QUIZLET'S IMPACTS ON EMI STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY AND LESSON COMPREHENSION AT HANOI UNIVERSITY OF INDUSTRY: A STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

TÁC ĐỘNG CỦA QUIZLET ĐẾN VIỆC VẬN DỤNG TỪ VỰNG VÀ HIỂU NỘI DUNG BÀI HỌC CỦA SINH VIÊN EMI TẠI TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC CÔNG NGHIỆP HÀ NỘI, TỪ GÓC NHÌN CỦA SINH VIÊN

Trinh Phuong Hoa[1], Ho Thi Bach Mai[1,*]

ABSTRACT

English as a medium of instruction (EMI) has become increasingly popular in higher education institutions worldwide, including Vietnam. However, many EMI students face challenges in understanding lesson content due to limited vocabulary knowledge. In recent years, digital tools such as Quizlet have been introduced as a potential solution to improve vocabulary mastery. This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of Quizlet in enhancing vocabulary mastery and understanding of lesson content for EMI students at the School of Languages and Tourism, Hanoi University of Industry, as perceived by the students themselves. A quantitative approach was employed, with over 70 students participating in the study through a questionnaire. The results show that Quizlet is perceived as an effective tool for vocabulary learning and understanding lesson content, with positive responses towards Quizlet usage, vocabulary mastery, and understanding of lesson content. The study suggests that Quizlet can be used as a valuable supplement to EMI teaching and learning, and provides insights for further research on the effectiveness of digital tools in EMI context.

Keywords: *Quizlet, EMI, vocabulary mastery, lesson content comprehension.*

TÓM TẮT

Việc sử dụng tiếng Anh là ngôn ngữ dạy và học (EMI) ngày càng trở nên phổ biến ở các cơ sở giáo dục đại học trên toàn thế giới và cả Việt Nam. Tuy nhiên, nhiều sinh viên EMI gặp khó khăn trong việc hiểu nội dung bài học do vốn từ vựng hạn chế. Các công cụ kỹ thuật số như Quizlet đã được đưa ra như một giải pháp để khắc phục khó khăn. Nghiên cứu nhằm khảo sát hiệu quả của Quizlet trong việc nâng cao khả năng nắm vững từ vựng và hiểu nội dung bài học của sinh viên EMI tại Trường Ngoại ngữ - Du lịch, Trường Đại học Công nghiệp Hà Nội, từ góc nhìn của sinh viên. Với 76 sinh viên tham gia thông qua khảo sát, kết quả cho thấy Quizlet được coi là một công cụ hiệu quả để học từ vựng, hiểu nội dung bài học, Quizlet có thể là một công cụ hỗ trợ có giá trị cho việc dạy và học EMI, đồng thời cung cấp thông tin để nghiên cứu sâu hơn về hiệu quả của các công cụ số trong các học phần EMI.

Từ khoá: *Quizlet, EMI, vốn từ vựng, khả năng hiểu bài.*

[1]School of Languages and Tourism, Hanoi University of Industry, Vietnam
*Email: maihtb@haui.edu.vn

1. INTRODUCTION

English as a medium of instruction (EMI) has gained popularity in higher education institutions worldwide, including Vietnam. EMI programs aim to prepare students for the globalized world and improve their English proficiency, but many EMI students face challenges in understanding lesson content due to limited vocabulary knowledge [4]. This limitation can hinder their academic performance and future career prospects. Therefore, improving vocabulary mastery is crucial for EMI students to succeed in their studies and beyond.

Given these challenges, there is a growing need for effective strategies to support EMI students in Vietnam. In recent years, digital tools such as Quizlet have been introduced as a potential solution to enhance vocabulary learning in language education. Quizlet is an online learning platform that allows users to create and study digital flashcards, quizzes, and games. It has gained popularity among students and educators as a tool for learning and reviewing information in various subjects, including languages [14].

Despite its popularity, there is limited research on the effectiveness of Quizlet in EMI context, especially from the students' perspective. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the effectiveness of Quizlet in enhancing vocabulary mastery and understanding of lesson content for EMI students at Hanoi University of Industry, as perceived by the students themselves. The research objectives are to (1) gain insights on how students use Quizlet to learn vocabulary, (2) explore the students' perceptions of Quizlet in vocabulary learning, and (3) examine the students' perceptions of how using Quizlet benefits understanding lesson content.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. English as a medium of instruction (EMI)

According to Dearden and Macaro [8], EMI refers to the provision of academic information in English in areas where

English is not the first language. For both students and instructors, EMI is thought to be a step toward internationalization. EMI expands lecturer mobility options and provides local university students with the skills they need to participate in professional settings globally. It also leads to courses that are open to foreign students, bridging language barriers to give higher education material to a larger audience. However, the application of EMI is not all positive. There have been concerns raised relating the possibility of 'linguistic imperialism' [3]. The difficulties that students have when learning complicated subject in a second language are also a source of concern [4], the intake of academic content supplied in a second language course to that of a first language course are also compared. It is also brought out that language concerns are not given enough weight on EMI courses [6]. Yet, Doiz, Lasagabaster, and Pavón emphasize the fact that EMI is a growing phenomenon.

2.2. Students' challenges in EMI courses

One of the main challenges faced by students in EMI courses is the vocabulary problem. Due to the different language structures between Vietnamese and English, students often struggle to understand and memorize the new vocabulary presented in the course materials. This problem is further compounded by the limited exposure to English language in everyday life, resulting in a lack of confidence in using English and difficulty in applying new vocabulary in practical situations. These difficulties can impact students' academic performance and ability to fully comprehend the content presented in the EMI courses [20].

Additionally, many EMI students face cultural and linguistic barriers when learning in a foreign language, as they may not have the necessary language proficiency to engage with their peers or fully participate in class discussions. This can lead to feelings of isolation and frustration, which can ultimately affect their motivation to learn and perform well in the course [20].

2.3. Vocabulary mastery and ability to understand lessons' content in EMI context

Vocabulary mastery is crucial for EMI students to understand lesson content and succeed academically [10]. EMI students need to be able to comprehend and use academic vocabulary to perform well in their studies and communicate effectively in the globalized world [7]. Therefore, improving vocabulary mastery is essential for EMI teaching and learning.

It is undeniable that vocabulary mastery is of critical importance for students studying in EMI contexts. A study by Santi et. al. [17] found that vocabulary size was positively correlated with reading comprehension in EMI students. This is supported by other research that has shown a significant relationship between vocabulary knowledge and academic achievement in general [12]. Therefore, students' ability to understand lesson content is greatly influenced by their mastery of vocabulary. As vocabulary is a key component of language proficiency, it is important to explore effective methods for students to improve their vocabulary knowledge and ultimately improve their ability to understand the lesson content. In recent years, digital tools have been increasingly utilized in language learning and vocabulary acquisition, and there is evidence to suggest their effectiveness [11]. In this context, the current study focuses on the use of Quizlet, a digital tool for vocabulary learning, and its potential to enhance EMI students' vocabulary mastery and ability to understand lesson content.

2.4. Quizlet and its effectiveness in EMI context

Digital tools have become increasingly popular in language education and vocabulary acquisition [14]. They offer various benefits, such as flexibility, interactivity, and accessibility [13]. Digital tools can provide a more engaging and personalized learning experience, cater to different learning styles, and facilitate self-directed learning [1]. Therefore, digital tools can be a valuable supplement to EMI teaching and learning.

Quizlet is an online learning platform that allows users to create and study digital flashcards, quizzes, and games. It has gained popularity among students and educators as a tool for learning and reviewing information in various subjects, including languages [14]. Quizlet offers various features, such as adaptive learning, spaced repetition, and gamification, that can enhance vocabulary learning [5]. Several studies have shown the effectiveness of Quizlet in vocabulary acquisition in various contexts [18, 19].

Despite its popularity, there is limited research on the effectiveness of Quizlet in EMI context. A study by Pham [16] on EMI students in Vietnam found that Quizlet was perceived as a useful tool for vocabulary learning and revision. Another study by Nguyen et al [15] on EMI students in Vietnam showed that Quizlet was effective in improving vocabulary learning, but its effectiveness varied depending on the types of exercises and the level of difficulty. Therefore, further research is needed to investigate the effectiveness of Quizlet in EMI context, especially from the students' perspective.

Overall, the literature suggests that vocabulary mastery is essential for EMI teaching and learning, and digital tools such as Quizlet can be a valuable supplement to enhance vocabulary acquisition. However, more research is needed to investigate the effectiveness of Quizlet in EMI context and its impact on students' perception and academic performance.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research setting

HaUI, one of leading application-oriented universities in Vietnam, has been providing high-quality graduates for industrialization, modernization, and global integration. Understanding the importance of English language proficiency in today's interconnected world, HaUI prioritizes English language teaching to equip its graduates with vital communication skills for international markets and collaborations. By emphasizing English language education,

HaUI ensures its graduates are linguistically competent, contributing to the country's socio-economic development and integration efforts.

As an inevitable trend, EMI has become increasingly popular in Vietnam as it allows students to learn in a global context and gain international exposure. Many universities and colleges in Vietnam have adopted EMI courses, including SLT - HaUI. To compete with other national and international universities, SLT has expanded more EMI courses in different programs to meet requirements of the labor market. EMI courses at SLT are offered for students with good grades in the English test entrance examination to university. Since this test is oriented to test high school students in a traditional method, it is completely different from EMI courses. This also creates some challenges for lecturers when designing materials, teaching, and assessing students in EMI context.

3.2. Data Collection

This study employs a quantitative research design using a survey to identify students' perceptions towards Quizlet usage, vocabulary mastery by using Quizlet, and ability to understand EMI lesson content when mastering vocabulary. The survey aims to gather numerical data that can be analyzed statistically to show the significance of variables under investigation.

According to Burns [2], it is clearly stated that "a quantitative is used to gain a precise numerical pictures of the issues, to gain a concise numerical picture of the issues; to characterize or describe a set of numbers; to show numbers succinctly in terms of averages, frequencies, percentages; and to show how numbers disperse or vary around a central point." By conducting a survey with an interval scale, the researcher can gain insights about the extent (from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5)).

76 EMI students from SLT - HaUI were invited to fill in the online questionnaire related to the research. The participants are chosen using a convenience sampling technique due to time constraints and limited resources. The participants are expected to have used Quizlet in their language learning activities before participating in the study.

Data collection for this study is through a survey conducted online. The survey includes 5 point Likert-scale items related to three main groups of questions with 1 equals to "Strongly disagree" and 5 equals to "Strongly agree"

The data collected from the survey will be analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine the participants' perceptions towards Quizlet usage, vocabulary mastery after using Quizlet, and ability to understand lesson content after mastering vocabulary. The statistical analysis will include mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution to test the significance of variables under investigation.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

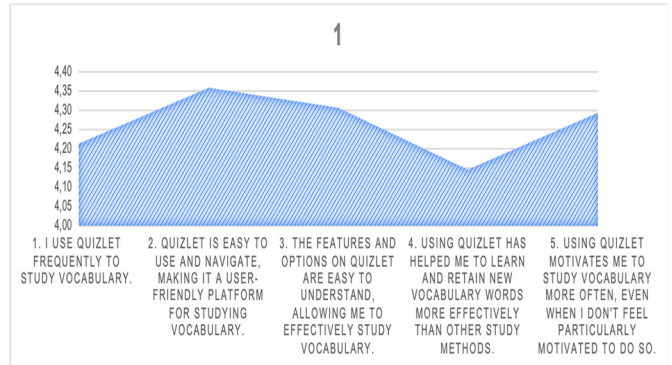### 4.1. Students' self-studying learning habit and motivation while using Quizlet

Figure 1. Students' perception of the general usage of Quizlet

Figure 1 presents students' learning vocabulary through Quizlet. The number of students using Quizlet is significant with a mean of 4.26. Thanks to a user-friendly platform and comprehend functions, students can easily use Quizlet in different devices anywhere at any time. Compared to other traditional methods, Quizlet can be considered as more effective by a majority of students with a mean of 4.15. Overall, Quizlet had a positive impact on inspiring students to study vocabulary. With a mean of 4.2, students expressed their preference for Quizlet to be motivated for vocabulary studying.

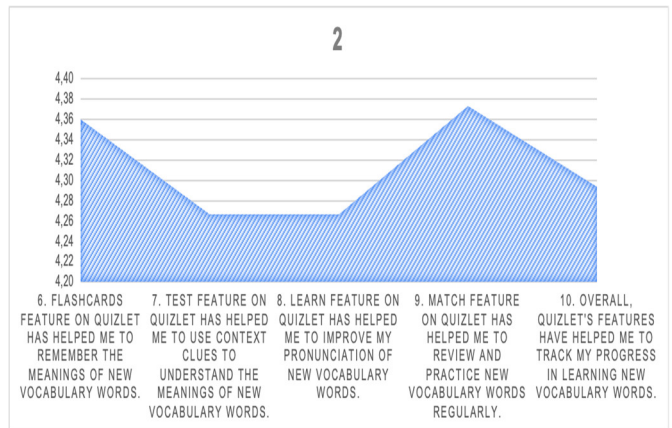### 4.2. Students can master vocabulary through Quizlet

Figure 2. Quizlet and Vocabulary mastery

To highlight the impact of Quizlet on mastering vocabulary, Figure 2 shows the majority of students' positive responses. Quizlet offers some functions to help learners achieve their goals, especially in vocabulary. The "Flashcards" function is mostly used to remember the definitions of terminology, both in Vietnamese and English. By using the "Learn" function, most participants strongly agree that this feature can also improve their pronunciation, which is beneficial for listening and speaking in class (with a mean of 4.27 for agreement). With the "Test" feature on Quizlet, it is beneficial for students to understand the meanings of new vocabulary words in specific contexts

(with a mean of 4.27 for agreement). In addition, the majority of students agreed that the "Match" function is helpful to review vocabulary in a funny way, which increases the effectiveness of learning (with a mean of 4.37). Overall, the statistics show the positive responses towards Quizlet usage in order to master vocabulary.

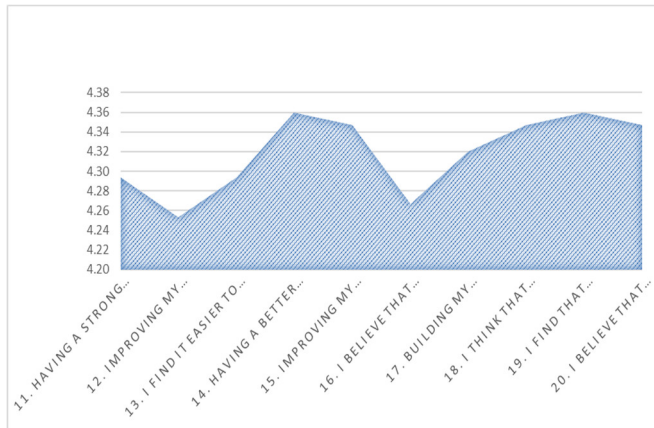### 4.3. Students' ability to comprehend EMI lessons

Figure 3. Students' perception on Quizlet, vocabulary mastery and their ability to understand lesson content in EMI classes

When mastering vocabulary in EMI context, students can confidently and actively participate in EMI lectures. For all EMI courses at SLT, students must complete different tasks in three phases of study. Before attending the lecture, students are required to gain basic knowledge about the unit by reading materials and completing tasks online. Most students (a mean of 4.27) show their agreement on the effectiveness of Quizlet in preparing the lesson before class. This would lead to confidence when attending lectures. During each lesson, lecturers may ask students to have a group discussion or to answer some revision questions. Thus, improving vocabulary can strengthen students' ability to actively participate in different activities. The majority of students agreed on the importance of vocabulary in EMI lectures (with a mean of 4.33). To help students better revise the lessons, mini-tests are designed in the form of multiple-choice questions. Students with good vocabulary can easily complete mini-tests with good marks. Overall, Figure 3 shows the positive responses towards students' ability to comprehend EMI lessons after acquiring vocabulary.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the research aimed to explore students' perceptions towards Quizlet usage and its impact on their vocabulary mastery and understanding of lesson content. The research highlighted the importance of Quizlet in EMI context. The findings of the research indicated that students had a positive perception of using Quizlet to master vocabulary, and they believed that it significantly improved their understanding of lesson content. The study's implications showed that Quizlet has a positive impact on EMI context and can be used as an additional tool to improve students' vocabulary.

The results of this research have practical implications for EMI lecturers and institutions, indicating the potential benefits of using Quizlet as a learning tool to support students' vocabulary development and understanding of lesson content. Further research can focus on the effectiveness of Quizlet on students' academic performance in EMI settings, including its impact on other language skills such as reading, writing, and speaking.

However, the study has some limitations that may affect the results. Firstly, the study uses convenience sampling, which may not be representative of the entire population. Secondly, the survey is the only data collection method, which limits the data's reliability and validity. Thirdly, the study only focuses on EMI students at Hanoi University of Industry, limiting the generalizability of the study's findings. Finally, due to time constraints, the survey can only be conducted for a small group of students, limiting the study's scope and generalizability.

TÀI LIỆU THAM KHẢO

[1]. Bachman L. F., Palmer A. S., 2010. *Language assessment in practice: Developing language assessments and justifying their use in the real world*. Oxford University Press.

[2]. Burns A., 2010. *Doing action research in English Language Teaching. A guide for practitioners*. Routledge. 118-119.

[3]. Canagarajah S., 1999. *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism in English Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[4]. Carloni G., 2018. *English-Taught Programs and Scaffolding in CLIL Settings. A Case Study*. La Didattica delle lingue nel nuovo millenio, le sfide dell'internazionalizzazione. Edited by Carmel Mary Coonan et al. Venice: Edizioni Ca' Foscari, 483-497.

[5]. Chaikovska O., Zbaravska L., 2020. *The efficiency of Quizlet-based EFL vocabulary learning in preparing undergraduates for state English exam*. Advanced Education, 14, 84-90.

[6]. Costa F., Coleman J. M., 2013. *A Survey of English-Medium Instruction in Italian Higher Education*. International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 16.1, 3-19.

[7]. Dearden J., 2019. *English as a medium of instruction: A growing global phenomenon*. British Council.

[8]. Dearden J., Macaro E., 2016. *Higher Education Teachers' Attitudes towards English Medium Instruction: A Three-Country Comparison*. Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching, 6.3, 455-486.

[9]. Doiz Aintzane, David L. Víctor P., 2019. *The Integration of Language and Content in English-Medium Instruction Courses: Lecturers' Beliefs and Practices*. Iberica, 38,151-176.

[10]. Hajebi M., Taheri S., Fahandezh F., Salari H., 2018. *The Role of Web-based Language Teaching on Vocabulary Retention of Adult Pre-intermediate EFL Learners*. Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp. 372-378.

[11]. Hanghoi, et al., 2022. *Digital games, literacy and language learning in L1 and L2, A comparative systematic review*. L1-Educational Studies in Language and Literature, 22, 1-44.

[12]. Hu M., Nation I. S. P., 2000. *Unknown vocabulary density and reading comprehension.* Reading in a Foreign Language, 13(1), 403-430.

[13]. Kukulska-Hulme A., Shield L., 2008. *An overview of mobile assisted language learning: From content delivery to supported collaboration and interaction*. ReCALL, 20(3), 271-289.

[14]. Kuo Y.C., Walker A. E., Schroder K. E. E., Belland B. R., 2014. *Interaction, internet self-efficacy, and self-regulated learning as predictors of student satisfaction in online education courses*. The Internet and Higher Education, 20, 35-50.

[15]. Nguyen T. T., Nguyen D. T., Nguyen D. L. Q. K., Mai H. H., Le T. T. X., 2021. *Quizlet as a Tool for Enhancing Autonomous Learning of English Vocabulary*. AsiaCALL Online Journal, 13(1), 150-165.

[16]. Pham A. T. 2022. *University Students' Perceptions on the Use of Quizlet in Learning Vocabulary*. International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (iJET), 17(07), pp. 54-63.

[17]. Santi E., Kholipa R., Putri M.G., Mujiono, 2021. *Reading interest strength and vocabulary acquisition of EFL learners: A meta- analysis*. Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies, 17(3), 1225-1242.

[18]. Sanosi A.B., 2018. *The effect of Quizlet on vocabulary acquisition*. Asian Journal of Education and e-Learning, 6(4), 71-77

[19]. Sen N. S., 2021. *A Critical Review on the Mobile Assisted Language Learning with a Focus on Empirical Studies*. Journal of Learning and Teaching in Digital Age, 2021, 6(2),117-126

[20]. Tsou W.L., Kao S.M. 2017. *Overview of EMI development. In English as a Medium of Instruction in Higher Education: Implementations & classroom practices in Taiwan*. Springer Singapore, 3-18.

THÔNG TIN TÁC GIẢ

Trịnh Phương Hoa, Hồ Thị Bạch Mai

Trường Ngoại ngữ - Du lịch, Trường Đại học Công nghiệp Hà Nội