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MOBILE LEARNING AS A TOOL FOR ENHANCING ENGLISH VOCABULARY ACQUISITION AMONG ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS

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Abstract

This article looks at how mobile learning can help architecture students build their English vocabulary. It draws on the author’s own teaching, where Quizlet and Kahoot serve as extra tools for reviewing terms and for quick retrieval activities in class. The apps are not presented as a way of teaching on their own. Instead, the paper asks how they can be tied to what architecture students actually have to do in English: describe buildings, read plans, name materials, explain how spaces relate to one another and present design decisions. It proposes a working framework that begins with introducing a term, continues through repeated retrieval and use in context, and ends with reflection. The limits of app-based practice are also discussed, above all the tendency to reward recognition and high scores rather than accurate productive use. The paper is methodological and practice-informed; it reports no measured learning gains and no experimental data. Its conclusion is that mobile tools help most when they support purposeful classroom teaching and give students real reasons to use technical vocabulary in communication.

Keywords: mobile learning; mobile-assisted language learning; English for Specific Purposes; architectural vocabulary; Quizlet; Kahoot; vocabulary acquisition.

ARXITEKTURA YO‘NALISHI TALABALARIDA INGLIZ TILI LEKSIKASINI MOBIL TA’LIM VOSITASIDA RIVOJLANTIRISH

Annotatsiya Maqolada arxitektura yo‘nalishi talabalarida ingliz tilidagi kasbiy leksikani rivojlantirishda mobil ta’lim imkoniyatlari ko‘rib chiqiladi. Maqola muallifning pedagogik tajribasiga tayanadi: dars jarayonida Quizlet va Kahoot ilovalaridan yangi so‘zlarni takrorlash, ularni esga tushirish va mavzuni mustahkamlash uchun foydalaniladi. Ushbu ilovalar mustaqil ta’limning o‘rnini bosuvchi vosita sifatida emas, balki arxitektura sohasiga oid kommunikativ vazifalar bilan bog‘langan metodik vositalar sifatida talqin qilinadi. Binolarni tasvirlash, chizmalarni izohlash, qurilish materiallarini farqlash, fazoviy munosabatlarni ifodalash va loyiha yechimlarini taqdim etishda terminlardan to‘g‘ri foydalanishga e’tibor qaratiladi.

Atamani tanishtirish, takrorlash, kontekstda qo‘llash va o‘zlashtirishni tahlil qilish bosqichlarini qamrab oluvchi amaliy model taklif etiladi. Maqola metodik-amaliy xarakterga ega bo‘lib, unda tajriba natijalari yoki statistik ko‘rsatkichlar keltirilmaydi. Mobil ilovalar maqsadli dars jarayoni va mazmunli nutqiy faoliyat bilan uyg‘unlashgandagina samarali vositaga aylanishi ta’kidlanadi.

Kalit so‘zlar: mobil ta’lim; mobil yordamida til o‘rganish; maxsus maqsadlar uchun ingliz tili; arxitektura leksikasi; Quizlet; Kahoot; lug‘at boyligini o‘zlashtirish.

МОБИЛЬНОЕ ОБУЧЕНИЕ КАК СРЕДСТВО РАЗВИТИЯ АНГЛИЙСКОЙ ЛЕКСИКИ У СТУДЕНТОВ АРХИТЕКТУРНЫХ СПЕЦИАЛЬНОСТЕЙ

Аннотация В статье рассматриваются возможности мобильного обучения для развития английской профессиональной лексики у студентов архитектурных специальностей. Материал основан на педагогической практике автора, в которой Quizlet и Kahoot используются для повторения лексики, активизации её извлечения из памяти и закрепления материала. Приложения рассматриваются не как замена преподаванию, а как методические инструменты, связанные с коммуникативными задачами архитектурного профиля: описанием зданий, чтением планов, обозначением строительных материалов, объяснением пространственных отношений и презентацией проектных решений. Предлагается модель, включающая введение термина, его повторение, употребление в профессиональном контексте и рефлексию. Отдельное внимание уделяется ограничениям цифровых заданий: правильный выбор ответа и высокий балл сами по себе не доказывают способность студента самостоятельно и точно использовать термин в речи. Статья имеет методический и практико-ориентированный характер; экспериментальные данные и количественные результаты не заявляются. Делается вывод, что мобильные приложения наиболее полезны в сочетании с целенаправленной работой преподавателя и содержательными речевыми заданиями.

Ключевые слова: мобильное обучение; мобильное обучение иностранному языку; английский язык для специальных целей; архитектурная лексика; Quizlet; Kahoot; усвоение лексики.

Introduction

English is more than one more general subject for architecture students. They need it to read professional material, follow international discussions of design and talk about buildings, materials and space. In practice they may have to describe a façade, say what a structural element does, read a floor plan or explain the idea behind a project, and every one of these tasks calls for exact vocabulary. A student who is comfortable with everyday adjectives such as “large”, “strong” or “beautiful” can still be stuck when asked to talk about a load-bearing wall, a spacious interior or an energy-efficient building.

This is a familiar problem in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and architecture makes it sharper. Its vocabulary is tied to visual form, technical function and professional setting. Words such as façade, foundation, column, beam, floor plan, circulation, proportion, insulation

and ventilation mean more to students when they can link them to drawings, models, photographs and real examples. Learning a translation may be enough to recognise a word, but it rarely prepares a student to use that word correctly in a sentence or a presentation.

Phones and tablets let students go back to vocabulary outside lesson time, in short sessions, with quick feedback and chances to retrieve what they have learned. In the author’s teaching, Quizlet and Kahoot have been used as supplementary tools in this way. How useful they are depends largely on whether the teacher links each digital task to a clear lesson aim. A competitive quiz can hold students’ attention and digital flashcards can encourage regular review, but neither should be treated as the final test of whether a student knows a word.

This article sets out how Quizlet and Kahoot can fit into a structured approach to teaching architectural vocabulary. It deals with three questions: why mobile practice suits architecture students, what each application can contribute at different points in vocabulary learning, and how teachers can help students move from recognising terms to using them on their own.

Theoretical background

Interest in mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) has grown because mobile technology makes practice easier to fit into a student’s day. Reviews and meta-analyses generally point to positive trends in mobile-assisted vocabulary learning, but they also note considerable differences in study design, learner populations, length of intervention and the way learning is assessed [1; 2; 7]. Studies with university and ESP learners, including work on self-regulated mobile learning, technical vocabulary and ESP classrooms, tell a similar story [3; 5; 6]. These findings need to be read with caution. They suggest that mobile tools can support vocabulary learning; they do not show that every app, or every way of using an app, leads to the same result.

Another key point is the gap between receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge. Receptive knowledge lets a learner recognise a word when reading or listening, while productive knowledge means retrieving the word unaided and using it appropriately in speech or writing. Research on mobile vocabulary learning has highlighted this gap and argued for looking beyond recognition scores [4]. For an architecture student, matching “beam” to a picture is a sensible first step, but explaining what a beam does in a building takes a good deal more.

Methodological approach

The approach taken here is practice-informed, conceptual and methodological. The paper gathers selected research on mobile-assisted vocabulary learning and sets it beside the author’s experience of using Quizlet and Kahoot in English classes for architecture students. It does not describe an experiment. The paper gives no number of participants, no pre-test or post-test results, no questionnaire findings and no statistical comparison.

Four principles organise the discussion. The first is that vocabulary should be chosen to match the architecture course and the communicative tasks students will face. The second is that new terms should be introduced in more than one way, pairing the written form with a definition, the pronunciation and, where possible, a suitable image. The third is that practice should involve retrieval rather than repeated passive reading. The fourth is that students should use the target terms in short spoken or written pieces and receive feedback from the teacher.

In this scheme the two applications do different jobs. Quizlet is well suited to preparing and reviewing sets of terms with digital flashcards and practice modes, and it works for both individual and cumulative revision. Kahoot suits brief, teacher-led review in which the whole class answers questions and sees results at once, so it is especially good for checking understanding together and starting discussion. They are not interchangeable, and the choice between them should follow the learning purpose rather than the appeal of a new platform.

4. Integrating Quizlet and Kahoot into architecture vocabulary teaching

4.1. Selecting and preparing vocabulary

It helps to start from a real architecture topic rather than a list of unconnected words. For a lesson on building components, a teacher might choose façade, foundation, column, beam, roof and load-bearing wall. For a lesson on interior space, the set could include layout, circulation, open-plan space, natural lighting and ventilation. The number of new items should stay manageable and suit the students’ level.

Before a set goes into an app, the teacher should check the spelling, pronunciation, part of speech, definition and technical meaning of each item. If a word has several meanings, the architectural one should be made explicit. Images need to show the relevant feature clearly, because a vague or merely decorative picture can confuse students instead of helping them. A short example sentence is also worth adding, for instance: “The main entrance is located on the eastern façade.” It gives students a context they can copy or adapt later.

4.2. Using Quizlet for preparation and repeated review

In the first stage of learning, Quizlet can present a term alongside its definition, translation, pronunciation or image. Students can go through the set before class, in a short period of independent study or after the lesson. The teacher can ask them to do more than read each card: they cover the definition and try to recall it first. This simple change turns passive exposure into retrieval practice.

A Quizlet set called “Architectural Elements” might contain “column”, a short definition such as “a vertical structural element that supports a load”, and a photograph of a column in a building. Students could then write an example sentence or pick out the column in a photo of a building. In later reviews, the teacher can mix older terms in with new ones so that students have to recall vocabulary from earlier lessons as well.

4.3. Using Kahoot for classroom retrieval and feedback

Kahoot works well at the start or end of a lesson for going back over vocabulary. Questions can ask students to choose the right term for a labelled element, pick the best definition, or find the word that completes a professional sentence. A question might, for example, show a building section and ask which term names the horizontal structural member. The pattern of answers also shows the teacher which items need further explanation.

The competitive format may raise participation, but speed is not the same as knowledge. Some students answer fast by guessing, and others simply need longer to read the question. For this reason the teacher should stop after selected questions and ask students why a given option is correct. That follow-up talk is what makes a quiz a language-learning activity.

Kahoot also lends itself to contrasting similar terms. Students might compare “façade” with “elevation”, or tell “beam” from “column” by thinking about orientation and function. The teacher needs to make sure each question has one defensible answer and that neither the wording nor the image is ambiguous. Once the quiz is over, students can use two or three of the target terms to describe a building or explain a design choice.

A classroom learning sequence

The sequence below shows one way of combining the two applications in a lesson on a topic such as “Describing a Sustainable Building”. The target vocabulary might include insulation, ventilation, natural lighting, sustainable materials, energy-efficient, façade, floor plan and load-bearing wall. Teachers will adjust the list to their lesson aims and to what their students already know.

Table 1. A proposed sequence for combining Quizlet and Kahoot in architectural vocabulary teaching.

Stage	Suggested activity	Learning focus
Before class	Students go through a Quizlet set with terms, definitions, pronunciation and images.	Initial familiarity and independent review.
Lesson opening	A short Kahoot quiz tests recognition and brings out common confusions.	Retrieval and diagnosis.
During class	In pairs, students label an image of a building or a simplified plan and explain some of its features.	Vocabulary in visual and technical context.
Speaking task	Each student describes one sustainable feature and explains its purpose using the target terms.	Productive use in connected speech.
After class	Students return to Quizlet and write a short description that includes five target expressions.	Recycling and transfer to writing.
Later review	A cumulative quiz or oral check brings back vocabulary from earlier lessons.	Delayed recall and further practice.

This sequence is a practical model and not a report of measured results. It is meant to show how digital practice can be connected to communication in the classroom. What the teacher can watch for is whether students go beyond choosing answers and start using the terms accurately when they describe a building, read a plan or explain a design decision.

6. Assessment, feedback and limitations

Assessment should look at more than one aspect of vocabulary knowledge. Recognition can be checked with matching tasks or image-based questions, and recall by asking students to name an element from a definition or a visual prompt. Use in context can be assessed through a short description, presentation or written explanation, and retention by returning to the same vocabulary after a delay. Together these give a fuller picture than an app score by itself.

Feedback should concentrate on how well the language is used. A student may pick “insulation” correctly in a quiz and still use it wrongly in a sentence. Another may know “circulation” but mix up its architectural meaning with ordinary traffic movement. To deal with

such cases, the teacher can ask students to explain the term, compare it with a related concept and use it in a new example. Pronunciation, spelling, collocation and grammatical fit deserve attention too.

One more limitation concerns the evidence behind this article. The teaching experience it draws on confirms that Quizlet and Kahoot were used, but the paper presents no controlled study and no numerical evaluation. It would therefore be wrong to say that the applications raised vocabulary retention by any particular percentage or improved exam results. A future classroom study could use a pre-test, a post-test and a delayed test, together with a rubric for judging the accuracy of vocabulary in descriptions and presentations. Student feedback could add information about accessibility and engagement, but it should be analysed separately from learning outcomes.

Conclusion

Mobile learning can make vocabulary practice more flexible, yet its educational value depends on how well it is built into teaching. For architecture students, English vocabulary becomes meaningful when it helps them read drawings, describe buildings, discuss materials, explain how space is organised and present design decisions. Quizlet and Kahoot contribute in different ways: Quizlet supports individual review and repeated exposure, whereas Kahoot gives the class a shared format for retrieval, checking and discussion.

The article has set out a practice-informed framework based on the author’s use of Quizlet and Kahoot and supported by published research on mobile-assisted vocabulary learning. Because no empirical results are claimed, the framework is best seen as a methodological proposal awaiting classroom evaluation. Future research at a technical university could look at immediate learning, delayed retention and the accurate use of architectural vocabulary in authentic communication tasks.

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