The Role of Perceived Ease of Use in the Adoption of Quizlet for Vocabulary Acquisition in Chinese EFL Contexts

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Abstract:- This study investigates the perceived ease of use of Quizlet among Chinese college English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, focusing on vocabulary acquisition. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, the research combined quantitative data from a survey (n = 95) and qualitative insights from semi-structured interviews (n = 24) following an 8-week Quizlet intervention. The quantitative results revealed high satisfaction with Quizlet, evidenced by a mean score of 3.96 on a 5-point Likert scale, highlighting its intuitive interface and multimedia features. Qualitative findings supported these results, identifying key themes such as user-friendly navigation, ease of becoming proficient and effective vocabulary learning through interactive modules. The study emphasizes the critical role of user-centered design in educational technology, suggesting that well-designed tools like Quizlet can significantly improve vocabulary acquisition and learner engagement. These insights advance the understanding of digital tool adoption in EFL contexts and offer practical recommendations for educators and developers.

Keywords:- EFL, Quizlet, Perceived Ease of Use, Vocabulary Acquisition, Technology Acceptance, Educational Technology

I. INTRODUCTION

The integration of digital tools into language education has profoundly transformed how learners acquire new languages. Among these tools, Quizlet, a popular online learning platform featuring flashcard-based study modes, has gained notable traction, particularly in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. Quizlet offers a variety of interactive features designed to enhance vocabulary acquisition, including modes such as "Learn," "Flashcards," "Write," and "Match." These features cater to diverse learning preferences and have been reported to improve vocabulary retention (Chien, 2015; Dizon, 2016). As digital tools become increasingly embedded in educational practices, understanding learners' perceptions of these tools is essential for optimizing their effectiveness.

Digital game-based learning, including platforms like Quizlet, has been recognized for its capacity to engage learners and enhance vocabulary acquisition. Research highlights that game-based tools can foster increased motivation, engagement, and autonomy (Ghafar & Noor, 2017; Janebi & Haghighatpasand, 2019; Son, 2018). These tools offer interactive and enjoyable platforms for learning, which can contribute significantly to effective vocabulary acquisition (Rabu & Talib, 2017). However, the perceived ease of use of such tools plays a critical role in their successful adoption and continued use (Aurangzeeb, 2024).

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), developed by Davis (1989), provides a foundational framework for understanding technology adoption. According to TAM, perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness are key determinants of technology acceptance. Perceived ease of use refers to the degree to which users believe that using a system will be free of effort, while perceived usefulness pertains to the belief that the system will enhance performance. This study specifically focuses on perceived ease of use, as understanding how easily learners can interact with Quizlet is crucial for its integration into educational settings.

Several studies have explored the effectiveness of digital tools, including Quizlet, for vocabulary learning. While effectiveness is a key area of research, this study narrows its focus to perceived ease of use. Evidence suggests that mobile-assisted learning tools can be more effective than traditional methods (Lin & Lin, 2019; Mahdi, 2017). Additionally, digital flashcards have been recognized for their efficiency in vocabulary learning (Lei & Reynolds, 2022; Nakata, 2019). Building on previous research, such as Duarte (2019) and Dizon (2016), which examined Quizlet's ease of use, this study provides a context-specific investigation within Chinese EFL learners.

The current study aims to fill a gap in the literature by focusing exclusively on the perceptions of ease of use among Chinese college EFL learners. Understanding these perceptions is crucial for informing the development of more effective and user-friendly digital learning tools. The findings will contribute to the growing body of literature on digital game-based vocabulary learning and offer insights into how

such tools can be better integrated into language learning curricula.

II. METHODOLOGY

➢ *Research Design*

This study utilized a mixed methods approach to investigate the perceived ease of use of Quizlet among college EFL learners. By combining quantitative and qualitative methods, the study integrated statistical analysis with in-depth personal insights, providing a holistic understanding of the topic (Creswell, 2014). The intervention involved an 8-week period during which participants used Quizlet as a supplementary tool for vocabulary learning. Students were encouraged to actively engage with various features of the platform to enhance their vocabulary acquisition.

➢ *Participants*

The study included 95 college EFL learners from two intact classes at a private college in Shandong Province, China. These learners used Quizlet as a supplementary tool for vocabulary acquisition in their English courses. To gain deeper insights into variations in perceptions across proficiency levels, 24 participants were selected for semi-structured interviews.

➢ *Instruments*

The survey questionnaire included demographic questions and items assessing perceived ease of use, adapted from Davis's (1989) TAM. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree.' To ensure clarity and comprehension, the survey was administered in Chinese (Mackey & Gass, 2021). The

questionnaire demonstrated high reliability with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.973.

➢ *Data Collection*

Quantitative data were gathered via a web-based survey administered through the 'Wen Juan Xing' platform, selected for its cost-effectiveness and efficiency in data processing (Cohen et al., 2018). Semi-structured interviews were conducted using Tencent conferencing software, recorded, and transcribed. To ensure the validity of the qualitative data, member checking was implemented, allowing participants to review and confirm their transcriptions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Each interview, lasting between 15 and 25 minutes, provided detailed insights into participants' experiences with Quizlet.

➢ *Data Analysis*

Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize participants' demographic information and their overall perceptions of Quizlet's ease of use. The qualitative data from the interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis as described by Braun and Clarke (2006). This analysis followed six steps: familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and writing up the findings. This systematic approach facilitated a thorough exploration of recurring themes and patterns, providing a comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences with Quizlet.

III. FINDINGS

A. *Quantitative Analysis*

The quantitative analysis demonstrated that Chinese college EFL learners generally found Quizlet easy to use. Detailed descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Perceived Ease of Use of Quizlet

Item	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. The Quizlet website and/or mobile app was clear and understandable.	3.97	0.798	Positive
2. For me, it is easy to learn English vocabulary through Quizlet.	3.81	0.802	Positive
3. For me, it is easy to learn English receptive vocabulary knowledge through Quizlet.	3.94	0.816	Positive
4. For me, it is easy to learn English productive vocabulary knowledge through Quizlet.	3.88	0.769	Positive
5. For me, it is easy to become skillful in using Quizlet.	4.15	0.762	Positive
6. For me, it is easy to use Quizlet.	3.97	0.837	Positive
Overall Perceived Ease of Use	**3.96**	**0.653**	**Positive**

The findings reveal that Chinese college EFL learners generally perceive Quizlet as an easy-to-use tool for vocabulary learning, with an overall mean score of 3.96 (SD = 0.653). The highest ratings were given for the platform's clarity and understandability (M = 3.97, SD = 0.798) and the ease of becoming skillful in using it (M = 4.15, SD = 0.762), indicating that learners found Quizlet intuitive and accessible. The ease of learning receptive vocabulary knowledge (M = 3.94, SD = 0.816) and productive vocabulary knowledge (M = 3.88, SD = 0.769) were also positively rated, though slightly lower. The overall ease of using Quizlet was similarly well-regarded (M = 3.97, SD = 0.837). These results suggest that Quizlet is viewed as a user-friendly and effective platform for

enhancing English vocabulary skills among this group of learners.

B. *Qualitative Data*

The qualitative data, collected through semi-structured interviews, provided deeper insights into the quantitative findings. Thematic analysis identified three main themes related to Quizlet's ease of use:

➢ *User-Friendly Interface*

Participants frequently described Quizlet's interface as intuitive and easy to navigate. One participant noted, "The interface is straightforward. I quickly figured out how to use all the features without confusion" (Student 22). Another

mentioned, "The instructions were easy to follow, and there were no complicated features" (Student 4). This consistent feedback highlights the importance of a clear and accessible interface in enhancing the user experience.

> *Ease of Becoming Proficient*

Learners reported that becoming proficient in using Quizlet was straightforward. A participant stated, "It was a bit challenging at first, but I quickly became skilled with regular use" (Student 7). Another shared, "Using Quizlet is quite intuitive, especially since we are generally good with mobile phones" (Student 14). This theme emphasizes the platform's design, which allows for quick adaptation and skill development.

> *Effective Vocabulary Learning*

Participants appreciated Quizlet's multimedia features, such as visual aids and interactive modules, which facilitated vocabulary learning. One participant remarked, "The pictures associated with the words help a lot in remembering them better" (Student 9). Another highlighted the multi-sensory approach, "Quizlet's integration of pictures and sounds makes learning more effective" (Student 21). The diverse modules, including flashcards, spelling tests, and matching games, were particularly valued for offering varied learning experiences catering to different learning styles.

IV. DISCUSSION

The findings align with previous research, underscoring the significance of perceived ease of use in the adoption of educational technologies (Davis, 1989; Duarte, 2019). Quizlet's user-friendly interface and engaging features were identified as key factors contributing to its positive reception among Chinese college EFL learners. These results suggest that when digital tools are designed with intuitive navigation and engaging content, they can significantly enhance the learning experience, making it more effective and enjoyable.

The study also highlights the importance of contextual factors in shaping learners' perceptions. The participants' positive feedback on Quizlet's interface and features may reflect broader cultural attitudes towards technology and learning. Additionally, the ability to access Quizlet across multiple devices aligns with the growing trend of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL), supporting findings by Mahdi (2017) that mobile platforms can enhance learning flexibility and accessibility.

While the overall perceptions of Quizlet were positive, some participants expressed a preference for more diverse learning tools beyond digital games. This observation mirrors the findings of Li et al. (2020), indicating a need for a variety of educational resources to cater to different learning styles and preferences. Furthermore, the study corroborates the findings of Rabu and Talib (2017), who emphasized the motivational and engaging aspects of digital games in education, highlighting the role of interactivity and immediate feedback in enhancing the learning experience.

In conclusion, the study contributes to the understanding of digital game-based learning tools, like Quizlet, as effective aids in vocabulary acquisition. The positive perception of Quizlet's ease of use corroborates the TAM's assertion that ease of use is a critical determinant in technology adoption (Davis, 1989). Moreover, the appreciation for Quizlet's multimedia features aligns with the literature, which suggests that interactive and multisensory learning experiences enhance vocabulary retention (Chien, 2015; Dizon, 2016). These insights are crucial for educators and developers aiming to optimize digital learning tools for language education.

V. IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The findings of this study have practical implications for educators and developers of digital learning tools. For educators, incorporating tools like Quizlet into teaching strategies can provide a more engaging and effective way to learn vocabulary, particularly for EFL learners who may benefit from visual and interactive content. It is recommended that educators guide students in the initial stages of using such tools, as indicated by the participants' initial learning curve.

For developers, the study underscores the importance of a clear and intuitive interface. Ensuring that features are easily accessible and user-friendly can significantly enhance the learning experience. Additionally, incorporating multimodal elements such as images, sounds, and interactive exercises can cater to diverse learning preferences and enhance the overall effectiveness of the tool.

VI. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

This study has limitations that should be addressed in future research. The sample size and focus on a single institution limit the generalizability of the findings. Future studies could explore the use of Quizlet across different educational contexts and with a more diverse sample. Additionally, a longitudinal study could provide insights into the long-term effects of using Quizlet on vocabulary retention and overall language proficiency. Furthermore, examining the impact of Quizlet on different aspects of language learning beyond vocabulary, such as grammar or listening skills, could provide a more comprehensive understanding of its utility in EFL education.

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