Heuristic Evaluation

Evaluated group Clear-Group, desktop prototype

Part I: Your Name

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Part II: Project Description

Application where you can find high quality courses for learning programming languages.

Part III: Evaluation Execution

The heuristic evaluation was conducted in-person. The group had a printed prototype and we evaluated the desktop version. First of all the person who was conducting the evaluation explained the three tasks and then we started the evaluation.
I had to interact with the group in order to understand if every element (for instance buttons) wil be in that place always or just under some conditions and if the state of active buttons was different from the inactive ones and just in the prototype they were the same.

Part IV: List of Violations

1. H4 Consistency and standard
    Where: button "Get started" in the main page, on the banner
    What: The button is on a banner and, for the position and what is written, suggest to the user he will redirect to a new page. Instead, you have a scroll to the "Top courses" section.
    Why: usually in applications, if a button scrolls you up/down you also have an icon that suggests this movement. Moreover with the label "get started" the user expects to arrive in a section where he can see all the courses, while here he is bringed in the section "top courses".
    Severity: 2
2. H4 Consistency and standard
    Where: image of the course in the "our top courses" section - simple task.
    What: The user has to click on the image to go to the course page.
    Why: Under each card there is a description. The user doesn't know he has to click on the image to go to the course page. Most applications that don't have a button like "see more" tend to group the entire information related to that element (in this case the image and the description below) as putting them in a card and allowing the user to click anywhere on the card.
    Severity: 4
3. H4 Consistency and standard
    Where: Become a teacher - complex task.

What: In the main page there is a button that says "Start to teach" while in the personal page the button is labeled "Become the teacher". Moreover, in the section when you can apply to become a teacher, the title of the section is "Become a teacher"

Why: the app uses three labels to express the same function

Severity: 3

4. H4 Consistency and standard

Where: personal information, first step to become a teacher - complex task.

What: when you upload the image, you can see only the name of the file, no the image itself and you can't adjust the position, to just show a part of it

Why: in application, usually when you upload an image as a profile image, you can see it, resize and adjust it.

Severity: 2

5. H4 Consistency and standard

Where: how to become a teacher section - complex task.

What: the state of the current section, as "personal information", "Educational Exp" ecc, is expressed in a different way to how it is expressed in "My learning", "Messages" … and in the login page with the buttons "Login" and "Register". The buttons related to the registration as a teacher become bigger when they are selected and change background color, while all the other buttons just change color.

Why: The app uses two different conventions to indicate the same state "section active".

Severity: 1

6. H4 Consistency and standard

Where: how to become a teacher section - complex task.

What: in this section all the input that are mandatory **don't have** the ***** symbol, while the ones that aren't mandatory have the * symbol.

Why: It's wildly used in applications that the mandatory fields have the * symbol, this application is using the opposite convention.

Severity: 4

7. H2 Match between system and the real world

Where: how to become a teacher section - final task - complex task.

What: The label of the button "Go back" brings the user in the "My learning" section.

Why: the label "go back" suggests that the user will go back from the exact place where he is coming, so if he was in "messages", "assignments", "notifications" sections he will expect to be redirected there. Moreover, if the user were in the main page and clicked on the "Start to teach" button, he would expect to be redirected to the homepage and not in the "My learning" section.

Severity: 3

8. H8 Aesthetic and minimalist design

Where: how to become a teacher section - complex task.

What: The gif present in the menu section of the box "Register as a teacher"

Why: putting a gif in a section where the user is inserting a lot of important information can distract him from the primary goals.

Severity: 1

9. H5 Error prevention
   Where: homepage when the user is not logged in.
   What: the button "Start to teach" brings the user directly to the form to become a teacher but the user is not logged in.
   Why: the button allows the user to enter a reserved area without doing the login or the registration as student, a step required to become a teacher.
   Severity: 4
10. HN Non-heuristic issue
    Where: how to become a teacher section - final task - complex task.
    What: the user has to insert name, surname, email and phone number but he is already registered as a student.
    Why: name, surname, email and phone number are information that the system already has, so it's an unnecessary info that the user has to insert.
    Severity: 0
11. H4: Consistency and standards
    Where: header.
    What: the button "Home" and the logo bring the user to the homepage.
    Why: there are two elements with different labels and shapes that do the same action. Moreover, usually on application it is known that clicking on the logo the user will be navigated to the homepage.
    Severity: 2
12. H4: Consistency and standards
    Where: course card and course description page.
    What: ratings of the course (stars)
    Why: usually people use stars to understand the ratings that other users have done to that course. Here the default rating of the course is 5 and when the user enrolls in it and writes comments it could change.
    Severity: 4

Part V: Summary and Recommendations

Report in the table below the total number of identified violations.

Heuristic	# violations
H1: Visibility of system status	
H2: Match between system and the real world	1
H3: User control and freedom	
H4: Consistency and standards	8
H5: Error prevention	1
H6: Recognition rather than recall	

H7: Flexibility and efficiency of use	
H8: Aesthetic and minimalist design	1
H9: Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors	
H10: Help and documentation	
HN: Non-heuristic issue	1

Generally it is a good application and the design is well done. I would change the card in the slider in the homepage, to better suggest the user where he has to click to go to the detail of the page and to visually better connect the image to the information below it.

I would also suggest considering the opportunity to allow people to enroll directly as teachers, removing the mandatory step "register as student". In this way the user could easily become a teacher.

Finally, I would also rethink how the evaluation of the course is given. For now, a new course has always 5 stars and only when people enroll to it and write comments can this evaluation change. In my opinion this algorithm is confusing, because users will associate stars to review that people give and not a default value. Rather, it could be better splitting these two evaluations, having one based on comments of the students and another one, clearly explained, as the evaluation that the platform or some authoritative figure gives.