

**USING QUIZZZ.COM TO ENHANCE PRE-  
INTERMEDIATE STUDENTS' VOCABULARY  
KNOWLEDGE**

**Orta Düzey Öğrencilerin Kelime Bilgisini Arttırmak İçin**

**Quizizz.Com Kullanımı**

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**Abstract**

As the previous research indicates, information and communication technologies play an important role and have a great potential in foreign language teaching. It is also obvious that mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) significantly affects the learning process among foreign language learners. There are many studies which have been conducted to see the possible outcomes of integrating computer into foreign language education; however, there are not enough studies to see the effects of mobile applications on language education; there are many popular applications such as Kahoot, Quizizz, Quizlet and Edpuzzle for educational purposes, though. As a still growing area, MALL research needs to expand so that it covers different contexts and age groups. This current study aims to investigate the relationship between MALL and vocabulary learning. In this study, 60 students who study at a university in Turkey were divided into two groups and they have been observed over a 4 week period and an achievement test was administered to both groups. The experimental group used an app called "Quizizz" during these 4 weeks and the control group went on learning vocabulary through traditional paper-based activities. Results from this observation and the test show that the experiment group slightly outscored the control group. However, no significant difference was observed between the scores of these two groups.

**Keywords:** Mobile-assisted language learning, vocabulary learning, foreign language teaching, ICT.

**Öz**

Önceki çalışmaların gösterdiği üzere, bilgi ve iletişim teknolojileri yabancı dil eğitimde önemli bir rol oynamakta ve büyük bir potansiyele sahip olmaktadır. Mobil Destekli Dil Eğitimi (MALL) de aynı zamanda yabancı dil öğrenme sürecini taşınabilirlik, canlı görseller, ilgi çekici materyaller, bireysel ve öğrenciler arası etkileşim sunması gibi imkanlar sayesinde önemli derecede etkilemektedir. Fakat, hala büyüyen bir alan olmasının yanı sıra, Mobil Destekli Dil Öğretimi araştırmaları ilerleyerek daha çok çevreyi, ortamı ve yaş grubunu kapsamaması gerekmektedir. Bu sebeple bu çalışma üniversite eğitimi gören 18-24 yaş grubundaki B1 seviyesindeki öğrencilerde Mobil Destekli Dil Öğretimi ve kelime öğrenimi arasındaki ilişkiyi anlamaya; araştırmaya çalışmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, Türkiye'deki bir üniversitede eğitim gören 60 öğrenci iki gruba ayrılmış ve 4 haftalık bir periyotta gözlemlenmiştir. Deney grubu Quizizz adlı bir uygulamayı 4 hafta boyunca kullanarak kelime öğrenimini ve testini buradan gerçekleştirmiş; diğer grup ise geleneksel kağıt aktiviteleri ile kelime öğrenmeye devam etmiştir. 4 hafta sonunda, bu çalışmada deney grubunun kontrol grubunu çok hafif farkla geçse de iki grup arasında kayda değer bir fark olmadığı tespit edilmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kelime öğrenimi, yabancı dil eğitimi, mobil uygulamalar, teknoloji destekli dil eğitimi.

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## 1. Introduction

Learning language necessitates developing listening and reading skills, defined as receptive skills; and speaking and writing skills, called as productive skills. To be capable of using these skills in an effective way, learners need to have a certain knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, which are both called sub-skills. If we compare these sub-skills, vocabulary has a more vital role in language learning process and it has started to get much attention by researchers (Alqahtani, 2015; Cameron, 2001; Marion, 2008; Read, 2000; Schmitt, 2000). Students cannot express themselves or understand the language just through grammar knowledge; but they can use the language and interpret the input at a certain level thanks to vocabulary knowledge and it is essential to acquire a second language (Schmitt, 2000; Thomas et. al., 2002; Wagner et al., 2007; Marion, 2008). Vocabulary knowledge enables learners to interpret the input and let them turn these input to output through an interpreting process.

It is clear that vocabulary plays an important role in the language learning process and that's why teachers try to teach vocabulary through some techniques and methods through definitions, self-defining context, antonyms, synonyms, dramatization, pictures and drawings, realia, illustrative sentences and some other techniques (Mehta, 2009).

However, this century offers us some other choices beside the current techniques and methods thanks to the technological developments seen in the last decades. Technologies have resulted in important changes in the process of teaching and learning (Pavlik, 2015). Computers and mobile phones are used by millions of people and they are benefited from in every aspect of our daily lives. Especially smart phones have become an essential part of our life because *“Mobile devices could open new doors with their unique qualities such as accessibility, personalizability, and portability”* (Saran and Seferoglu, 2010). Considering these facts, teachers can try to integrate these changes into their classes and utilize these smart phones and computers in classes. To achieve that, many apps have been developed and are sold in online markets by developers and these applications are offered to teachers and learners to make language learning more effective. Recent technological developments have definitely fostered learning and teaching in classes. Ball (2011) states that it increases learner autonomy and motivation; enables transferability of skills to the real-life; let students get instant feedback and make it easier for students to track progress of their goals.

Some teachers and learners have already started benefiting from these apps and websites and they have become very popular all over the world; some of these popular apps are Kahoot, Quizlet, Quizizz, Busuu and Voscreen. Beside these, there are many other apps and websites which have different techniques but somehow similar educational aims.

Many studies have been published on mobile apps or computers for language learning (Basal et al., 2016; Böhm & Constantine, 2016; Gezgın et al., 2018; Godwin-Jones, 2011; Kétyi, 2015; Nushi & Eqbali, 2017). However, this study focuses on two groups of A2 level students' vocabulary classes at a university in Turkey, one of which was chosen as the experimental group taught with “Quizizz” which has an app version and online website version, and the other one was chosen as the control group taught with traditional methods. The study will firstly review the previous research in this field and then will report on the design, content and objective of the current study. Finally, it will present and compare the data, discuss the results, and reach a conclusion.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Students' Attitudes**

There are some studies which investigated the attitude of students to mobile assisted language learning through some questionnaires and interviews, and found a positive attitude (Alemi et al., 2012; Gezgin et al., 2018; Jaradat, 2014; Kukulska & Hulme, 2010; Kutluk & Gülmez, 2014; Lu, 2008; Suwantarathip & Orawiwatnakul, 2015) For instance, Jaradat (2014) investigated the performance of students comparing the before and after using the mobile app to learn French. 36 students participated in the study for 2 semesters and the data collected in both formal and informal settings. A survey was applied and 10 students were randomly chosen to conduct interviews. The result of the study showed that 76% of the students preferred to get French classes on mobile rather than in classroom or on a computer, and 90% of the students stated that they were satisfied with the mobile app.

### **2.2 Previous Research**

As mentioned before, there are many studies on technology use in education (Alemi et al., 2012; Basal et al. 2016; Böhm and Constantine 2016; Gezgin et al., 2018; Jaradat, 2014; Kétyi, 2015; Kukulska & Hulme, 2010; Kutluk & Gülmez, 2014; Lu, 2008; Nushi & Eqbali, 2017; Suwantarathip and Orawiwatnakul, 2015). Although there are a few studies which were made years ago, learning and teaching through mobile apps has started to become more popular and usable in classrooms in recent years. Regarding those studies and research, it can be seen that they generally have created significant differences but there are some studies which couldn't find significant differences. Firstly, this research After reviewing some of these studies on mobile assisted language learning (MALL), which found significant differences between their experimental and control groups, we will analyze the ones which did not identify any important differences.

Suwantarathip and Orawiwatnakul (2015) conducted a study to see whether any differences existed between paper-based vocabulary exercises and SMS messages sent to learners to teach new vocabulary. It lasted for 6 weeks and the group getting the messages to learn the target vocabulary outperformed the control group. While Suwantarathip and Orawiwatnakul (2015) compared the paper-based exercises with SMS messages; Wu (2012) compared SMS messages with a mobile app.

Wu (2015) created an app for mobile phones, which is called Word Learning-CET6 with the aim of teaching vocabulary to 70 Chinese students in two ways. The experimental group used the app CET6 to learn the vocabulary while the other group studied the vocabulary through text messages. The posttest results showed a significant achievement difference between these two groups favoring the experimental group.

Azabdaftari (2012) had a study of vocabulary teaching through flashcards and Spaced Repetition System, which is a mobile-based program. There were 80 students and half of them formed the control group while the other half formed the experimental group. This study lasted for 7 weeks. The group using mobile-app outperformed the other group with a significant difference on a posttest of a 20 item multiple-choice. Moreover, Başoğlu and Akdemir (2010) also carried out a similar study. They compared the differences between using a mobile app of flashcards and paper-based flashcards in learning vocabulary. There were 2 groups and each group had 30 university students. The control group studied vocabulary on paper-based flashcards while the experimental group studied the

vocabulary on a mobile-app of flashcards. After 6 weeks, a posttest was administered, in which the experimental group outscored the other group.

Boticki, Wong et. al. (2011) studied 37 Chinese students at a primary school, who played a game of Chinese character formation. There were two versions of the game, the first of which was played on smart phones while the other version was paper-based. The posttest revealed that the learners who used the mobile app performed better than the learners who played the paper-based version. Alemi, Sarab et al. (2012) conducted research on a mobile phone-based SMS vocabulary program involving 45 students who studied 320 headwords for 16 weeks. The experimental group received example sentences twice a week and the other group studied the vocabulary by using a dictionary. Whereas the posttest found no significant differences, the experimental group performed significantly better on the delayed posttest.

Besides all these studies above, Amer, (2010) Ally, Tin et. al. (2011), Baleghizadeh and Oladrostam (2010) applied MALL and found positive results. However, some other studies revealed no significant differences. For instance, Derakhshan and Kaivanpanah (2011) conducted a study which lasted 7 weeks. A control group of 22 students and an experimental group of 21 attended the study and the experimental group used a mobile-based SMS program. They were taught 15-20 words per session and they were supposed to write down a sentence for each word. A posttest and a delayed posttest were held later, which showed no important difference between these groups.

Hung, H-C et. al. (2009) investigated the effectiveness of WiCFG, which is a tablet PC-based game on learning vocabulary. 32 students attended the study; half of them (control group) played the paper-based version of the game while the experimental group played WiCFG. After a while, students' motivation, attitude and learning outcome were analyzed and WiCFG was found to be effective for low-proficiency learners, but not for high-proficiency learners.

In their study, Hsieh, Chiu et. al. (2010) compared two groups of students. The experimental group used a mobile writing app to enhance their writing skills in Chinese, while the control group did not use the app. On the posttest, the experimental group outperformed the other group just in terms of the mean gain scores; on the other hand, there were no significant difference in the abilities of personification, simile, description, hyperbole and repetition.

### **2.3 Research Questions**

Research questions of this study are;

1. How effective is Quizizz.com in teaching Vocabulary for university students?
2. Is it possible to see a significant improvement in a short time for the experimental group?

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Design

This study aimed to see how effective “Quizziz” is in vocabulary learning and teaching when it is compared to traditional activities in classrooms. “Quizziz” was chosen to be applied in English classes with the aim of enhancing the vocabulary knowledge of the learners since it has a mobile application in play market of Android and app store of IOS and can be used as a website through browsers on a computer and it offers live quizzes and online homework. Therefore, it was selected as the best alternative. In this study, the experimental group of A2-level learners completed the vocabulary exercises and assignments through Quizziz, and their results were compared with those of the group completing the traditional paper-based activities. An achievement test was held to compare the achievement differences after 4 weeks for both of the groups.

#### 3.2 Participants

The participants of this study were 60 engineering faculty students in Turkey. All of the participants were male and their proficiency level was pre-intermediate. They were first year students (freshmen) and they were divided into two groups whose teachers were different. The first group was the experimental group using the app for four weeks and the other group was the control group, which was taught vocabulary through traditional paper-based activities.

#### 3.3 Data Analysis

The students are taught English with the main course book of “Life 2”. Each unit has some vocabulary sections and the students are supposed to know the words included in each unit when they take their mid-term and final exams. The participants studied these words in different ways as mentioned above, and at the end they took an achievement test of 40 multiple choice items. The scores of this exam were used as the data and analyzed to reach some conclusions.

#### 3.4 Procedures

Two groups of 1<sup>st</sup> grade students who studied the same English course book were selected to be included as the participants in this study. Because their classes were formed by proficiency level, these two groups had the same proficiency level: A2.

The experimental group practiced the vocabulary on “Quizziz” on mobile phones while the control group was given vocabulary worksheets for four weeks. Every week, a worksheet and an online quiz of target vocabulary were delivered to the students. The content of the materials of these two groups were the same. After this process was completed, the students took an exam, which included 40 multiple-choice items covering the previous worksheets and online quizzes on this vocabulary, and the scores of this exam were used as the data.

### 4. Results

When it comes to compare the results, it is seen that the control group scored 84,6667 and the experimental group scored 81,5833 on average. That is, the achievement test showed that students who practiced the vocabulary on mobile phones performed better than the control group who practiced it via paper-based activities. The test scores of both groups are given below. It is clear that experimental group is relatively more successful than the control group; however, it is not a significant difference. This result is

compatible with some previous research results (Boticki, Wong et. al., 2011; Derakhshan and Kaivanpanah, 2011; Hsieh, Chiu et. al., 2010).

<b>Descriptive Statistics</b>			
Dependent Variable: Achievement Test			
Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	Participants
Experiment	84,6667	5,03151	30
Control	81,5833	4,42774	30
Total	83,1250	4,94943	60

### 5. Discussion and Conclusion

It is clear that mastery of vocabulary is vital in language learning. It enhances the proficiency of learners and helps them understand the target language or express themselves in an easier way. Therefore, learning vocabulary is viewed as one of the key abilities and teachers should always try to do their best to make their students learn the target vocabulary. 21<sup>st</sup> century offers us some advantages such as learning through computers, mobile phones and online tools. The relevant research indicates that mobile assisted language learning encourages positive learner attitudes and enhances their motivation (Jaradat, 2014; Kinash et al., 2012; Moura and Carvalho, 2010). The studies also indicate that students generally show a better test performance if they use mobile apps to learn a second language (Al-Emran et al., 2016; Hwang et. al, 2011; Jaradat, 2014; Rossing et al., 2012; Zaldívar et al. 2015).

The results of the present study indicate that the control group was slightly outscored by the experimental group. In other words, the experimental group outperformed the other group by using a mobile app to enhance their vocabulary knowledge and learn the target vocabulary. However, as the mean scores of the groups suggest, the difference between the scores of the groups is not significant. One of the reasons for that is students know what time they will have an exam and exactly which parts of the book will be tested, so they take the exam by studying these specific parts just one day before the exam. The current study contributes to the field by stating that mobile assisted language learning may be effective in vocabulary learning and teaching even though it does not seem to be much effective in a short term.

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