The impact of Quizlet in teaching C1 vocabulary to BA students of UzSWLU

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Annotation

This study explores the effectiveness of using Quizlet, an application with gamification elements, in teaching advanced (C1-level) English vocabulary to students enrolled in a Bachelor of Arts (BA) program. Data were collected from 20 undergraduate students of UzSWLU. The research aims to determine whether integrating Quizlet into vocabulary instruction enhances lexical acquisition, retention, and learner engagement. A mixed-methods approach was employed, involving pre- and post-tests to measure vocabulary gains, as well as surveys to gather students' perceptions of the tool. Results showed a statistically significant improvement in students' vocabulary performance, with participants reporting increased motivation and autonomy in their learning process. The findings suggest that Quizlet is a valuable resource in higher education contexts for supporting vocabulary development at advanced proficiency levels. Moreover, the study highlights the importance of incorporating learner-centered digital gamification applications to foster a more interactive and personalized educational experience. Theoretical and practical implications as well as recommendations for integrating digital gamification tools in vocabulary instruction were discussed.

Keywords   *vocabulary, advanced level, digital gamification applications, retention, BA students*
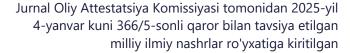
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Влияние Quizlet на обучение лексике уровня C1 студентов бакалавриата УзГУМЯ

Аннотация   *Данное исследование направлено на изучение эффективности использования Quizlet – приложения с элементами геймификации – в обучении продвинутому (уровень С1) английскому словарному запасу студентов бакалавриата. Данные были собраны у 20 студентов УзГУМЯ. Цель исследования – определить, способствует ли интеграция Quizlet в процесс обучения лексике улучшению овладения лексическим материалом, его запоминанию и вовлеченности учащихся. В исследовании использовался смешанный метод: проводились входной и итоговый тесты для измерения прогресса, а также опросы для выявления отношения студентов к использованию данного инструмента. Результаты показали статистически значимое улучшение лексических навыков у студентов, при этом участники отметили рост мотивации и самостоятельности в процессе обучения. Полученные данные свидетельствуют о том, что Quizlet является ценным ресурсом в контексте высшего образования для поддержки развития словарного запаса студентов на продвинутом уровне. Более того, исследование подчёркивает важность внедрения ориентированных на обучающегося цифровых игровых приложений для создания более интерактивного и персонализированного образовательного опыта. В статье обсуждаются теоретические и практические аспекты, а также даны рекомендации по внедрению цифровых инструментов с элементами геймификации в преподавании лексики.*

Ключевые слова   *словарный запас, продвинутый уровень, цифровые геймификационные приложения, запоминание, студенты бакалавриата*

Quizlet ilovasining O'zDJTU talabalarining C1 darajasidagi leksikani o'rganishiga ta'siri

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Annotatsiya   *Ushbu tadqiqot San'at bakalavriati (BA) dasturida o'qiyotgan talabalarga ilg'or (C1-darajali) ingliz lug'atini o'rgatishda o'yinlashtirish elementlariga ega Quizlet ilovasidan foydalanish samaradorligini o'rganadi. Ma'lumotlar O'zDJTU bakalavriat bosqichining 20 nafar talabalaridan to'plangan. Tadqiqot Quizlet dasturini lug'at o'rgatishga qo'shish lug'atni o'zlashtirish, eslab qolish va o'quvchilarning faolligini oshirish yoki yo'qligini aniqlashga qaratilgan. So'z boyligini o'lchash uchun oldingi va keyingi testlarni, shuningdek, o'quvchilarning vosita haqidagi tasavvurlarini to'plash uchun so'rovlarni o'z ichiga olgan aralash usullardan foydalanildi. Natijalar talabalarning so'z boyligining statistik jihatdan sezilarli yaxshilanishini ko'rsatdi, ishtirokchilar o'z o'quv jarayonida motivatsiya va avtonomiyaning ortishi haqida xabar berishdi. Topilmalar shuni*

ko'rsatadiki, Quizlet oliy ta'lim kontekstlarida ilg'or malaka darajasida so'z boyligini rivojlantirishga yordam beradigan qimmatli manbadir. Bundan tashqari, tadqiqot o'quvchiga yo'naltirilgan raqamli geymifikasiya ilovalari orqali ta'lim jarayonini yanada interaktiv va shaxsiylashtirilgan qilish muhimligini ta'kidlaydi. Nazariy va amaliy natijalar hamda raqamli o'yinlashtirish vositalarini lug'atga o'rgatish bo'yicha tavsiyalar muhokama qilindi..

Kalit so'zlar   *lug'at, ilg'or daraja, raqamli gamifikatsiya ilovalari, eslab qolishlik, bakalavriat talabalari*

Introduction

In recent years, the integration of technology into language education has transformed traditional learning environments, offering innovative ways to enhance vocabulary acquisition. Among these technological tools, Quizlet has gained significant popularity for its interactive and gamified features, particularly in vocabulary learning. As digital applications continue to shape educational practices, it becomes essential to investigate their impact on learners' progress and engagement – especially in higher education settings, where students are expected to develop advanced academic language skills.

Vocabulary plays a vital role in achieving language proficiency, particularly at the C1 level, where learners must not only understand nuanced meanings but also use complex and contextually appropriate language. For students at the B2 level transitioning to C1, expanding their lexical repertoire is a crucial yet often challenging task. Traditional methods such as rote memorization and written exercises, while effective to some extent, may lack the motivational appeal needed to sustain long-term learning. This gap has led to th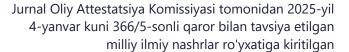e growing adoption of gamified learning tools, which combine educational content with elements of challenge, reward, and engagement.

Quizlet, as one of the most widely used vocabulary apps that contains gamification elements, provides learners with multiple study modes – including flashcards, matching games, and adaptive learning algorithms – that aim to promote active recall and long-term retention. Its accessibility, user-friendly interface, and customizable content make it particularly suitable for tertiary-level students. However, while Quizlet's popularity is evident, empirical research is still needed to evaluate its actual impact on vocabulary learning outcomes in formal academic contexts.

To address this need, the present study investigates the effects of using Quizlet for teaching C1-level vocabulary to B2-level BA students. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent does the use of Quizlet improve C1-level vocabulary acquisition and retention among B2-level BA students?

2. How do BA students perceive the effectiveness and usability of Quizlet as a tool for learning advanced (C1) English vocabulary?

Literature review

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Achieving advanced language proficiency necessitates a deep and nuanced vocabulary knowledge. Nation (2018) emphasizes that extensive reading and repeated exposure to vocabulary in varied contexts are crucial for learners to internalize and effectively use new lexical items. He advocates for the "Four Strands" approach, which balances meaning-focused input and output, language-focused learning, and fluency development to facilitate vocabulary acquisition.

In the context of tertiary education, learners often face challenges in acquiring specialized and academic vocabulary essential for advanced proficiency. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) highlights that motivation, identity, and consistent use of the language are pivotal in reaching advanced proficiency levels.

Gamification, defined as the application of game-design elements in non-game contexts, has gained traction in language education for its potential to enhance learner engagement and motivation. A systematic review by Zhou and Wei (2023) synthesizes findings from 21 empirical studies, concluding that interactive and competitive elements of gamification can significantly enhance the language learning experience. The review emphasizes the importance of aligning gamified elements with pedagogical goals and incorporating learner feedback to optimize educational outcomes.

Further, a study by Mekhbekov (2018) investigated the use of gamification in teaching English as a foreign language in Kazakhstan. The results indicated that gamification significantly enhanced students' motivation and engagement in the learning process.

Quizlet, an online learning platform, incorporates gamified features such as flashcards, matching games, and quizzes to facilitate vocabulary learning. A meta-analysis by Wang and Tahir (2023) examined the impact of Quizlet on learners' vocabulary acquisition, retention, and attitudes. The study found that Quizlet had a statistically significant positive effect on vocabulary learning achievement and retention, with a smaller yet positive effect on learner attitudes.

In a study focusing on higher educational institution learners, Lukov (2022) investigated the effectiveness of Quizlet in learning Academic Word List (AWL) vocabulary. The findings indicated that the use of Quizlet improved learners' vocabulary acquisition and retention, particularly when images were incorporated into the flashcards.

Additionally, a study by Aziza and Miftakh (2021) explored students' perceptions of Quizlet as a vocabulary learning tool. The research revealed that students found Quizlet to be an effective and engaging platform for vocabulary learning, attributing its success to its interactive features and ease of use.

While the aforementioned studies underscore the efficacy of Quizlet and gamification in vocabulary learning, there remains a paucity of research focusing specifically on advanced-level vocabulary acquisition among B2-level learners transitioning to C1 proficiency. Moreover, most studies have concentrated on general vocabulary acquisition, with limited exploration into the acquisition of specialized or academic vocabulary pertinent to higher education contexts.

The integration of gamified tools like Quizlet in language learning has demonstrated positive outcomes in vocabulary acquisition and learner engagement. However, further research is warranted to explore their effectiveness in facilitating advanced-level vocabulary learning among tertiary-level students. Such investigations would provide valuable insights into optimizing vocabulary instruction strategies for learners aiming to achieve higher language proficiency levels.

Participants

The study involves 20 BA students majoring in English at Uzbekistan State World Languages University. The participants' ages ranged between 18 and 21 years old. All participants are at the B2 level of English proficiency, based on CEFR standards. They are beginning to transition into C1-level vocabulary development as part of their academic language training. None had previously taken part in such experiment before. All the participants agreeded to participate and signed the document asking for their permission (consent form) to take part in our research and understood the assignment.

Participants are divided into two equal groups:

Experimental Group (n = 10): Combines both Quizlet application and traditional methods to study C1 vocabulary.

Control Group (n = 10): Studies the same vocabulary through traditional, paper-based methods.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study adopts a quasi-experimental design with a mixed-methods approach (primarily qualitative via surveys) to investigate the impact of Quizlet, when used in combination with traditional methods, on teaching C1-level vocabulary to B2-level undergraduate students. The study is conducted over a period of 4–5 weeks in a higher educational context. The study spans 4 to 5 weeks, with two 35-minute lessons per week dedicated to explicit vocabulary instruction. Both groups study the same target C1-level vocabulary items. The following instruments are used to collect the data:

- **Pre-test and post-test** of C1 vocabulary knowledge (same test for both groups).

- **Student perception survey** administered to the experimental group post-intervention, focusing on motivation, engagement, and attitudes toward the combined learning method.

The vocabulary tests include matching tasks on definitions, synonyms, collocations, and contextual use. The survey includes Likert-scale and open-ended questions.
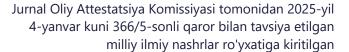
Procedure

The experimental study was conducted over a four-week period. The procedure included structured weekly sessions designed to introduce, practice, and consolidate C1-level vocabulary using Quizlet. Below is a week-by-week breakdown:

- **Week 1 – Introduction:**

- Students in both groups took a pre-test to assess their initial knowledge of the selected C1 vocabulary items. The experimental group was introduced to Quizlet and its gamified features (flashcards, match games, tests, and learn modes). They also received a short tutorial on how to navigate the app both in and outside the classroom.

- **Week 2 – Vocabulary Set 1:** *Health* **and** *Environmental Problems*:

• Students in the experimental group studied vocabulary related to the topics of *Health* and *Environmental Problems* using Quizlet. They practiced with the "Learn" and "Match" modes and engaged in class discussions and problem-solving tasks using the target vocabulary. The control group received the same word lists but worked with them using traditional materials and classroom instruction.

• **Week 3 – Vocabulary Set 2: *Education* and *Technology*:**

• A second set of vocabulary was introduced. The experimental group continued using Quizlet to study words related to *Education* and *Technology*. They were also assigned sentence-building and gap-fill tasks within the app. In class, they completed vocabulary-based speaking and writing activities. The control group worked with printed materials and teacher-led exercises.

• **Week 4 – Consolidation & Post-Test:**

• During the final week, students reviewed all vocabulary items studied throughout the course. The experimental group used Quizlet's "Test" and "Flashcards" modes to consolidate knowledge. Both groups then took a post-test to assess vocabulary retention and progress. In addition, the experimental group completed a feedback survey to share their perceptions of using Quizlet for vocabulary learning.

Data analysis

A mixed-methods approach was used to analyze the data collected during the four-week study. The goal was to assess the effectiveness of Quizlet in improving C1-level vocabulary acquisition among BA students and to explore their perceptions of the digital tool.

Quantitative Analysis: Pre-test and post-test results were collected from both the experimental and control groups. Each test consisted of vocabulary items related to the four thematic sets: *Health*, *Environmental Problems*, *Education*, and *Technology*. The scores were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean scores and standard deviations) and inferential statistics to determine whether the changes in performance were statistically significant. A paired samples t-test was conducted for both groups to compare vocabulary knowledge before and after the intervention. Additionally, an independent samples t-test was used to compare post-test performance between the experimental and control groups. These tests helped determine whether the use of Quizlet led to greater vocabulary gains than traditional methods.

Qualitative Analysis: To complement the test data, a post-intervention survey was administered to the experimental group. The survey included Likert-scale and open-ended questions focusing on students' perceptions of the Quizlet platform, including its usability, motivational impact, and influence on vocabulary retention. Responses were analyzed thematically to identify common patterns, such as increased learner autonomy, engagement, and perceived effectiveness of gamification elements.

SCORING PROCEDURES

The pre- and post-tests consist of a range of vocabulary tasks including:

• **Multiple-choice questions** (meanings, synonyms, collocations)

• **Gap-fill sentences** (contextual use)

• **Matching exercises** (word-meaning or word-collocation) Each test includes 30

questions, with 1 point awarded for correct answer, resulting in a maximum score of 30. The same scoring criteria apply to both the pre-test and the post-test.

• Scores will be recorded and converted to percentages for comparison.

• Vocabulary gain will be calculated by subtracting pre-test scores from post-test scores for each participant.

• An independent samples t-test will be used to compare the performance of the control and experimental groups.

Student Survey (for an Experimental Group Only)

The perception survey includes:

• **10 Likert-scale statements** (rated from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree)

• **2 open-ended questions** for qualitative feedback.

• Quantitative survey responses will be analyzed via JASP app descriptively (mean, median, standard deviation).

• Qualitative responses will be coded thematically to identify patterns in learner attitudes, motivation, and engagement with the Quizlet-enhanced approach.

Results and discussion

The vocabulary pre-test and post-test were administered to both groups to measure vocabulary gains over the 4–5 week intervention. The **experimental group**, which received instruction combining traditional methods and Quizlet-based activities, demonstrated a **notable increase in test scores** compared to the control group, which relied solely on traditional instruction.

• **Experimental group**:
  o *Mean pre-test score*: 17.7 / 30
  o *Mean post-test score*: 24.6 / 30
• **Control group**:
  o *Mean pre-test score*: 16.6 / 30
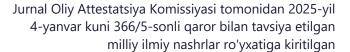 *Mean post-test score*: 19.9 / 30

Group	Test Type	N	Mean Score (/30)	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
Experimental	Pre-test	10	17.77	1.08	16.40	19.47
Experimental	Post-test	10	24.61	1.13	22.93	26.27
Control	Pre-test	10	16.57	1.22	14.76	19.10
Control	Post-test	10	19.93	1.72	17.46	23.18

These results confirm that both groups improved, but the experimental group (using Quizlet) showed a much **stronger and more significant** vocabulary gain.

The post-intervention **survey results** from the experimental group also supported the quantitative findings:

• **90%** of students agreed that Quizlet made vocabulary learning more engaging.

• **80%** reported increased motivation and willingness to study vocabulary independently.

• **70%** noted better retention due to repetition features and game-like tasks.

The results highlight the benefits of using digital gamification application in vocabulary

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instruction. Quizlet's interactive features – such as flashcards, test modes, and matching games – appear to promote deeper cognitive processing and **i**ncreased learner autonomy, which likely contributed to higher vocabulary gains.

The combination of **traditional methods** and **digital gamification tools** provided multiple modes of input and practice, catering to diverse learning preferences. The experimental group's greater improvement can be attributed to the **spaced repetition, instant feedback**, and **interactive nature** of Quizlet, which are grounded in cognitive learning theory.

These findings suggest that integrating digital gamification app like Quizlet can enhance the effectiveness of traditional vocabulary instruction, especially when teaching higher-level academic vocabulary to learners transitioning from B2 to C1.

Conclusion and limitations

This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of using Quizlet, a digital platform with gamification elements, in teaching C1-level vocabulary to B2-level BA students. By integrating Quizlet with traditional teaching methods in the experimental group, the research revealed a statistically significant improvement in vocabulary acquisition and learner motivation. Participants exposed to the combination of Quizlet and classroom instruction demonstrated enhanced engagement, better retention of advanced vocabulary, and greater autonomy in their learning process compared to those in the control group who used traditional methods alone.

The findings support the integration of gamified digital tools like Quizlet in higher education, especially for vocabulary development at advanced proficiency levels. The positive perceptions of students, as gathered through surveys, further validate the motivational benefits of incorporating interactive, game-like features in vocabulary instruction.

Despite the promising results, several limitations must be acknowledged:

1. **Sample Size**: The study involved only 20 participants, with 10 in each group. A larger and more diverse sample would increase the generalizability of the findings.

2. **Short Duration**: The intervention lasted only 4–5 weeks. A longer implementation period might yield more robust and long-term data on retention and effectiveness.

3. **Single Context**: The study was conducted at one university with a specific group of BA students, limiting the applicability of the results to other institutions or learner profiles.

4. **Self-Reported Data**: Student perceptions were gathered through surveys, which may be subjective. No interviews or observational data were included to triangulate results.

5. **Focus on Vocabulary Only**: The study concentrated exclusively on vocabulary learning and did not measure possible improvements in other language skills like reading or writing.

Future research could address these limitations by expanding the participant pool, extending the intervention duration, incorporating mixed assessment methods, and exploring the impact of Quizlet on broader linguistic competencies.

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