

## PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF E-MORPHOLOGY IN BLENDED LEARNING

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**Abstract:** The paper deals with the procedures and types of exercises used in E-learning programme called E-Morphology, which has been worked out within the project of the Ministry of Education in Slovakia for university students at the Department of English and American studies at the Faculty of Humanities at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica, and for those students at the Faculty of Pedagogy and the Faculty of Arts at Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra. E-Morphology is based on the authentic text material obtained from English newspapers and magazines with the aim to concentrate on those grammar elements which seem to be most difficult for language learners. The team working on the e-learning programme had to compile a large corpus of grammar structures which was used in various exercises of multiple choice, matching, cloze and open exercises and even translation exercises provided with feedback and percentage achievement.

**Key words:** blended learning, Moodle, multiple choice exercises, matching, cloze, practical demonstration.

### Introduction

*Online learning* as a potential major shift in education is a new expanding model that is student-centric, highly personalized for each learner, and more productive. The growth of online learning can be observed in Slovak universities as well where most of the growth is occurring in blended-learning environments, in which students learn online in a supervised environment at least part of the time. Blended learning can be characterized as an approach to learning and teaching which combines learning undertaken in face-to-face sessions with learning opportunities created online. Its main goals are:

- to educate and offer training through e-learning mode for those students who attend part – time programmes;
- to enable students to study at their own pace, place and time;
- to enable them to practice online receiving supporting feedback on their progress;
- to provide application specific knowledge of the subject along with the theoretical knowledge of basic concepts;
- and for staff to have information on students' learning skills and progress.

Some blended learning teachers deliver most of their lessons in a traditional manner. They use the learning management system (LMS) to post due dates, reminders, homework assignments, class notes, and lecture materials. Students access the LMS mainly outside of class – before and after school, at lunch, on weekends and holidays.

Other blended learning teachers make use of LMS to explain the topics online, prepare exercises, blogs and quizzes. This type of learning provides a secure online system for student submissions and assessments, posting grades and communication among class participants.

Students use the LMS to discuss, blog, write quizzes, and submit work related to their in-class activities. Their great advantage, as stated by Malá (2011) is that they can use asynchronous collaborative learning which extends face-to-face learning and creates supporting learning networks managed by students at the time and place best suited to their needs.

### **Description of the website links to the units of E- Morphology**

Now let me introduce the e-learning programme called E-Morphology which has been worked out within the project KEGA 3/6045/08 subsidized by the Ministry of Education in Slovakia. It is intended for university students at the Department of English and American studies at the Faculty of Humanities at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica. The linguistic subject focussing on the English grammar on upper intermediate - advanced level is essential for future translators and interpreters as well as for future teachers. Therefore the e-learning programme has been introduced with the idea to help students practise the English grammar in a modern innovative way.

Let's look at the programme at our University website. Clicking on the LMS you can see the Moodle with its links. Entering the password I can log in and then it opens and on the left hand side you can see E-Morphology. Clicking on the link there appears the web page containing various sections: People, Participants, Activities. Under Activities there are other sublinks: Forums, Quizzes, Under Administration there are sublinks: Turn editing on, Settings, Assign roles, Grades, Outcomes and other links.

In the middle there is the link Unit 1 and the scrolling Jump to ... where you can choose the unit you want to work on. Clicking on a particular unit you can see assignments and exercises. There are 23 units, each focused on a particular category of the English grammar.

They cover all the issues of English morphology: derivational and inflectional morphemes, conversion, word classes, compounds, grammatical categories of nouns, determiners, adjectives, adverbs and grammatical categories of verbs. In order to avoid interference between English and Slovak, the focus has been on those grammar structures which pose the greatest problems to students.

The first 13 units are planned for the winter term and the others cover the assignments and exercises of the summer term. The enrolled students can practise whichever unit they wish during the term based on the lectures given and the study of grammar books.

### *Practical demonstration*

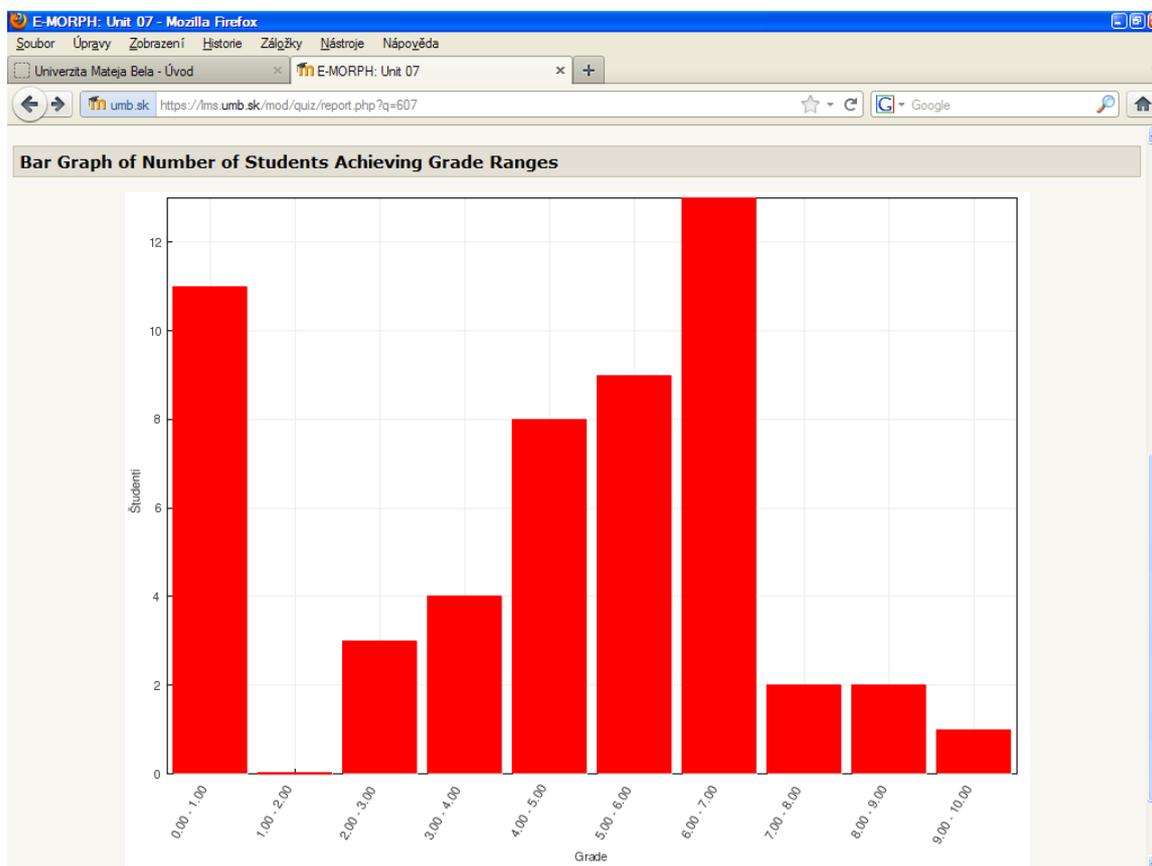
Let's look at Unit 1. Clicking on the link you can see the assignments and exercises directed at morphemes. Students are asked to complete the exercise No 1 and submit it with a click. Then they are provided with feedback, where correct answers are marked with green colour and a tick, wrong answers on the other hand are marked with red colour and a cross. Students can see the results: Partially correct. Marks for this submission: 17/18. With previous penalties this gives 16/18. This submission attracted a penalty 1.8. (see picture No1- following page). Students can make as many attempts as they wish and they can check whether they were right or not. However, they should read assignments carefully and complete empty boxes according to the tasks required. The program distinguishes space and e.g. some singular nouns accompanied by indefinite articles. If the student enters a double space instead of a single one or uses the nouns with no article, the task is marked as wrong. Below each exercise students can read whether they were correct or partially correct, they can see marks for submission and history of responses. After completing all the exercises of the particular unit, they can click on Save without submitting, Submit page, Submit all and finish. Clicking on Submit all and finish students close the attempts and they will no longer be able to change their answers. This command can be used in testing.



Picture No 1

Let's look at the programme from a teacher's point of view. Clicking on Participants, he / she can follow all participants of the course, their names, home towns, country and the time of their last access. Clicking on Quizzes, he / she can see the same units and exercises as students can. In addition to their assignments and feedback mentioned before, he / she has an access to all students' activities. Clicking on Results the teacher can see students' results, i.e. he / she can read how many attempts each of the students made, when each of them completed the task, how long it took him / her to do so. In the Result section, below the chart giving the names of students and their results, the LMS offers to click the links Show / Download all attempts; Students with attempts only and Students with no attempts. Thus the teacher can see who didn't attempt to practise any exercise. And Bar Graph (Picture No2) below gives the number of students achieving grade ranges.

The teacher can read which exercises were either difficult for students or misunderstood by them. He / she can reconsider the type of exercise and adapt or modify it so that it will suit students' abilities or it will avoid complicated editing.



Picture No 2

### Possibilities of Editing

Clicking on the Edit link the teacher can see Order of Questions and Question name, i.e. the wording of assignments, then Grade and Action. Under Action link there are two icons, the first one used to preview the question and the second one used to edit. Clicking on the Edit icon the teacher has permission to edit the question, move it or save that as a new question. Here he / she can make any changes, modifications or amendments. Everything that he / she has edited must be saved clicking on the link Save changes. He / she can edit embedded answers (cloze).

Picture No 3

There are a few types of exercises best suited to the online quizzes on the English grammar. First of all they are multiple choice exercises, cloze exercises, substitution, matching, riddles, etc. In multiple choice exercises, clicking on an empty box it scrolls showing the possibilities to choose from. This can be seen in the following picture (Picture No 3).

In cloze exercises students are required to fill in the blanks with words that would best complete the passage and make a given sentence grammatically correct.

Riddles are used to make quizzes more attractive and amusing.

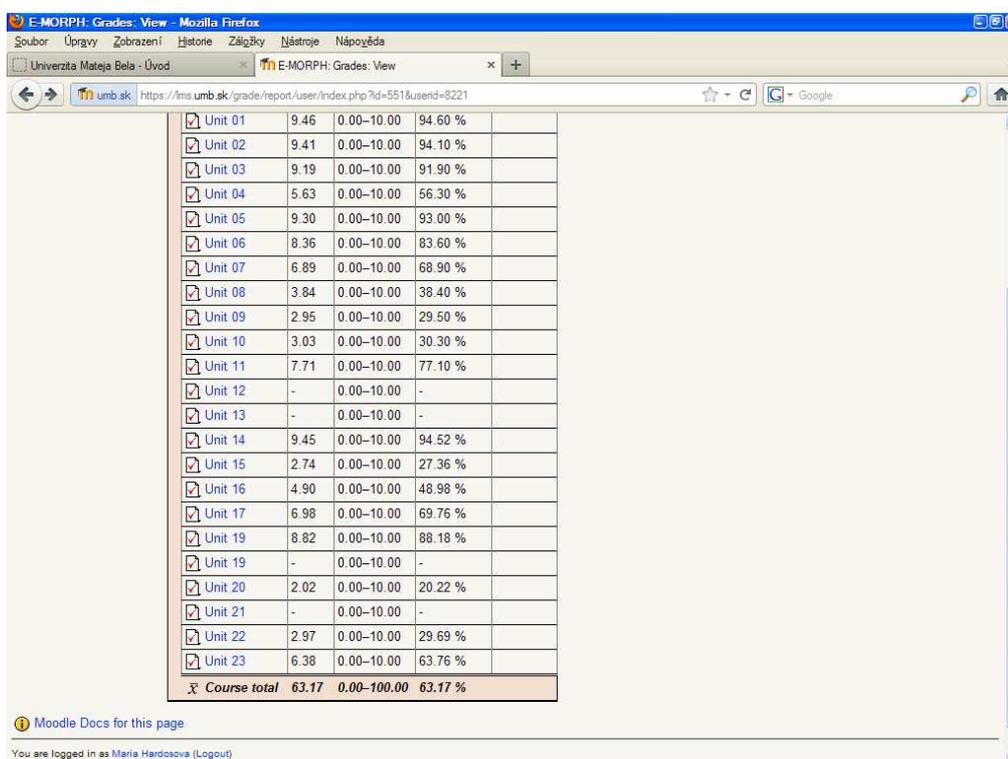
Matching exercises are basically created as a combination of multiple choice tests.

Under Administration on the web page there are links which enable the teacher to edit, set, assign roles and see the grades. Clicking on the first one Turn editing on he / she can add a resource, i.e. put in a title of the resource book, compose a text or web page, link to a file or website. He / she can add activity: assignments: online text, upload a single file, offline activity,

he / she can input an examination date, glossary, lessons, questionnaires and quizzes. We will focus on quizzes. Clicking on the link it is possible to start editing the quiz. The web page shows Timing, Display giving Questions per page – Unlimited, Shuffle questions – No, Shuffle within Questions – Yes. Attempts enable the teacher to set number of attempts or use unlimited number. In Grades section he / she can choose grading method applying penalties. After editing it is necessary to click on Save and return to course and then on the link Turn editing off.

Clicking on the second line Setting the teacher or programmer can edit course settings giving the full and short names of the course, then format, enrolments, groups, availability, language, etc. The following link Assign roles enables to assign roles to the teacher, student or guest. Clicking on the role of Student, the teacher can see all students' e-mail addresses. The following link Grades offers grader reports of all students, clicking on a small box next to the particular student the teacher can see the overall grades and percentage achieved. He / she can analyse each unit, clicking on the particular unit he / she can see how successful the student was including the number of attempts he made (Picture No 4).

The Group link enables the teacher to select students and thus create groups according to his / her own criteria.



<input type="checkbox"/>	Unit 01	9.46	0.00–10.00	94.60 %	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 02	9.41	0.00–10.00	94.10 %	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 03	9.19	0.00–10.00	91.90 %	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 04	5.63	0.00–10.00	56.30 %	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 05	9.30	0.00–10.00	93.00 %	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 06	8.36	0.00–10.00	83.60 %	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 07	6.89	0.00–10.00	68.90 %	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 08	3.84	0.00–10.00	38.40 %	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 09	2.95	0.00–10.00	29.50 %	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 10	3.03	0.00–10.00	30.30 %	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 11	7.71	0.00–10.00	77.10 %	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 12	-	0.00–10.00	-	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 13	-	0.00–10.00	-	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 14	9.45	0.00–10.00	94.52 %	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 15	2.74	0.00–10.00	27.36 %	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 16	4.90	0.00–10.00	48.98 %	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 17	6.98	0.00–10.00	69.76 %	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 19	8.82	0.00–10.00	88.18 %	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 19	-	0.00–10.00	-	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 20	2.02	0.00–10.00	20.22 %	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 21	-	0.00–10.00	-	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 22	2.97	0.00–10.00	29.69 %	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unit 23	6.38	0.00–10.00	63.76 %	
<b>Course total</b>		<b>63.17</b>	<b>0.00–100.00</b>	<b>63.17 %</b>	

Picture No 4

In Report section, clicking on Activity report or Participation report the teacher can get an overall view of the course activities.

Question bank enables the teacher / programmer to create a new question choosing from an essay, matching, embedded answer (cloze), multiple choice, short answers and true / false questions.

## Conclusion

Despite all these demanding and time-consuming activities that the teacher / programmer has to do in LMS system preparing the course, this programme is a great help for students as it enables them to study at their own pace, place and time and to practice online receiving supporting feedback on their progress. It is also a suitable aid for teachers to monitor students' progress and activities outside of the classroom.

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