opinions on activities after online classes* | | | | | |
| 1. The teachers give homework assignments in different kinds (listening, speaking, reading, writing, mini-projects). | | | | | |
| 2. The teachers give Ss clear instructions on how to do the homework. | | | | | |
| 3. The teachers let Ss choose their own learning materials/ sources. | | | | | |
| 4. The teachers let Ss choose their own ways to present their homework/ assignments. | | | | | |
| 5. The teachers give Ss homework mostly as an individual work. | | | | | |
| 6. The teachers give Ss homework mostly as pair work or group work. | | | | | |
| 7. The teachers let Ss peer check their homework assignments. | | | | | |
| 8. The teachers give constant help and feedback when Ss do their homework assignments. | | | | | |

**Please tick the answer that can show your opinion for each statement.** (1 = strongly disagree => 5 = strongly agree)

| *Opinions on the use of IT tools in online classes to promote learner autonomy.* | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The use of IT tools gives me opportunities to develop my learning independence. | | | | | |
| 2. IT tools help me develop my language skills. | | | | | |
| 3. The use of IT tools helps me develop my learning skills. | | | | | |
| 4. The use of IT tools helps me develop my critical thinking. | | | | | |
| 5. The use of IT tools helps me develop my IT skills. | | | | | |
| 6. The use of IT tools helps me develop my teamwork skills. | | | | | |
| 7. The use of IT tools helps me develop my presentation skills. | | | | | |
| 8. The use of IT tools helps me develop my confidence and determination. | | | | | |

**APPENDIX 2**

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

**Promoting Learner Autonomy in Online Classes: A Study on First-year Non-English Major Students in Thuongmai University**

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS – FOR TEACHER INTERVIEWEES**

**Please answer the questions below:**

1. In your opinion, what is learner autonomy?

2. How important is learner autonomy in your online classes?

3. What IT tools do you use to develop learner autonomy in your online classes? How often do you use them?

4. Is the use of IT tools in developing learner autonomy a big challenge to you? Why (not)?

5. Did you often give feedback to students in your online English classes? Why (not)?

6. What do you think about the benefits of the use of IT tools in terms of promoting learner autonomy in your online classes? Why?

| Opinions |
|---|
| 1. The use of IT tools gives me opportunities to develop my learning independence. |
| 2. IT tools help me develop my language skills. |
| 3. The use of IT tools helps me develop my learning skills. |
| 4. The use of IT tools helps me develop my critical thinking. |
| 5. The use of IT tools helps me develop my IT skills. |
| 6. The use of IT tools helps me develop my teamwork skills. |
| 7. The use of IT tools helps me develop my presentation skills. |
| 8. The use of IT tools helps me develop my confidence and determination. |

7. What will you do to promote the learner autonomy in your online English classes in the future?

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS – FOR STUDENT INTERVIEWEES**

**Please answer the questions below:**

1. How many English online classes do you have per week?

2. Do you think learner autonomy is important in your online English classes? How is learner autonomy promoted in your online English classes

3. What IT tools are used in your online English classes? Please state how frequently they are used, for what they are used and why

4. What do you think about the benefits of the use of IT tools in terms of promoting learner autonomy in your online classes? Why?

| Opinions |
|---|
| 1. The use of IT tools gives me opportunities to develop my learning independence. |
| 2. IT tools help me develop my language skills. |
| 3. The use of IT tools helps me develop my learning skills. |
| 4. The use of IT tools helps me develop my critical thinking. |
| 5. The use of IT tools helps me develop my IT skills. |
| 6. The use of IT tools helps me develop my teamwork skills. |
| 7. The use of IT tools helps me develop my presentation skills. |
| 8. The use of IT tools helps me develop my confidence and determination. |

5. What do you expect from the teachers to increase learner autonomy in the future?