

QLETZ: NOUN-You-Know Online Module For Vocabulary Learning

Nurul Huda Mukhtar, Nurzahrah Zainal, Nur Ain Mat Nasir, Melor Md Yunus

Abstract: Enriching vocabulary among English as a Second Language (ESL) learners, especially primary school students; plays a major role in developing the students' holistic proficiency in English language. However, there are some issues regarding the students' performance in learning basic vocabulary (especially nouns); due to the conventional method of teaching and learning, which does not bring a huge impact on their performance in classrooms. Gamified education has become one of the preferable practices used in teaching and learning among ESL learners due to its creative approach. This intervention intends to study the effectiveness of integrating Quizizz and Quizlet in learning English vocabulary among Year 2 primary school students of a suburban area in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia based on Super Minds textbook, which is aligned systematically with Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Quizlet offers flashcards and individual assessment while Quizizz focuses on group assessment. Three topics have been included in this online module, which significantly assists the teaching and learning session to be more comprehensible and practical. The research design for this study is action research based on the model proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart. Pre- and post-tests are conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of this module and researchers field note is also applied to obtain the educators' and students' feedback. The result from pre- and post-tests indicates a significant improvement in students' vocabulary acquisition. Hence, educators could possibly apply QLETZ Noun You Know to expand their repertoire of teaching strategies and motivate students to speak in English.

Index Terms: ESL learners, gamified learning, nouns, primary school, Quizizz, Quizlet, vocabulary

1 INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary knowledge is considered as the foundation of various aspects of communicative competence which covers linguistic, discourse, functional, sociolinguistic, and strategic knowledge. The success of reading comprehension depends on its lexical knowledge and it contributes to the English competency as a whole. Vocabulary learning is one of the fundamental steps for English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. There are many studies conducted on the strategies of language learning in the past years. For example, a study conducted by [1] emphasizes on the importance of having a learning strategy which complements the needs of the students as it contributes to the success of language competency. Using context clues as a vocabulary learning strategy is the main highlight in the study done by [2]. Meanwhile, mobile-assisted learning had been chosen as the main focus of the study by [3] that could assist the ESL learners to enhance their lexical knowledge. Catering the need of Alpha Generation (also known as iGeneration), especially in their learning process; is crucial. According to [4], Alpha generation is defined as the generation that was born in 2010 and onwards. They were born in the era that is rich in technologies and thus, they are exposed to the highly-immense usage of gadgets. Therefore, there is a need for educators to establish an interesting instructional design that could capture the interest of the learners as well as maximising the language competency especially in ESL classroom.

In that sense, gamified -learning is also considered as one of the most demanding instructional designs as it is parallel with the rapid growth of technology in education. [5] also support the use of gamified-learning which helps to accelerate the students' motivation towards learning and also provides better result of students' understanding of the targeted topics. In fact, [6] post similar views on the value of this gamified learning. In addition, according to [7], learning vocabulary is regarded as a tedious work; hence a lot of efforts are needed to understand the target words. He adds that games assist the teachers in classrooms by bringing fun and interesting elements into the teaching and hence; students find the language learning process more engaging and meaningful. Therefore, the aim of this study is to study the effectiveness of integrating Quizizz and Quizlet in learning English vocabulary among Year 2 primary school students of suburban area in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia based on Super Minds textbook, which is aligned systematically with Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Vocabulary Learning

Vocabulary is defined as a list of words that are known by a person [8]. [9] define vocabulary is a collection of words for a language or a list of words that might be used by the individual speakers of the language. Meanwhile, [10] proposes vocabulary comprises a collection of words that is frequently defined or translated, specialized terms or expressions that are used in a particular field, subject, area or subculture and all words in the language. Vocabulary learning is the heart of language learning [11]. It shows the importance of learning the lexical knowledge. By comprehending adequate vocabulary, it could increase the language competency among the learners namely the ESL learners. As stated earlier, many studies have been conducted in based on strategies on language learning. [12] focus on the use of gestures in vocabulary learning in ESL classroom. Meanwhile, according to [13], it is recommended that the teachers to identify the teaching strategies that meet the needs of the students specifically in vocabulary learning, thereby a meaningful teaching and learning could be established.

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2.2 Gamified Learning (Quizziz and Quizlet as Effective Game-Based Learning Tools)

According to [14], "gamification in learning and education is a collection of activities and processes to solve problems related to learning and education by using or applying the game elements." In other words, it means that a set of activities and tasks created based on the game mechanics that focusing on the educational purposes. In fact, gamified learning has been identified as one of the effective tools that could improve students' learning process [14]-[15]-[16]. There are many advantages of implementing gamification in learning as it captures learner's attention, motivates learners to accomplish the task (objective of the lesson), and promotes healthy competition and communication [16]. In Malaysia, gamification in learning has been mushrooming for the past ten years. Based on the study done [6], gamification helps the Malaysian ESL learners to improve their understanding towards grammar. In relation, there are studies conducted in Malaysia have shown the effectiveness of gamification towards the students' engagement in learning. [17]-[18]. Plus, gamification also assists the teachers to evaluate their instructional design based on the results of the students and also encourage the learners to assess their understanding towards the topic given based on their performances in the assigned gamified learning. It has been supported by [19] that gamification produces not only a great impact on learning but also in assessment. Quizlet is an educational application for the students and teachers to create and share online learning materials. Quizlet has become the most popular online educational service in the United States of America which is over than 50 million students and teachers use this application each month. Quizlet starts its application with a simple online learning tool and today Quizlet offers tools for the teachers and the students to make flashcards, practice spelling, play learning games, test the student's knowledge, collaborate with other students and more. According to [20], the flashcard feature in Quizlet can enhance students' vocabulary acquisition due to its modern digital learning approach, which is more interesting than a conventional classroom approach. They also claim that Quizlet might be a suitable medium for learning vocabulary. On the other hand, Quizziz is a free gamified quiz for every subject to play. It offers teachers the opportunity to create their own quiz or use the already made quizzes by the other teachers using this application. There are millions of teacher-created quiz in Quizziz. The students are able to answer the quiz provided by their teacher at their own pace as they can either choose to play a Live Game together with their friends or use Homework mode in order to complete the quiz and it also accommodates the teachers with the result of the students based on the assigned topics. (20). Besides, Quizziz also has the additional value in engaging students with this application and interacting with their classmates effectively because it provides levels, leaderboard, music, themes and friendly interfaces. Hence, in this current study, the researchers have integrated the application of Quizziz and Quizlet to produce an online module named Qletz-Noun You Know that is intended to assist the students to enhance their vocabulary knowledge.

2.3 Qletz: Noun –You-Know Online Module

QLETZ:Noun-You-Know module is created to meet the needs of the students in learning vocabulary. It is an online game-based learning module designed by integrating two web-based

study applications, Quizziz and Quizlet intended to improve the student's vocabulary. By creating a more interactive and exciting learning environment, QLETZ:Noun-You-Know module is aimed to bring colours to the classroom atmosphere during the vocabulary learning process [21] asserts online flashcards significantly play a role as an efficient vocabulary learning tool as students can do revision regarding vocabulary systematically with the aid of online flashcards. Hence, QLETZ:Noun-You-Know module has utilised the flashcard feature in Quizlet to produce a set of flashcards for each unit, respectively. The flashcards contain interesting images and their descriptions, which assist the students in acquiring new words, namely noun. With the aim to promote a healthy competition among the students, Quizziz is incorporated in the module to test their understanding of noun, not only individually but also as a group. [22] claim that a competitive learning environment can ensure the involvement of all learners throughout the lessons. Thus, from the Noun-You-Know module, the students are able to evaluate their own performance and it also opens the door to self-assessment. In fact, it allows the students to compete with their classmates in a healthy manner and produces a more interactive learning environment. Plus, this is also aligned with the CEFR-aligned School Based Assessment (CBA) that also promotes self-assessment among the students as well as encouraging the teachers to do formative assessment [23]. Hence, this module not only benefits the students but also the teachers. This online module is constructed to assist the teachers in teaching vocabulary in classrooms, specifically towards Year 2 students in primary schools as well as enhancing ESL students' vocabulary in the selected topics.



Fig. 1. Main page of QLETZ Noun-You-Know module

In order to ensure that the vocabulary learning process is in-line with the syllabus provided by the Ministry of Education, QLETZ:Noun-You-Know module is designed based on the topics taught in Year 2 textbook, Super Minds as shown at Fig. 1. QLETZ:Noun-You-Know module has adopted three topics; Unit 1: Free Time, Unit 2: The Old House and Unit 3: Get Dressed, which are based on topics 5 to 7 in the Super Minds textbook. It is listed in Table 1.

TABLE 1: TOPICS IN QLETZ:NOUN-YOU-KNOW MODULE

Topics in Super Minds textbook	Units in QLET: Noun-You-Know Module
Topic 5: Free Time	→ Unit 1: Free Time
Topic 6: The Old House	→ Unit 2: The Old House
Topic 7: Get Dressed	→ Unit 3: Get Dressed

The sequence of selected units is shown in Fig. 2. The learning units consist of flashcards and tests for each topic for the students to explore.



Fig 2. Learning Units in QLETZ: Noun-You-Know module

3 METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Action research is a process of systematic inquiry that seeks to improve social issues affecting the lives of everyday people [24]. [25] states that action research also facilitates teachers' emancipation when they are able to collect their own data for the benefit of themselves, their schools and classrooms. Therefore, this current study employs action research as it provides a better understanding about how to improve educational practices in the classrooms. For the purpose of this study, an action research was done based on the model proposed by [26]. The four steps involved are planning, acting, observing and reflecting.

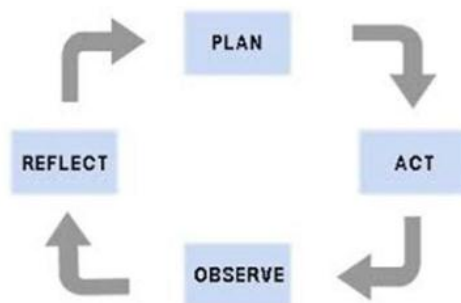


Figure 3: as cited in [26]

1) Planning

The first stage of this study was planning. The researchers identified the issue of vocabulary acquisition and develop a plan of action to solve the issue. Therefore, aim and the duration of intervention were determined. The material for the intervention and data collecting instrument were prepared at this stage.

2) Acting

The plan is being implemented where the students familiarise themselves with QLETZ Noun You Know with the guidance of the researcher.

3) Observing

Tests are carried out to observe the difference before and after implementing QLETZ Noun You Know.

4) Reflecting

The post test is then analysed to determine if the intervention has helped them.

Research Participants

The study was carried out in a school in Malaysia, which was a sub-urban school in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. 30 participants of the age 8 years old attended Year 2 of primary education in Malaysia and the pupils were selected through purposive sampling based on their proficiency level.

Research Instrument

The research instruments consist of tests and questionnaires. For the tests, pre-test and post-test were designed to measure pupils' understanding of the topic. Questions in the pre- and post-test are similar in terms of the content, structure and difficulty level. The data of pre-test and post-test were collected before and after the intervention.

Data collection procedure

Analysis

This innovative project utilises the action research method whereby pre and post-tests were employed. The intervention process (QLETZ: Noun-You-Know module) comes in between those two tests. This project involves 30 Year 2 intermediate to low proficiency primary students who are the students in one of the researchers' school. This project begins with the pre-test. Then, three days are needed for the students to use this module particularly Unit 1 on the first day, Unit 2 for the second day and Unit 3 on the last day. After the students have completed the three-day session, they are required to answer the post test in order to evaluate the students' performances and ultimately, the effectiveness of this module is determined.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

For this research, the pre-test and post-test were examined and compared to determine whether QLETZ: Noun You Know in vocabulary acquisition. The test scores were summarised in Table 2. The table recorded the participants' scores in pre-test and post-test for the modules in QLETZ Noun You Know.

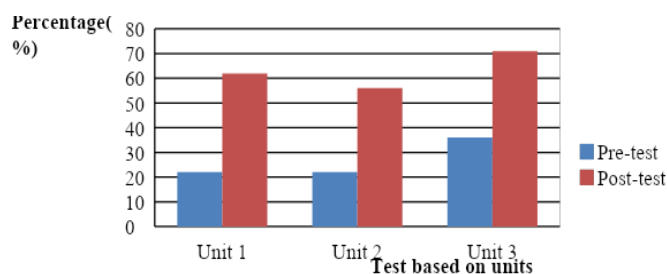
TABLE 2: RESULTS OF STUDENTS OBTAINED FROM PRE AND POST TESTS

No	Participants	Pre-test marks	Post-test marks	Margin of difference
1	Participant 1	7	12	5
2	Participant 2	8	14	6
3	Participant 3	8	15	7
4	Participant 4	4	11	7
5	Participant 5	6	14	8
6	Participant 6	6	15	9
7	Participant 7	6	16	10
8	Participant 8	10	16	6
9	Participant 9	6	14	8

10	Participant 10	6	13	7
11	Participant 11	9	13	4
12	Participant 12	8	14	6
13	Participant 13	8	11	3
14	Participant 14	6	16	10
15	Participant 15	6	15	9
16	Participant 16	5	16	11
17	Participant 17	8	14	6
18	Participant 18	9	16	7
19	Participant 19	4	13	9
20	Participant 20	3	13	10
21	Participant 21	2	14	12
22	Participant 22	1	15	14
23	Participant 23	7	16	9
24	Participant 24	2	16	14
25	Participant 25	3	15	12
26	Participant 26	3	13	10
27	Participant 27	1	12	11
28	Participant 28	1	11	10
29	Participant 29	2	10	8
30	Participant 30	2	10	8

From the table shown, there is a significant improvement between the pre-test and the post-test after the application of Quizziz and Quizlet in the QLETZ Noun-You-Know module. All participants managed to improve their scores in their post-test. It was evidenced in their post test result that they gained their self-confidence in responding to the tasks given. Throughout the sessions, the participants were guided by the researchers at first, before they completed the modules independently. With the time constraint and limited internet access, the participants managed to complete the modules within a week.

TABLE 3: RESULTS OF STUDENTS OBTAINED FROM PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST ACCORDING TO UNITS



28 out of 30 students or about 62% shows an improvement in Unit 1: Free Time. Between pre- and post-test of Unit 2: The Old House, there is an increment of 34% which is from 22% to 56%. Finally, for Unit 3: Get Dressed, it illustrates that the percentage of marks obtained by the students increases from 36% to 71%. Thus, it is very clear that this module has brought a positive change to the students' understanding of vocabulary, mainly on nouns. The results are shown in Fig.4. Students' attitude towards English learning shows a tremendous improvement after using this QLETZ: Noun-You-Know module. Researchers receive positive feedback from the students, generally due to the appealing flashcards and interesting activities in the module. Among positive remarks from random participants are "I love the game!", "Can I play again?", "English is best!" and "I like singing." Their English teacher also provides an encouraging feedback on this module and hopes that it will be applied continuously for the whole topics in Super Minds instead of three topics.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In conclusion, Quizlet and Quizziz are among the best gamified-learning applications which provide a great impact in accelerating students' understanding towards their learning, especially in vocabulary. By incorporating both applications in one complete module, it can holistically cover the scope of vocabulary acquisition among the students. Hence, this QLETZ: Noun-You-Know module can be considered as one of the creative and innovative ways of learning that not only boosts students' motivation towards learning, but also contributes to the improvement of academic performances, especially in the three stated topics in Superminds. In fact, the English teachers could also benefit from this module as it employs a creative and meaningful instructional design. Therefore, QLETZ: Noun-You-Know module has a high potential to be utilised widely for the whole topics in Super Minds textbook in the future.

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