Enhancing LMS Effectiveness in Language Centers: A Case Study of V-Hub at VUS Vietnam

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Abstract

This mixed-methods study investigates the effectiveness of V-Hub, a Learning Management System (LMS) implemented at VUS, a prominent language center in Vietnam, focusing on homework completion rates and teacher strategies. A survey of 27 teachers and in-depth interviews with six teachers reveal that while V-Hub's user-friendly interface and learning content is positively perceived, technical limitations, such as device compatibility issues and the absence of answer explanations, hinder its full potential. Teachers employ various strategies to motivate and support students in using V-Hub, including rewards, personalized guidance, and clear communication. The study highlights the crucial role of teachers in effectively integrating LMS into language teaching and underscores the need for platform enhancements and comprehensive teacher training to maximize the benefits of technology-mediated language learning. Future research directions include exploring student perspectives, investigating the impact of specific LMS features on learning outcomes, and examining the potential for LMS materials to replace traditional textbooks.

Introduction

Learning management systems (LMS) have gained widespread adoption across educational institutions, particularly with the rise of online and blended learning models. Numerous educational organizations have integrated online learning into their academic courses (Dao et al., 2021), with LMS playing a crucial role in organizing and delivering online academic content. This trend is also evident in developing countries, with a growing body of research on LMS implementation (Pham et al., 2021). However, although the prevalence of LMS has been increasing, challenges remain in their effective utilization, particularly in specialized contexts like English Language Teaching (ELT).

While LMS offers numerous benefits in ELT contexts, such as content management, flexibility, and increased opportunities for student interaction, they also present challenges, including technical issues and skepticism about their effectiveness (Cao, 2023). Teachers play a pivotal

role in shaping the student learning experience in this landscape. Their multifaceted roles as facilitators, leaders, advisors, and technologists highlight their importance in navigating the complexities of LMS integration and ensuring positive learning outcomes (Thongsongsee, 2022).

At VUS, a leading educational center in Vietnam, the LMS called V-Hub (https://vhub.vus.edu.vn/ords/lxp/r/lxp/login) has been an integral part of curricula since May 2022. While V-Hub supports both in-class instruction and homework assignments, initial observations indicated concerningly low homework completion rates, with less than 50% of students consistently completing assigned tasks. This raises questions about the platform's effectiveness and the strategies employed by teachers to encourage student engagement. The potential benefits of the LMS in language learning, such as providing personalized learning experiences, facilitating communication and collaboration, and offering access to a wealth of resources, are substantial. However, realizing these benefits hinges on effective LMS design and implementation, and teachers' pedagogical approaches to utilizing the platform.

This research aims to address the challenge of low homework completion rates on V-Hub by investigating how VUS teachers and students can effectively leverage the platform. Through a survey of 27 teachers and semi-structured interviews with six teachers, this research explores pedagogical strategies and recommendations to improve student engagement and homework completion rates. This study seeks to provide valuable insights into the under-researched area of LMS utilization in Vietnamese language centers, offering practical implications for educators and LMS designers alike.

Literature review

Definition of Learning Management System

LMS is a software application or web-based technology that serves different purposes in the learning process (Alias & Zainuddin, 2005). Gilhooly (2001) indicated that the learning management system delivers content and handles other features such as course administration, skills gap analysis, tracking, and reporting. Agreeing with Gilhooly (2001), Szabo & Flesher (2002) mentioned that an LMS is multifunctional as it manages instructional content, identifies and evaluates users' learning and training objectives, and tracks, collects, and displays data for learning management. LMS also enables teachers to design and deliver lessons, monitor students' participation, and evaluate students' performance online. Watson (2007) highlighted the role of the LMS as a framework that handles all parts of the learning process. According to Başal (2016), an LMS can facilitate the learning process by providing learners with easy access to learning materials and resources, and instructors with the means to develop and disseminate educational content, track student engagement, and assess student performance. Additionally, an LMS may offer interactive functionalities such as threaded discussions, video conferencing, and discussion forums, thereby enhancing student collaboration and communication (Al-Dhief et al., 2024).

According to Kraleva et al. (2020), content design and technical standards are instrumental in

developing effective LMS platforms. Content design standards guide the inclusion and presentation of instructional materials, assessments, and multimedia elements, while technical standards ensure compatibility and functionality across different devices and browsers. Though ensuring this framework is valuable to the success of LMS platforms, it is essential to critically examine its applicability in diverse learning contexts, particularly in language centers where language learners' specific needs and challenges might require additional considerations beyond content and technical aspects.

The adoption of an LMS for English language teaching and learning

The adoption of LMS in English Language Centers for ELT instruction is witnessing a notable rise, though its integration varies considerably. Many institutions in Vietnam have been actively incorporating LMS into their pedagogical practices since the breakout of the COVID-19 pandemic when all learning and teaching activities had to be moved online to sustain (Cao, 2023), aiming to boost student engagement, individualize learning, and streamline administrative processes. The utilization ranges from supplementary resources and assignments to a full-fledged blended learning approach, combining online and face-to-face components (Sangrà et al., 2012). Features like discussion forums, online quizzes, and multimedia libraries are widely used to facilitate communication, assessment, and access to diverse language materials (Al-Busaidi & Al-Shihi, 2010).

While the trend towards LMS adoption is positive, successful integration hinges on several critical factors. Teacher preparedness, encompassing both technical skills and pedagogical adaptation, is paramount for effective LMS implementation (Ertmer, 1999). Student acceptance, influenced by perceived usefulness and ease of use, is also crucial for sustained engagement (Yalcin & Kutlu, 2019). Institutional backing, including infrastructure, technical support, and clear policies, provides a foundation for successful adoption (Al-Busaidi & Al-Shihi, 2010). Furthermore, ensuring content and pedagogical alignment is vital for maximizing the LMS's potential in language learning (Sangrà et al., 2012).

Teachers' roles in promoting LMS adoption among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students

Teachers play a multifaceted role in promoting LMS adoption among EFL students. They act as motivators, highlighting the benefits of LMS features and rewarding student efforts (Bradley, 2021). As guides, they provide clear instructions and ongoing assistance, ensuring students confidently navigate the platform (Sangrà et al., 2012). By curating engaging content and designing collaborative activities, teachers transform the LMS into a vibrant learning hub (Garrison et al., 2010). They leverage LMS assessment and feedback tools to monitor progress and personalize learning (Alharbi & Drew, 2014). Lastly, their own enthusiasm and active use of the LMS serve as a powerful model for students, demonstrating its value and encouraging exploration. Through these combined efforts, teachers empower EFL students and help equip them with the needed self-confidence to embrace the LMS as an integral part of their language learning journey.

Norman & Hyland (2003) explained that self-confidence is crucial to student participation and

progress. More generally, Ghafar (2023) believed that self-confidence is an important quality that may greatly affect numerous parts of an individual's life, including the academic, personal, and social domains. Rubio (2007) stated low self-esteem levels can negatively impact students' psychological health, leading to insecurity, fear, and social distance. Conversely, a significant positive relationship between self-confidence and English language proficiency among university students in Malaysia was proven to exist (Al-Tamimi & Shuib 2009). The efforts of teachers in helping and guiding students to adopt LMS with self-confidence can pay off in the long run as the process does not just stop at their learning journey at language centers like VUS. Students can continue to reap benefits from their acquired self-confidence in all levels of learning in the future.

Definition and impacts of homework on the learning process.

At VUS, V-Hub has become an essential tool for teachers to ensure learners complete their homework as part of their learning process to meet the objectives of the courses. With its digitized learning materials and the convenience of easy access at any time, V-Hub integrates and tailors available homework to suit each learner group's specific needs, directly contributing to supporting their learning journey at the center. To better understand how V-Hub can effectively deliver and encourage homework completion to learners, the definition of "homework" needs to be reviewed and revisited.

Evolution of Homework Definitions

Early definitions of homework, such as those proposed by Lee Jr. & Pruitt (1979) and Cooper (1989), focused on the teacher's perspective and the tasks assigned for completion outside of school hours. Lee Jr. & Pruitt (1979) classified homework into four categories: practice, preparation, extension, and creativity. However, these studies may not fully reflect the current landscape of homework assignments, especially with the advancements in educational practices and technologies.

More contemporary research has expanded the understanding of homework beyond traditional academic work. Songsirisak & Jitpranee (2019) perceived homework as a beneficial learning tool that enhances students' learning habits, performance, and academic achievements. Nisar ul Haq et al. (2020) viewed homework as extending beyond the classroom, aiding children in understanding lessons and school guidance.

Proven Benefits of Homework

While the definitions of homework have evolved, its benefits to the learning process remain evident. Research spanning several decades has consistently demonstrated the positive impact of homework on student learning.

Paschal et al. (1984) found that traditional, routine, and graded homework positively affected student achievement. Cooper's studies (1989, 1994) indicated that homework enriched students' factual knowledge, improved academic study skills, fostered positive attitudes toward learning, and enhanced non-academic capabilities like self-discipline and time management.

More recent research continues to support these findings. Olympia et al. (1994) discovered that

students who participate in homework are more engaged in learning. Muijs & Reynolds (2011) found that homework can ensure students' academic achievements, consolidate and develop self-studying skills, and prepare for in-class lessons. Nisar ul Haq et al. (2020) highlighted teacher perspectives on the benefits of homework, including fostering independence, improving memory, reinforcing classroom instruction, and increasing student engagement.

Homework in English language teaching and learning

Homework plays a significant role in ELT contexts. Studies have shown that homework can improve students' language skills, particularly in reading, writing, vocabulary, and grammar (Nunan, 2004). Moreover, homework allows students to consolidate their learning outside the classroom and apply the knowledge they have gained in real-life situations. Research has also demonstrated that online homework can be particularly beneficial for EFL learners, enhancing their engagement and performance compared to traditional homework (Dogan & Dogan, 2024).

However, the impact of homework also depends on several factors, including the type and quality of assignments, the amount of time spent on homework, and the learners' perceptions and motivations. Excessive or poorly designed homework can have detrimental effects, leading to increased stress and reduced motivation (Kralovec & Buell, 2000). Teachers need to strike a balance and provide meaningful, challenging, and manageable homework assignments that promote learning and engagement.

Learners' perceptions of the value of homework can significantly influence its effectiveness. Generally, EFL learners tend to have a positive attitude towards homework, recognizing its potential to improve their language skills and prepare for examinations (Amiryousefi, 2016). However, some learners may find homework tedious or overwhelming, especially if they perceive it as irrelevant or excessive. Research suggests that learners are more likely to appreciate homework when they perceive it as useful, interesting, and connected to their learning goals (Xu, 2011).

Furthermore, learners' perceptions can also be influenced by their cultural backgrounds and previous educational experiences. In some cultures, homework may be viewed as a crucial part of the learning process, while in others, it may be seen as an unnecessary burden. Teachers need to be sensitive to these cultural differences and adapt their homework practices accordingly.

Teachers' strategies to improve homework completion rates in EFL contexts

Research emphasizes that effective homework practices require a multi-faceted approach from teachers, extending beyond mere assignment and collection. Proactive strategies such as providing regular and constructive feedback, consistently checking for completion, and incorporating homework-related discussions into classroom activities foster a sense of accountability and encourage student engagement (Xu, 2011; Elawar & Corno, 1985). Teachers' detailed corrective feedback on writing assignments are also highly appreciated by their students, which leads to increased motivation and completion rates (Vo, 2022). Designing homework tasks that are relevant, and meaningful, and allow for some degree of student autonomy can also boost intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy, leading to improved completion

rates (Hong et al., 2009).

Equipping students with effective learning strategies and time-management skills is crucial. Explicit instruction in these areas empowers learners to approach homework with greater confidence and overcome potential challenges (Bembenutty, 2009). Additionally, fostering positive teacher-student relationships and creating a supportive classroom environment can contribute to increased student motivation and a willingness to engage with homework tasks (Skinner & Belmont, 1993). While the potential benefits of technology in enhancing homework engagement and completion are recognized (Azmi, 2017), its effective implementation necessitates careful planning and consideration of pedagogical goals.

Research Questions

LMS have become indispensable in education, particularly with the rise of online and blended learning. They offer a platform for diverse teaching and learning activities, including content delivery, assessment, and communication. Homework, a traditional pedagogical tool, serves to reinforce learning, develop self-discipline and time management skills, and prepare students for in-class activities. Additionally, student self-confidence plays a pivotal role in academic performance and overall well-being. This study aims to investigate the intersection of these elements by exploring teachers' perceptions of V-Hub's homework design and their strategies to encourage homework completion. Specifically, this research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of V-hub's homework design (content and technical aspects)?

2. What strategies do teachers employ to motivate, guide, and support students in completing homework on V-hub, and how do these strategies relate to completion rates?

Methods

Pedagogical Setting & Participants

This research was conducted at VUS, an English language training center in Vietnam certified by NEAS - an Australian body of Quality Assurance in Education and Training. VUS has more than 70 campuses across the country. A survey was designed and sent to 27 both Vietnamese and other nationalities teachers to gather their perceptions of V-Hub design (N=27). Subsequently, six teachers self-elected to participate in a follow-up in-depth interview at the end of the survey.

V-Hub, the LMS at VUS, has been rolled out since May 2022 across all levels of English language training at the center. Teachers and students can access V-Hub either on a website (V-HUB | VUS LEARNING HUB) or as an application on smart devices (). Students can log in to V-Hub for all English language lessons and practice, with the User Interface (UI) design customized to ensure the engagement of different learner age groups. The UI design from teacher view is somewhat similar across levels, in which all teaching and learning activities in one class session are organized in Before Class, In Class, and After Class (Figure 1). According

to the VUS Teacher Guides, teachers and students go through the Before Class activities and cover all In Class ones when they meet in class. The After Class section contains all homework that students should complete autonomously at home to practice what they have learned in class. Furthermore, teachers can access V-Hub as a one-stop shop for attendance checks, marking learners' submissions, and tracking their progress i.e. checking whether they complete the learning activities. The After Class section is the focus of this study.

Figure 1.

A screenshot of how teaching and learning activities in one class session are organized.
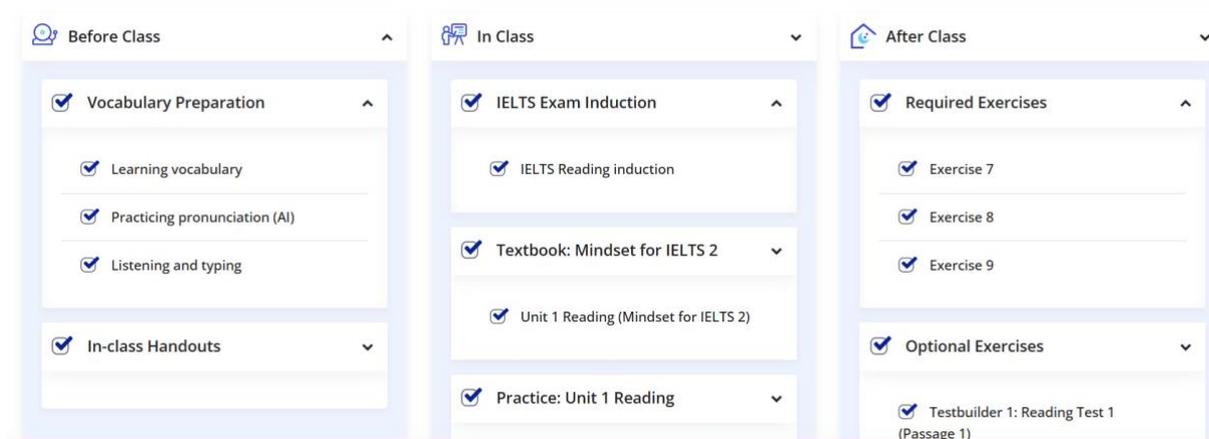
The participants' years of experience using V-Hub are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1.

Participants' years of experience using V-Hub and levels of teaching

SURVEY (N=27)			
Years of Experience using V-Hub	Full (>= 2.3 years)	21	78%
	Not full (<2.3 years)	6	22%
Level of Teaching	Children	17	63%
	Teenagers	7	26%
	IELTS	2	7%
	Adults	1	4%
INTERVIEW (N=6)			
Years of Experience using V-Hub	Full (>= 2.3 years)	4	67%
	Not full (<2.3 years)	2	33%
Level of Teaching	Children	2	33%
	Teenagers	4	67%

Table 1 presents the demographics of the participants in terms of their years of experience using V-Hub and the levels they teach. The majority of the survey respondents (78%) have been using V-Hub since launch, indicating substantial familiarity with the platform. Most of them teach Children (63%) and Teenagers (26%). Similarly, most of the interview participants (67%) also have full experience using V-Hub since launch and teach Teenagers (67%) and Children (33%). This demographic information provides context for understanding the teachers' perspectives and experiences with V-Hub, particularly in relation to their use of the platform for assigning and managing homework.

Design of the Study

To answer the two research questions, the mixed-method approach that combined quantitative and qualitative methods to collect and analyze data (Creswell & Guetterman, 2018) was employed. For the quantitative method, a survey was designed based on a user-centered LMS prototype developed that Kraleva et al. (2020) developed. The survey consisted of two parts, with the first part gathering data about respondents' backgrounds to ensure that they have had enough experience with V-Hub, the LMS being investigated. The second part, which includes 20 survey items, focused on investigating how teachers perceived the effectiveness of the content design, technical design, and pedagogical advantages of V-Hub.

For the qualitative method, in-depth interviews, which are described in detail in the next part, were also conducted.

Data collection & analysis

Quantitative methods, particularly online surveys, offer several key advantages for research. They enable researchers to reach a larger sample size, ensuring greater generalizability of findings (Munther et al., 2024). Moreover, these methods provide the opportunity for rigorous statistical analysis and hypothesis testing, allowing for the examination of correlations and the evaluation of theoretical frameworks (Hair, 2009). The inherent objectivity and accuracy of a survey contribute to the reliability and validity of research conclusions (Quantitative Methods - Organizing Your Social Sciences Research Paper - Research Guides at University of Southern California, n.d.).

The online questionnaire of this study consisted of two main parts. The first part serves to gather essential demographic information about the respondents with 6 question items. This includes their gender, age, nationality, teaching experience at VUS, the primary program they teach, and their main campus location. Collecting this data allows for a more nuanced analysis of the survey results, enabling the researchers to identify potential patterns or trends based on these demographic factors.

The second part, or the research survey, was developed based on the framework proposed by Kraleva et al. (2020), emphasizing the importance of content design and technical standards in developing effective LMS platforms. To align with this framework, the survey questions were divided into three distinct categories with the total of 20 close-ended question items: **E-content Design** and **Technical Design** of the After Class on V-Hub with 8 question items (ED1, ED2, ED3, ED4, ED5, ED6, ED7, ED8) and 7 question items (TD1, TD2, TD3, TD4, TD5, TD6,

TD7) respectively, and the **Pedagogical Benefits** of completing the After Class on student performance with 5 question items (PB1, PB2, PB3, PB4, PB5). This categorization ensured a comprehensive evaluation of V-Hub, encompassing its instructional content and technological functionalities. Additionally, the survey design incorporated insights from the current design of V-Hub, allowing for a targeted assessment of its specific features and functionalities. This approach ensured that the survey questions were directly relevant to the platform's actual implementation and its potential impact on teaching and learning.

The research survey adopted the Likert five-point scale to measure teacher attitudes and perceptions about the e-content design, technical design and the pedagogical benefits of the After Class section on V-Hub. This scale, ranging from 1 to 5, specifically, 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD), 2 = Disagree (D), 3 = Neutral (N), 4 = Agree (A), and 5 = Strongly Agree (SA), was applied to 20 items. The questionnaire was approved by the Quality Assurance (QA) Department of VUS before its official administration.

Prior to formal administration, a pilot survey was conducted with 10 VUS teachers to identify and address any ambiguous or confusing items. Cronbach's Alpha, which was calculated to assess the survey's reliability was 0.79, confirming the reliability of the data collection instrument (Hair, 2009).

An official questionnaire designed on Google Forms was distributed to VUS teachers via an email sent out by the Teaching Quality Manager (TQM) of the VUS campus where the first researcher is working. After two weeks since the TQM's email delivery date (1st July, 2024), 27 responses were recorded with 6 self-elections to participate in the follow up in-depth interview. The responses were quantified and computed using Excel (Microsoft 365), and then statistically presented.

Following the survey, in-depth interviews were conducted with six VUS teachers to gain deeper insights into their experiences and perceptions of V-Hub, particularly in relation to the After Class section. The interviews aimed to elaborate on the quantitative findings from the survey and explore the strategies teachers had employed to address any perceived issues and encourage homework completion. The interview questionnaire covered six key areas: V-Hub interface and usability, technical and device compatibility, students' homework completion rates, e-communication and reminders, homework explanations and support, and homework feedback and correction. The first three areas served to confirm and expand upon the perceived issues identified in the survey, while the latter three focused on uncovering teacher strategies to promote higher homework completion rates. The questions were also approved by VUS' QA Department prior to the scheduled interviews.

Each session was conducted via Google Meet and lasted from 20 minutes to 30 minutes. Before each interview, the researchers informed the interviewees of the purpose of the research, confirming their consent to participate in the research, seeking their approval for recording the interview, and ensuring the anonymity of their answers. To ensure these teachers' anonymity in the report, they were identified by codes T1 to T6. All of the teachers' responses were then transcribed verbatim and subsequently sorted for significant ideas to answer the research questions that are presented in this study.

Results/Findings and discussion

Teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of V-hub's homework design (Content and Technical aspects and the Pedagogical Benefits)

This section explores VUS teachers' perceptions of V-Hub's homework design, encompassing both e-content and technical aspects, as well as its perceived role in the teaching and learning process. As mentioned in the Methods section, the data from 20 items in the second part of the survey is presented in Table 2a, Table 2b, and Table 2c, which answer the first research question.

E-Content Design

Table 2a.

Teachers' perceptions about the E-content Design (ED) of V-Hub

Code	Items	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean
ED1	All activities in the After Class section are well organized.	0%	0%	33.3%	51.9%	14.8%	3.82
ED2	It is easy to navigate between activities in the After Class section.	0%	3.7%	18.5%	55.6%	22.2%	3.97
ED3	The instructions of After Class activities are easy for students to follow.	0%	0%	18.5%	51.9%	29.6%	4.12
ED4	Multimedia objects in After Class activities are well-organized and easy to use.	0%	7.4%	11.1%	51.9%	29.6%	4.04
ED5	After Class activities vary in question types.	0%	14.8%	29.6%	33.3%	22.2%	3.63
ED6	After Class activities are adequately designed for students to consolidate the knowledge they learnt in class.	0%	3.7%	14.8%	63%	18.5%	3.97
ED7	After Class activities are designed in students' zone of proximal development (ZPD).	0%	14.8%	25.9%	40.7%	18.5%	3.63
ED8	Explanations of answers are provided to all activities in the After Class section.	0%	18.5%	25.9%	44.4%	11.1%	3.49
	Average score of teacher perceptions about ED						**3.83**

Overall, teachers have a favorable view of the content design of V-Hub's homework, with an average mean score of **3.83** (Table 2a). Teachers positively perceive the overall organization of activities within the After Class section (ED1: Mean = 3.82), the ease of navigation between different activities (ED2: Mean = 3.97), and the adequacy of the activities for students to consolidate their learned knowledge (ED6: Mean = 3.97), further contributing to the positive

perception of V-Hub's e-content design. The clarity of instructions (ED3: Mean = 4.12) and the organization and usability of multimedia objects (ED4: Mean = 4.04) are particularly well-regarded. However, there is room for improvement in providing a greater variety of question types (ED5: Mean = 3.63) and ensuring that activities are appropriately challenging for students within their ZPD (ED7: Mean = 3.63). Although over half of the respondents had a positive or neutral view of the question variety in After Class activities (ED5), a significant minority (30%) desired more diverse question types. This suggests that while the current question variety is generally acceptable, there is potential to enhance student engagement and cater to different learning styles by incorporating a wider range of question formats. Furthermore, the perception that activities are designed within students' ZPD (ED7) could be better aligned with Vygotsky's (1978) theory, which posits that optimal learning occurs when tasks are challenging yet achievable with appropriate support, thus promoting cognitive growth and development. This may explain why most interviewed teachers reported that students rarely seek clarification on homework, implying that the homework activities could be more engagingly challenging. To illustrate this, teachers T1 and T2 shared:

> *"Most assignments on V-Hub are suitable for current students' levels."* (T1, Vietnamese, teaching teenagers and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

> *"The assignments on V-Hub are quite easy for teenage students to complete."* (T2, Vietnamese, teaching teenagers and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

The most concerning feature of the V-Hub's content design, according to the surveyed teachers, is the dearth of available explanations for all answers to homework activities on V-Hub (ED8: Mean = 3.49). The teachers overwhelmingly shared their views on how providing explanations for all answers could enhance the learning experience:

> *"This function [explanations for answers] is really necessary to help students profoundly understand new knowledge."* (T2, Vietnamese, teaching teenagers and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

> *"This function [explanations for answers] would be really helpful. I suggest having a feedback portal for students to send feedback in case of arising issues."* (T3, Vietnamese, teaching teenagers and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

> *"Teachers will really welcome this function [explanations for answers] as it would significantly help reduce teachers' workload."* (T5, Vietnamese, teaching teenager and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

> *"Good students can look at explanations and help their friends, who are weaker."* (T6, foreign teacher, teaching teenager and children levels, 2 years 2 months experience with V-Hub)

These views align with Vatterott's (2009) emphasis on clear instructions and expectations in homework. The provision of answer explanations to all homework activities could also be considered as a form of timely feedback on student work, which significantly enhances student academic practice as highlighted by Nguyen (2024). Additionally, they also underscore the potential of the LMS to support both academic achievement and independent learning skills

(Muijs & Reynolds, 2011). In other words, benefits of the LMS such as enhancing student understanding, promoting self-directed learning, and reducing teacher workload would be reinforced when all answers to homework activities on V-Hub were provided.

Technical Design and Usability

Table 2b.

Teachers' perceptions about the Technical Design (TD) of V-Hub

Codes	Items	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean
TD1	The After Class section on V-Hub works smoothly across devices, e.g., phones, tablets, and PCs.	0%	22.2%	44.4%	33.3%	0%	3.12
TD2	The After Class section on V-Hub works smoothly across OS e.g., Windows and Mac.	0%	7.4%	48.1%	40.7%	3.7%	3.41
TD3	The After Class section on V-Hub works smoothly across browsers e.g., Chrome, Edge, Firefox, etc.	0%	7.4%	51.9%	40.7%	0%	3.34
TD4	The After Class section allows for effective communication e.g. reminders, inquiries, etc between teachers and students.	0%	33.3%	22.2%	40.7%	3.7%	3.15
TD5	In the After Class section, teachers can view students' correct and incorrect answers across all activities.	0%	11.1%	40.7%	44.4%	3.7%	3.41
TD6	Teachers can provide either written or oral feedback on students' After Class activities.	7.4%	14.8%	33.3%	40.7%	3.7%	3.19
TD7	Teachers can access analytics of students' performance such as completion rate, accuracy rate, mistake patterns, time spent, etc. in the After Class section.	0%	18.5%	14.8%	51.9%	14.8%	3.63
	Average score of teacher perceptions about TD						**3.32**

Teachers' perceptions of the technical design and usability of V-Hub are less positive, with an average mean score of **3.32** (Table 2b). While teachers generally find V-Hub functional across operating systems (TD2: M=3.41) and browsers (TD3: M=3.34), the user experience seems not seamless across devices such as mobiles, tablets, and PCs (TD1: M=3.12). Specifically, a significant 22.2% of the respondents did not think the After Class section works smoothly across different devices. Four out of six interviewees also said that V-Hub had not worked stably on their phones and the compatibility and stability should be improved. Teacher T1

complained:

> *"The content on V-Hub is not displayed in a proper ratio when I access it on my phone [compared to PC and/or laptop]. Some features also failed to exhibit."* (T1, Vietnamese, teaching teenagers and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

The interviewed teachers also reported occasional login problems. Teachers T2 and T6 said:

> *"I have to use an incognito browser to access V-Hub in order for the lesson content to display properly. Otherwise, the lesson content won't show up."* (T2, Vietnamese, teaching teenagers and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

> *"I sometimes failed to access the After Class due to excessive logins from many teachers at the same time."* (T6, foreign teacher, teaching teenager and children levels, 2 years 2 months experience with V-Hub)

The survey results (TD1, TD2, TD3) and the interviews infer that such technical glitches can hinder access and cause frustrating inconsistent user experience when learners access V-Hub for homework across different devices, thus potentially impacting the homework completion rates. It is, however, important to note that this is inferred from the teachers' experience. To confirm this hypothesis, learner feedback on their experiences accessing and using the V-Hub across devices should be surveyed to provide a more accurate understanding of the extent to which learners are impacted by the accessibility of V-Hub. From there, more efficient optimization of V-Hub in general, and the After Class in particular, shall be planned to ensure seamless access to V-Hub regardless of devices and operating systems.

In terms of communications between teachers and students on V-Hub, the absence of a built-in communication feature within the After Class section (TD4: Mean=3.15) elicited mixed reactions. Some teachers saw it as unnecessary, given the existing communication channels such as face-to-face sessions, system-generated notifications, and emails. Specifically, teachers T1, T3, and T5 expressed:

> *"I think V-Hub already sends automatic notifications to students to remind them about homework. Therefore, I wouldn't appreciate the function that allows teachers to send reminders to their students. It could possibly cause problems that relate to the language that the teacher uses."* (T1, Vietnamese, teaching teenagers and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

> *"The viability of this function, if available, would depend on students' proactive learning attitude, especially help-seeking."* (T3, Vietnamese, teaching teenagers and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

> *"I don't think this function would be helpful because teachers can remind their students about unfinished assignments instead of sending reminders. It is all about students' attitude toward homework. So, this function would annoy students, causing a negative effect on the relationship between teachers and students."* (T5, Vietnamese, teaching teenager and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

However, there were expressed desires for a dedicated space for homework-related queries and

reminders. Teacher T3, T5, and T6 believed:

"It would be great if this function were available, which also strengthens teacher-student interactions throughout the course." (T3, Vietnamese, teaching teenagers and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

"This function, if available, would be quite useful." (T5, Vietnamese, teaching teenager and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

"This function would be useful for students to find appropriate assistance with their homework." (T6, foreign teacher, teaching teenager and children levels, 2 years 2 months experience with V-Hub)

Teacher T4 also added:

"There should be a chatbox enabling teacher-student communications about lessons and homework. This function, if available, would strengthen teacher-student interactions throughout the course." (T4, Vietnamese, teaching children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

This finding suggests another potential area for improvement, balancing the need for streamlined communication with concerns about increased teacher workload. It is worth exploring whether a carefully designed communication feature within V-Hub could enhance teacher-student interaction and support without overburdening teachers.

The interviewed teachers were also asked for their opinions about adding a function to V-Hub that enables teachers to respond to students' homework inquiries. While one teacher fully advocated this initiative,

"This function would foster and strengthen the relationship between teachers and students." (T6, foreign teacher, teaching teenager and children levels, 2 years 2 months experience with V-Hub)

four other teachers supported this idea with added conditions for the optimum of the function:

"If this function [communication] were introduced to V-Hub, it should be easy to use." (T5, Vietnamese, teaching teenager and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

"I partly agree with this. However, students should be well trained to use this function. In addition, teachers' workload may be heavier. Teachers may not welcome this initiative." (T1, Vietnamese, teaching teenagers and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

"I think this function would be helpful. However, it would be really helpful for students who really take assignments seriously. Questions should be categorized so that teachers can address them effectively." (T2, Vietnamese, teaching teenagers and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

"This function would only be useful to the students who have strong self-discipline. There should be a chat box on V-Hub so that teachers and students can discuss lessons." (T3, Vietnamese, teaching teenagers and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

There was one teacher doubting the necessity of such function, sharing their notes of concern:

> *"I don't think this feature would be helpful as students can meet their teachers in person to discuss their homework instead of sending inquiries on V-Hub and waiting for teachers' responses. Moreover, teachers don't have much time. Therefore, I think this feature won't be welcomed by many teachers."* (T4, Vietnamese, teaching children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

The differing opinions highlight the complexities involved in implementing new features on V-Hub and underscore the importance of careful consideration of both potential benefits and challenges.

The ability to access analytics on student performance, particularly the accuracy of students' answers, are viewed favorably (TD7: Mean = 3.63, and TD5: Mean = 3.41). While more than two-thirds of survey participants in TD7 acknowledged that they could access analytics of their students' performance such as homework completion rate, accuracy rate, mistake patterns, and time spent, etc. (51.9% agreed, 14.8% strongly agreed), a noteworthy percentage of 18.5% of respondents indicated an inability to access such analytics. The same pattern is found in teachers' perception about V-Hub allowing them to check the accurate answers of their students (TD5), with 48.1% thinking they can check if their students provided correct or incorrect answers and 11.1% confirming they could not check. This result is interesting because only the percentage of students completing homework is viewable to teachers on V-Hub. The platform provides no clues to the number of correct or incorrect answers from the students' submissions.

To illustrate this point, Figure 3 below shows students' individual homework completion rates per session. Figures 4 and 5 illustrate what the teacher can view from homework completion data of student number 15, which is circled in Figure 3. As can be seen from Figure 4, only the status of homework completion, meaning "complete" or "incomplete," is shown. Figure 5 further demonstrates that students' answers are not displayed for the teacher's view.

Figure 3.

Students' homework completion rates

Homework [View CO]

No	Name	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6	Session 7	Session 8	Session 9	Session 10	Session 11	Session 12	Session 13	Session 14	Session 15
1	[redacted]	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
2	[redacted]	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
3	[redacted]	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
4	[redacted]	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%	100%	0%
5	[redacted]	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%	100%	0%
6	[redacted]	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%	100%	0%
7	[redacted]	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
8	[redacted]	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%	100%	0%
9	[redacted]	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%	100%	0%
10	[redacted]	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	0%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%
11	[redacted]	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%	100%	0%
12	[redacted]	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%	100%	0%
13	[redacted]	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%	100%	0%
14	[redacted]	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%	100%	0%
15	[redacted]	66.67%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Figure 4.

The homework completion status of student No. 15 as shown in Fig.3

Figure 5.

Student No.15's homework details

The collected data on teachers' perceptions of V-Hub allowing them to provide feedback on student homework (TD6: M=3.19) adds more insights to teachers' practice with the After Class section on the platform. The surveyed teachers showed mixed perceptions regarding the provision of feedback to students for their After Class activities on V-Hub, with 44.4% agreeing that they could provide feedback on students' homework and 22.2% disagreeing. TD6 was also the only question that received Strongly Disagree (SD) responses (7.4%), indicating a level of frustration exists among the surveyed teachers when V-Hub does not enable their feedback communication to students.

The teaching practice shared during the interviews could somewhat explain why the survey participants *thought* they could check the accuracy of their students' answers and communicate their feedback to students on V-Hub while in reality, they cannot. This highlights not only an area for improving V-Hub functions to enable teacher-student feedback on homework but also

an opportunity for the VUS Center to frequently provide reminding communications or workshops on how to use V-Hub to teachers. Furthermore, enhancing the platform's analytics capabilities to provide more detailed insights into student performance, including error patterns, could address this concern and empower teachers to provide more targeted and timely feedback.

Pedagogical Benefits

Table 2c.

Teachers' perceptions about the Pedagogical Benefits (PB) of V-Hub

Codes	Items	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean
PB1	Teachers can easily monitor their student's completion of After Class activities.	0%	14.8%	22.2%	51.9%	11.1%	3.6
PB2	Teachers can detect students' common mistakes in After-class activities for timely addressing them in class.	0%	18.5%	33.3%	40.7%	7.4%	3.38
PB3	After Class activities effectively help my students practice the language beyond the classroom.	0%	7.4%	29.6%	51.9%	11.1%	3.67
PB4	The After Class section boosts the students' overall studying performance.	0%	3.7%	22.2%	63%	11.1%	3.82
PB5	The After Class section boosts the students' overall confidence in language use.	0%	11.1%	37%	48.1%	3.7%	3.45
	Average score of teacher perceptions about PBs						**3.58**

Table 2c presents the pedagogical benefits of V-Hub's After Class section as perceived by the teachers, with the average score of 3.58. These perceived benefits align with the positive feedback on the e-content design, particularly the clarity of instructions (ED3 in Table 2a) and the effective organization of multimedia objects (ED4 in Table 2a). The survey results indicate that teachers believe the After Class section effectively helps students practice the language beyond the classroom (PB3: Mean = 3.67) and boosts their overall studying performance (PB4: Mean = 3.82). This suggests that the clear instructions, well-organized multimedia, and thoughtful activity design contribute to meaningful learning experiences and support students' academic growth.

However, there is a desire for After Class activities to better boost students' overall confidence in language use (PB5: Mean = 3.45). This observation is in line with the survey data on e-content design, where teachers indicated a need for a wider variety of question types (ED5 in Table 2a) and activities that are appropriately challenging within students' ZPD (ED7 in Table 2a). As teachers reported that students rarely inquired about homework, providing more challenging tasks, coupled with adequate support, could foster a sense of accomplishment and enhance self-efficacy in language learning. It is, however, also worth considering whether this

observation might be influenced by other factors, such as students' reluctance to ask for help or cultural norms that discourage questioning teachers as the authority figures (Tran, 2013).

The survey data also reveals that while teachers appreciate the ability to monitor student completion (PB1: Mean = 3.6), they find it challenging to detect students' common mistakes in After Class activities for timely addressing them in class (PB2: Mean = 3.38). This difficulty may be exacerbated by the technical limitations of V-Hub, particularly the inability to view students' actual answers within the platform, as highlighted earlier in the discussion of TD5 and TD7 in Table 2b. Furthermore, the lack of answer explanations (ED8 in Table 2a) and functions for teachers to feedback and communicate (TD6 and TD4 in Table 2b) limit teachers' ability to offer timely feedback and support. Providing explanations could empower students to identify their own errors and understand the underlying concepts, promoting self-directed learning and reducing the need for extensive teacher intervention.

Teachers' strategies to support and motivate students in completing homework on V-Hub, and how these strategies relate to completion rates.

The interviews revealed a range of strategies employed by VUS teachers to motivate and support students in completing homework on V-Hub. These include reminders and communication, feedback and support, rewards and recognition, clear expectations and instructions, and personalized learning. The effectiveness of these strategies varied, but clear communication, timely feedback, and personalized support emerged as key factors in promoting homework completion and student engagement.

Teachers' strategies to guide and support students in completing homework on V-Hub.

In general, the interviewed teachers understand the crucial role of their guidance in setting the tone for students' smooth experience with the learning materials and activities on V-Hub, especially the After Class section. This understanding aligns with research by Nguyen et al. (2024), who found that students believe teachers play a vital role in guiding them to effectively use learning materials. Therefore, at the beginning of a course, they spend time drawing their attention to the homework section on V-Hub. Teachers T1, T3, T4 and T5 shared:

> *"I always remind my students to complete their homework at the end of each lesson."* (T1, Vietnamese, teaching teenagers and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

> *"I frequently remind them in class and talk to them in case they need support."* (T3, Vietnamese, teaching teenagers and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

> *"I normally remind my students about doing their homework in a few first sessions of the course, but I don't do this weekly"* (T4, Vietnamese, teaching children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

> *"I remind my students about their homework in the first month of the course. After that I leave it to their autonomy."* (T5, Vietnamese, teaching teenager and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

Teacher T1 even mentioned how they walked their students through the platform to ensure their comfortable navigation on V-Hub. T1 shared:

> *"I asked a student to lend me their V-Hub account to walk the whole class through all sections on V-Hub as demonstrations of the how-to"* (T1, Vietnamese, teaching teenagers and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

When invited to share the problems that might correlate with the low homework completion rates, in addition to students' overwhelming study load at schools, low self-disciplines, and intrinsic motivations, which fall out of the scope of this study, the teachers reported technical issues such as unsuccessful login, and answers not successfully auto-saved that discouraged students' access to V-Hub for homework. Teachers T4 and T5 noted:

> *"Some students in my IELTS classes said they hadn't had good experience with V-Hub because they'd spent hours to complete an assignment but the platform didn't record their answers. The students ended up being discouraged."* (T4, Vietnamese, teaching children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

> *"I think some of them might have technical issues when logging into their V-Hub accounts."* (T5, Vietnamese, teaching teenager and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

For login issues, Teacher T5 chose to seek technical support

> *"… referred them to VUS staff for further support as this is beyond my capability of assistance".* (T5, Vietnamese, teaching teenager and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

Teacher T4, whose students experienced the platform not recording their answers, particularly shared:

> *"I advised students to type their answers in a Word document, then copy and paste them into the respective answer boxes on V-Hub"* (T4, Vietnamese, teaching children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

For courses whose print Workbooks are digitized for V-Hub, teachers return to the Workbooks for easy checking and monitoring students' completion and providing them with feedback. Teacher T2 shared:

> *"I told my students to use the Workbooks instead of V-Hub to avoid all the technical hiccups and ensure easy monitoring."* (T2, Vietnamese, teaching teenagers and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

As the interviewed teachers unanimously affirmed that students rarely proactively sought teacher clarification on assignments, they had to proactively provide support and explanations for homework as countermeasures to ensure effective teaching and learning practices. Teachers T2, T3, and T5 shared:

> *"If necessary, I often guide my students to do homework on V-Hub, ensuring all my students understand what needs to be done."* (T2, Vietnamese, teaching teenagers and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

> *"I often address students' general queries at the beginning of the lesson. For personal*

questions, they're addressed at the end of the class." (T3, Vietnamese, teaching teenagers and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

"I provide homework explanations at the beginning of the class because I think this is the best time to carry out this step. This would help students consolidate previous lessons and link to the next lesson. If class time allows, I will address other questions at the end of the lesson." (T5, Vietnamese, teaching teenager and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

The responses highlight that to cope with V-Hub-related issues, most teachers relied on non-V-Hub solutions, such as using external documents or reverting to print workbooks. This reliance on workarounds might indicate a need to investigate teacher competence in utilizing V-Hub further and plan for more teacher V-Hub support workshops and resources. There should also be more visible/approachable teacher support services, such as readily available technical support or dedicated IT support channels for teachers, to address V-Hub issues promptly. These findings, coupled with the insights from Research Question 1 regarding the desire for answer explanations and the challenges faced by teachers in utilizing V-Hub effectively, underscore the need for a multi-faceted approach to platform improvement. Addressing both the technical limitations and the pedagogical concerns, such as providing explanations for answers and offering comprehensive teacher training, can create a more supportive and conducive learning environment on V-Hub, ultimately enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes.

Teachers' strategies to motivate students to complete their homework on V-Hub.

The interviewed teachers also shared they had employed various strategies to motivate students to complete their homework on V-Hub. These strategies ranged from extrinsic motivators like rewards and recognition to intrinsic motivators like fostering a sense of autonomy and providing personalized support.

Some teachers, like teachers T3 and T5, utilized rewards to boost students' extrinsic motivations to complete homework:

"I chat and support them through Zalo (an online chatting app in Vietnam). Sometimes I encourage those who finish their assignments by rewarding them, but this is only a temporary strategy." (T3, Vietnamese, teaching teenagers and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

"I sometimes reward those students who have completed their homework on V-Hub." (T5, Vietnamese, teaching teenager and children levels, full experience with V-Hub)

This use of rewards aligns with extrinsic motivation theories (Deci, 1971; 1972, as cited in Baranek, 1996). However, as teacher T3 acknowledged, relying solely on external rewards may not be a sustainable solution for long-term engagement.

T1 suggested incorporating a feature on V-Hub that provides compliments to students upon completing homework:

"V-Hub should have a function that pays compliments when students finish their homework." (T1, Vietnamese, teaching teenagers and children levels, full experience

with V-Hub)

This suggestion highlights the potential of positive reinforcement within the platform itself. Praise can be an effective motivator, and integrating it into V-Hub could create a more encouraging and supportive learning environment. The influence of such positive communication on learner motivation can be understood through the framework of Emotional Response Theory (Mottet et al., 2006), which suggests that positive feedback can elicit favorable emotional responses and enhance enjoyment of learning.

While not explicitly stated as motivational strategies, the teachers' emphasis on clear expectations and instructions, as discussed in relation to Research Question 1, can contribute to intrinsic motivation. When students understand what is expected of them and have access to clear instructions and support resources, they are more likely to feel a sense of ownership and autonomy over their learning.

Furthermore, the mention of personalized support in the introductory paragraph suggests that teachers may be tailoring their motivational strategies to individual student needs and learning styles. This aligns with self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), which emphasizes the importance of autonomy and personalized learning experiences in fostering intrinsic motivation.

The findings suggest that a multi-faceted approach to motivation, combining extrinsic and intrinsic motivators, is crucial for promoting student engagement with V-Hub homework. While rewards and recognition can provide immediate incentives, fostering intrinsic motivation through clear expectations, personalized support, and a sense of ownership over their learning is essential for long-term success. Future research could explore the optimal balance of these strategies and how V-Hub can be designed to better support them.

Conclusion

This study has revealed that V-Hub, while generally well-received by VUS teachers, has room for improvement to optimize its effectiveness. While the platform's convenience, user-friendly interface, and learning content were recognized as strengths, contributing positively to teaching and learning, limitations in device compatibility, particularly across different operating systems and browsers, and the absence of certain features, such as answer explanations and detailed mistake tracking, were identified as areas needing attention. Furthermore, the study revealed various strategies employed by teachers to motivate and support students in completing homework on V-Hub, including the use of rewards, personalized support, and clear communication. These strategies play a crucial role in mitigating the platform's limitations and fostering student engagement.

This study underscores the crucial role of teachers in effectively integrating technology, such as V-Hub, into language teaching. Their pedagogical expertise, adaptability, and commitment to student learning are essential for maximizing the benefits of Information and Communication Technology and mitigating its limitations. Investing in teacher training and providing ongoing support are crucial steps in ensuring the successful implementation of technology-enhanced

language learning.

While offering valuable insights, this study has certain limitations. The survey primarily collected data from 27 teachers working in Ho Chi Minh City, with limited representation from other regions where VUS has campuses. This geographical constraint may limit the generalizability of the findings to the broader context of VUS centers nationwide. Additionally, the survey did not collect sufficient data from foreign teachers, with only 3 participating, potentially overlooking valuable perspectives from this specific group of educators. Furthermore, the interviews were conducted with 6 self-elected teachers at the To Ngoc Van Campus only, which might not be a fully representative sample of the teaching staff across all VUS centers. This concentration on a single campus may introduce bias and limit the transferability of the qualitative findings to other VUS locations with potentially diverse teaching approaches and experiences with V-Hub.

Building on the findings of this study, future research could explore LMS implementation in language centers on a broader scale, encompassing multiple institutions and diverse learner populations. Investigating student perspectives on LMS usage would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing engagement and learning outcomes. Future research could explore the impact of incorporating answer explanations and detailed mistake tracking on student learning outcomes and teacher practices. Additionally, investigating the effectiveness of different motivational strategies and their alignment with student preferences could provide valuable insights for optimizing homework completion rates. Finally, examining the potential for LMS materials to replace traditional textbooks could contribute to discussions on the evolving role of technology in language education.

By addressing these recommendations and fostering ongoing collaboration between researchers, educators, and technology developers, we can create more engaging, effective, and accessible language learning experiences for all students.

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