

THE EFFICACY OF QUIZLET CLASSIC LIVE GAME ON VOCABULARY RETENTION AND LEARNING MOTIVATION OF BUSINESS ENGLISH STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DANANG - UNIVERSITY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDIES

NGHIÊN CỨU HIỆU QUẢ CỦA TRÒ CHƠI QUIZLET CLASSIC LIVE ĐỐI VỚI VIỆC GHI NHỚ TỪ VỰNG VÀ ĐỘNG CƠ HỌC TẬP CỦA SINH VIÊN CHUYÊN NGÀNH TIẾNG ANH THƯƠNG MẠI TẠI TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC NGOẠI NGỮ - ĐẠI HỌC ĐÀ NẴNG

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Abstract - This research investigates the efficacy of Quizlet classic live game on learners' retention of ESP vocabulary and learning motivation in Business English classes at The University of Danang - University of Foreign Language Studies (UD-UFLS). With the utilization of pretests and posttests, the findings reveal that the experimental group (N = 38) recollected specialized vocabulary better than the control group. In addition, in the interview, the experimental students found the Quizlet classic live game engaging and motivating to learn ESP terminologies. Henceforth, the implications of this research are to determine whether Quizlet classic live game can be deployed as an effective ESP vocabulary learning tool and as an empirical instance that contributes to the literature on gamification in language instruction to enhance the learning experience for students.

Key words - Quizlet classic live game; ESP vocabulary retention; learning motivation; Business English classes

1. Introduction

In the era of rapid globalization and economic integration, Vietnam has opened up opportunities for businesses to engage in valuable contracts with foreign partners and for individuals to develop their future careers. However, this multilingual working environment presents a challenge that necessitates proficiency in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) disciplines such as Business, Tourism, and Information Technology. In fact, Vietnamese employees tend to struggle with specialized presentations and reading comprehension of professionally written texts in the workplace, as it requires not only general English proficiency but also mastery of ESP vocabulary that conveys specialized knowledge. Consequently, the lack of vocabulary, particularly job-related ESP terminologies, often leads to difficulties in expressing ideas and thoughts. However, the process of learning new word lists does not always accelerate the vocabulary retention progress due to the monotonous and stressful memorization. Moreover, acquiring ESP words requires dedicated effort and study time, as it demands a comprehensive understanding of the field of study [1]. Thus, teachers must incorporate cutting-edge and engaging teaching methods so that students can make progress in vocabulary learning, thereby enhancing their English reading comprehension abilities. While Quizlet has been recognized as a valuable tool for

Tóm tắt - Nghiên cứu khảo sát hiệu quả của trò chơi Quizlet classic live đối với việc ghi nhớ từ vựng và động cơ học tập của sinh viên tiếng Anh thương mại tại Trường Đại học Ngoại ngữ - Đại học Đà Nẵng (UD-UFLS). Với bài kiểm tra trước và sau, kết quả cho thấy nhóm thử nghiệm (N = 38) nắm từ vựng chuyên ngành tốt hơn so với nhóm kiểm soát. Thông qua phỏng vấn, sinh viên cho rằng trò chơi Quizlet classic live thú vị và tạo động lực học tập thuật ngữ chuyên ngành. Do đó, bài viết nghiên cứu liệu trò chơi trực tuyến Quizlet có thể được triển khai như một công cụ hữu ích khi học từ vựng tiếng Anh thương mại và là ví dụ thực tế đóng góp tư liệu về phương pháp giảng dạy tích hợp trò chơi, nhằm nâng cao trải nghiệm học tập cho sinh viên.

Từ khóa - Trò chơi Quizlet classic live; hiệu quả ghi nhớ từ vựng chuyên ngành; động lực học tập; lớp tiếng Anh thương mại

vocabulary improvement through flashcard sets [2] [3], there is limited empirical evidence on the effectiveness of Quizlet classic live game for students with higher language competence. Henceforth, this study aims to investigate the impact of Quizlet classic live game on vocabulary gain and learning motivation, specifically for students in Business English classes at UD-UFLS.

2. Literature Review

Regarding English for specific purposes (ESP) teaching and learning, technical vocabulary, including Business English is considered to be one of the most challenging aspects for students to fully understand and use in professional contexts, compared to general English owing to the requirement of the subject knowledge [4]. Specifically, Business English, a growing branch of ESP terminology in teaching and research, refers to the use of English in various contexts of business communication and transaction contexts, ranging from letters, resumes, business jargon, branding, and promoting [5]. Therefore, the ability to use the most accurate Business English vocabulary in work-related contexts helps guarantee communication efficiency in communication with clients, employers, and colleagues in international workplaces [6]. However, in the case of Business English learning, there are uncommon meanings of common words, which is a

huge obstacle for most students learning Business English. For instance, “acquisition” in general English refers to the process of learning and gaining a skill; whereas, in Business English, it refers to purchasing another company, asset, or resources to expand market share. Therefore, in order to develop students’ language skills for successful and effective communication in their future professional activities, teachers need to employ an effective method of teaching business vocabulary in classrooms. That is, the pedagogical method should motivate learners’ willingness to explore more about the specialized vocabulary and increase their vocabulary gain. However, the process of rote-learning vocabulary wordlists is not always effective due to its boredom and lack of interaction [7].

In recent years, gamification has become a prevalent trend in English vocabulary learning and teaching [8] accompanied by the utilization of online and mobile applications thanks to the rapid advancement of technology. Among the current game-based learning applications, Quizlet stands out as a useful tool that allows students to improve their vocabulary through flashcards sets created by teachers and themselves on laptops or mobile devices. However, there is limited empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of Quizlet classic live game, which can be hosted as an engaging classroom activity in enhancing learning motivation and vocabulary learning outcomes in ESP courses [9]. In fact, this application incorporates gamified elements that accelerate vocabulary gain and student’s motivation, mitigating the perceived tedious and repetitive sense of memorizing. Simultaneously, elements such as achievement, feedback, levels of difficulty, and leaderboards play a crucial role in developing learners’ active engagement by stimulating a desire to master new words and succeed in the game [10].

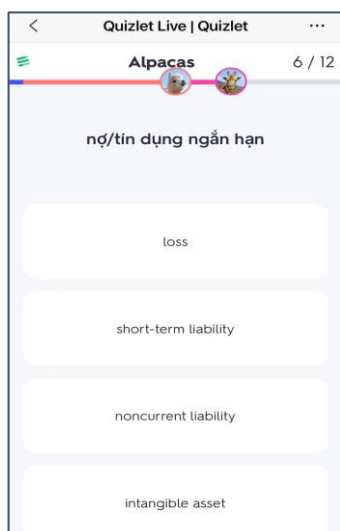


Figure 1. A Quizlet live game quiz

Previous studies have investigated the efficacy of Quizlet application to enhance general English vocabulary for learners at low levels of English proficiency. For instance, Sanosi [9] found a significant improvement in the acquisition of vocabulary extracted from their syllabus of the low-level EFL learners at Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University in Saudi Arabia after using Quizlet for English

learning within a month. However, one month of interventions is considered only sufficient to notice subtle changes in vocabulary gains. Another study [2] which employed 60 students in the General English 1 course studying with Quizlet within 5 weeks, discovered a greater progress in vocabulary gain and students’ willingness to learn than the control group. In an attempt to witness a more noticeable development in vocabulary gain, Waluyo and Bucol [3] measured students’ learning outcomes with in-class vocabulary tests before and imminently after Quizlet activities along with pre-and post-tests in the long term. However, too many vocabulary tests and quizzes can be counterproductive as they may bore the students and burden them with excessive workload. Nevertheless, there is a noticeable gap in the investigation into the efficacy of Quizlet classic live game on vocabulary retention and learning motivation in the context of Business English courses for students at the intermediate level.

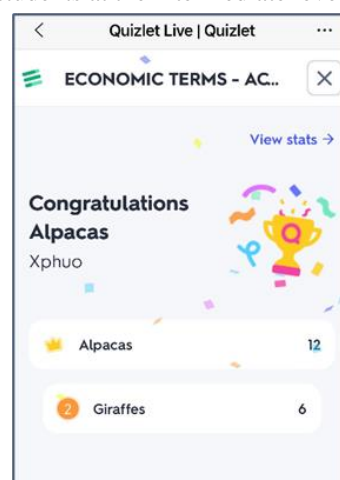


Figure 2. Quizlet live game leaderboard and result after the game

3. Research Methodology

This study employs a mixed method design between a quantitative quasi-experiment and a qualitative method. Regarding the quantitative method, the study employed a pre-test to check students’ prior knowledge and a post-test to measure vocabulary acquisition after a semester experiencing with Quizlet intervention. The results of this experiment would test the following hypotheses:

- Null hypothesis (H_0): The use of Quizlet has no significant effect on the learners’ ESP vocabulary retention.
- Alternative hypothesis (H_A): The use of Quizlet has significant effects on the learners’ ESP vocabulary retention.

In addition, a semi-structured interview was conducted as a means of data triangulation, to gauge the students’ perception of learning motivation and vocabulary gain.

3.1. Research Questions

1. How does Quizlet application affect ESP learners’ retention of Business English vocabulary?
2. What are learners’ perceptions of using Quizlet games in Business English learning in terms of vocabulary gain and motivation?

3.2. Participants

This study was conducted with 76 second-year students majoring in Business English of ESP Faculty at UD-UFLS, Vietnam. The non-probability sample includes 60 females (79%) and 16 males (21%) who had experience with Business English vocabulary from their previous integrated language skill B1.1 and B1.3 courses with the same instructor. The students were divided into two groups: the experimental class who learned Business English with the Quizlet classic live game in each class and the control group without the treatment. They were purposely chosen from the same course: Language Integrated Skills B2.1 in the program, using Market Leader Course book at the Intermediate Level (3rd edition), so their English level is relatively similar based on previous learning results, which assists with the internal validity of the quasi-experimental design as it minimizes the differences in English level and academic background among learners [11]. Although a greater population of participants is recommended to promote the generalizability of a study [12], a quasi-experiment with convenience sampling is more accessible and feasible for small-scale projects in educational research and yet can be a useful source of reference for relevant same-scale projects.

3.3. Instruments

- Vocabulary Tests

The purpose is to measure the proficiency of Business English vocabulary among experimental and control groups before and after the intervention using Quizlet classic live games.

As for the content, the vocabulary is derived from syllabi of the Market Leader Coursebook (Pre-Intermediate and Intermediate levels, 3rd edition) and relevant Business English reading materials from Openstax.com, namely An Introduction to Business, Principles of Marketing.

In terms of the format, the pre-test consisted of 40 items: 30 multiple-choice questions and 10 short-answer questions. Similarly, the post-test included the same format as the pre-test, to measure changes in vocabulary learning after the intervention. Both of the tests were administered using Google Forms for efficient data collection and statistical analysis.

In addition, to guarantee content validity, the study aligned test items with the course syllabus (Market Leader Course book, Pre-Intermediate and Intermediate levels, 3rd edition), distributing questions across relevant units of study. Some relevant Business English reading materials from the open academic library Openstax.com were also considered, including the Principle of Marketing, An Introduction to Business, and the Principle of Accounting.

- Semi-structured Interviews

To gather qualitative data on students' perceptions and experiences of using Quizlet in ESP vocabulary learning, the interview specifically focused on learners' motivation and awareness of their progress in Business vocabulary learning. The participants were 10 experimental students

selected from the study cohort. The reason for using semi-structured interview was to allow for flexibility and recording of further comments from the respondents while maintaining focus on prepared questions. The data was audio-recorded and transcribed for qualitative analysis.

Basically, these instruments, combining quantitative assessment through tests with qualitative insights from interviews, were implemented to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the effects of Quizlet classic live games on Business English vocabulary acquisition.

3.4. Data collection

Due to the pedagogical ethics that learners should be treated similarly and fairly, both B2.1 classes became experimental groups, experiencing ESP vocabulary learning with Quizlet games and flashcards without a control group. At the beginning of the course, a pre-test was conducted to investigate learners' previous knowledge of ESP vocabulary. After 10 lessons incorporating Quizlet classic live games and revision with Quizlet flashcards after each lesson over a 3-month period, post-tests were conducted to test the potential changes in learners' vocabulary mastery. Moreover, the group interview was conducted within 30 minutes with a group of 10 students who had experienced the class applying Quizlet classic live game and was recorded for data analysis.

3.5. Data analysis procedure

The collected data was imported and stored in Microsoft Excel, in which the data of pre-test and post-test was statistically analysed into means (M), standard deviation (St. D), error mean and p value. If the p. value or Sig. (2-tailed) < 0.05, it indicates that H0 is rejected and HA is accepted. In fact, the result was reinforced with the aid of SPSS 27.0 program to double-check mathematical calculations illustrated with tables. As for the interview, the data underwent content analysis, coded as from S-1 to S-10, and categorized into similar and opposing views.

4. Findings

4.1. The effects of Quizlet classic live games on students' vocabulary gain by test scores

Regarding the pre-test between groups with an equal number of participants, while the mean score of the control group was relatively equal, which indicates that the groups were relatively at the same level of English regarding previous knowledge of the target vocabulary. In addition, the standard error in pre-test scores of the experimental group was subtly lower than the control group (.46388 < .54929). That means the variation in language proficiency level among the students in the control group is slightly higher than that in the experimental group. However, in general, the variance in the pre-test scores between both groups was highly close.

Generally, there is an improvement in test scores of both groups based on the results illustrated in Table 1 and Table 2 through paired sample t-test. However, the statistics show that the acquisition of Business English terminologies was more significant for the experimental group in comparison with the control group. Specifically,

while the mean scores after treatment in the experimental group rose by slightly over 26 points, only 8.5 points of increase was recorded for the control group. This means the experimental group gained better scores than the control group in vocabulary tests after receiving a 10-week treatment with Quizlet class live game after 10 lessons. In other words, the game affected the experimental students positively. Moreover, the result for the experimental group in the post-test was more condensed compared to the other group, as its standard error of the mean remained lower ($.49009 < .72827$).

Table 1. The results of pre-test and post-test scores in each group through paired t-test

Pair	Test	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	exper_pretest	10.6579	38	2.85956	.46388
	exper_posttest	36.8158	38	3.02114	.49009
Pair 2	control_pretest	10.6842	38	3.38602	.54929
	control_posttest	19.1842	38	4.48936	.72827

However, a slight development in vocabulary learning judged by test scores also occurred in the control group even if they were not treated with Quizlet. In addition, standard deviation of post-tests (over 3 and 4.489 points respectively), which refers to how scores are dispersed around the mean, was higher than that of pre-tests in both groups as shown in Table 1. The high S.D. value reveals a gap in vocabulary learning amongst individuals in the same group. Specifically, competent students tended to continue gaining dramatically higher scores than lower-levels although both types of learners made their efforts and progress in the same learning condition.

Table 2. The differences between pre-test and post-test scores in each group

		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		M	S.D.	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
Pair 1	Exper_pretest - posttest	-26.15789	3.50695	.56890	-27.31060	-25.00519	45.980	37	< .001
Pair 2	Control_pretest - posttest	-8.50000	4.18976	.67967	-9.87714	-7.12286	-12.506	37	< .001

Given the data in Table 2, the p values of both groups < 0.001 , which indicates that the difference between pre-test and post-test scores is significant. In other words, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and it is accepted that the use of Quizlet has significant effects on the learners' ESP vocabulary retention (H_A). That is, learners were able to understand and recognize vocabulary better after the intervention of Quizlet classic live games. In addition, the students learning vocabulary with Quizlet classic live game incorporated in the classroom in this study performed in the post-test more successfully than those memorizing lists of words without gamification. Moreover, the results support the application of Quizlet as an effective vocabulary learning tool, in line with Sansoni [5] who investigated the effectiveness of deploying distinct modes of Quizlet application, and Waluyo and Bucol [3] who advocated the

utilization of Quizlet flashcards. However, these studies looked at the changes in test scores of low-level learners instead of more competent students who are attending Business English courses and did not consider the enhanced learning motivation as an outcome of hosting Quizlet game in the classroom.

4.2. Learners' perceptions of the effects of Quizlet classic live game on motivation and Business English vocabulary gain

Based on the interview, all interviewees unanimously agreed that utilizing Quizlet live games significantly boosted their learning motivation and engagement during classroom activities compared to the traditional method of learning with vocabulary lists. This accordingly supports the findings of the previous studies [7] and [10] about the effectiveness of deploying Quizlet on learners' motivation. Moreover, establishing a designated time for vocabulary learning before conducting the games can enhance students' focus as well as their motivation, largely due to the competitive nature of the activity. In addition, the utilization of Quizlet classic live game provided students with exposure to professional vocabulary ranges of systematically categorized topics. This exposure occurred in a more captivating and less monotonous manner, aided by images which facilitated improved retention. Notably, besides motivation improvement, over a 10-week period of treatment, participants experienced a substantial gain in ESP vocabulary knowledge and retention, which reinforces the result of the previous studies [2], [3] and [9]. In this way, students found it more straight-forward to recall previously learned terminologies and decipher specialized content encountered in professional reading materials.

However, a notable drawback emerges as each word set within Quizlet live games is only played twice in each lesson, leading to a tendency for the acquired vocabulary to be easily forgotten or only partially retained in the long term. This was evident as students exhibited greater proficiency in dealing with multiple-choice questions in post-tests compared to short-answer tasks, which indicates the word retention improved at a recognition level rather than producing words. Hence, teachers should utilize Quizlet in classrooms on a more regular basis and assign post-class revision activities with Quizlet flashcards as mandatory self-learning practice. Furthermore, despite acquiring a certain level of understanding in the definition of specialized English vocabulary, learners still struggled to comprehend several work-related texts accurately, prompting them to seek additional information from documents via the Google search engine. Therefore, it is notable that sustaining long-term memory of terminologies and enhanced reading comprehension of professional texts necessitates providing regular additional reading tasks elucidating the vocabulary featured in Quizlet live games.

5. Conclusion

In summary, the analysis conducted using SPSS 27.0 indicates a positive impact of Quizlet Classic Live games on vocabulary learning in Business English classes, as evidenced by the rejection of the null hypothesis. However,

while these games excel in promoting short-term word recognition and recall, they may not sufficiently support precise vocabulary recall and long-term memory retention. Hence, participants often find it necessary to supplement their learning by revisiting flashcards more frequently and conducting additional research for deeper comprehension. Moreover, compared to the traditional teaching method, the gamified approach fosters motivation for autonomous learning, encouraging students to engage more deeply in seeking supplementary materials to fully grasp unfamiliar technical vocabulary encountered during the quizzes. In addition, deploying Quizlet Live as a regular vocabulary learning and revision tool in classroom activities creates an engaging and captivating environment for knowledge acquisition. Nevertheless, relying solely on Quizlet Classic Live games may not ensure a comprehensive understanding and retention of the challenging vocabulary used in business contexts. Therefore, future studies should explore the complementary use of other study modes such as Match, Test, and Checkpoint to measure potential greater progress in students' vocabulary acquisition.

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