The Role of Quipper Application for English Language Teaching

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ABSTRACT

Quipper is one of widely recognised Online Learning Platforms for learners on many levels. Quipper is equipped with several features that can support the process of learning, especially for language learning. This study aims to deeply discuss the features offered by Quipper that can benefit the learners through suitable instructional design used in learning English; and to provide the implication of its use for Indonesian education context. This study is library research where the data were derived from relevant articles and previous studies. The research findings revealed that some features of Quipper could benefit students to acquire new vocabulary, punctuality and grammatical awareness through Chat Room or In-built Messaging. Moreover, as web-based learning platform, Quipper could expose the multimodal exposure (written, oral and visual) for foreign language input. More importantly, Quipper was interestingly viewed by many learners as a new way of learning that somehow could enhance their positive language learning intensity. Nevertheless, even though Quipper is positively welcomed, it might imply several challenges and limitations. In Indonesian education context, Quipper could not be fully used as the main platform for learning because there would be a great reliance on teachers to misuse the features that leading to the boring class activity and lack of teaching professionalism.

INTRODUCTION

The development of technology massively has “roamed” in every human life aspect, especially in education sector. Internet has become one of the most influential inventions affecting today’s teaching learning transformation, like E-learning or Online Based Learning. There are many Online Learning Platforms used by learners to develop a new approach and methods toward certain subjects, one of them is learning language. In this opportunity, the writer focuses on the implementation of Quipper application. Quipper is one of the Open Source Online Based Learnings used by many teachers and students in secondary/high school level. This writing attempts to discuss several features offered by the Quipper in providing instructional design in teaching and learning process, especially in teaching English subject. The discussion will encompass the advantages and also the limitations of the Quipper as the online learning platform. To conclude this writing, the writer will briefly review the phenomenon of Quipper in the context of Indonesian educational system. Quipper (www.quipper.com) is a free UK-based online learning platform aiming to help learners to learn online through a web access or an application.

Quipper was released in January 2014 as the breakthrough of online learning platform. Quipper has the main feature called “Quipper School” functioning as the online classroom platform that can be used by teachers and students. Technically, in order to involve in the Quipper Platform, someone should sign up for free in https://school.Quipper.com/en-PH/index.html for the new personal account or can be logged in through the Facebook account. It requires the email address and the password to activate the account. Quipper offered the two optional users, which are as a teacher and student. Since Quipper has been used by million people
distributed mostly in countries such as UK, Japan, Philippines, Indonesia, Mexico, and Thailand, thus, there are some languages that correspond to several countries, namely English, Japanese, Filipino, Bahasa Indonesia, Mexican, and Thai. Quipper School, is a free e-learning platform that empowers teachers to streamline teaching methods and class management, and enables students to learn in a fun and effective way. Headquartered in London, the company has offices in Manila, Tokyo, Jakarta and Mexico City, and is currently used by 150,000 teachers and 2 million students across the four countries (Campos, 2016).

METHODS

The focuses of this study were to describe the features of Quipper as one of popular Online Learning Platforms used in teaching English; and to portray the issues and challenges of its use in Indonesian education context. This study used the literature study approach where allows the researchers to portray and describe deeply one particular phenomenon (Yin, 2014). The information needed to support the description in this paper was based on books, articles of relevant previous study.

In presenting the finding and discussion, this study employed a descriptive review. The researcher carefully narrowed down the search of relevant published journal articles and classified them into particular and designated topic. A descriptive review would provide the opportunity for researcher to identify any interpretable trends or draw overall conclusions about the benefits of existing conceptualisations, propositions, methods or findings (Paré et al., 2015).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Feature Analysis of Quipper as the Online Learning Platform

Quipper contains several features that are required as the standardised online learning platform. Those features consist of contents, learning purposes, and importantly the instructional design model and concept. In this part of writing, the writer will critically discuss about the functions of each feature and its limitations in designing the learning instructional.

The presence of the Quipper is an absolutely breakthrough in reflecting today’s modern learning environment. There are some strong points of Quipper that can attract more users in practicing the online learning design now and for few years ahead. The features offered by Quipper representatively provide a complete function of school classroom. Technically, the web features and application of Quipper is qualified as the three standard online learning platform. Paulsen (2003) categorised three aspects of standardised online learning platform, namely, the creation of course tools, student and tutor support tools, and course administration.

Furthermore, on Quipper, it can maintain the online classroom teaching learning process, send the assignment, create the assessments and examinations, monitor students’ progress, create educational content (upload, view and download). Quipper supports teachers via virtual storage that allows them upload and keep their PowerPoint presentations, PDF files, pictures and videos online (Mulyono, 2016). For students, they can work individually and collaboratively in following the instructions and assignment given by their teachers. Here are some Quipper’s interesting features:

The Assignment and General Study

This feature consists of three main menus: Creation, Assessment, and Learning. The 'creation' function involves setting up the classroom, the materials, and the students. The 'assessment' feature makes it
easier for teachers to assign learning materials (lessons and quizzes) to pupils. The 'learning' feature provides learners with access to these learning materials. This feature is designed for teachers to create and maintain the standard activities of teaching learning process.

**The Curriculum**

This menu offers two options for teachers regarding the learning materials; they can either use the materials available on the Quipper database, or they can develop their own materials and use them to teach their students (Mulyyono, 2016). Curriculum is considered as the crucial factor in guiding the teachers and students achieve the planned learning objectives. Pittaway (2014) defined the curriculum as a document that includes details about goals, objectives, content, teaching techniques, outcomes, evaluation and assessment, and resources. Similarly, functions like Moodle (used by university), in which provides the Unit Guide containing the synopsis of the course, the course objectives, and marking criteria of the unit/subject. By inserting the digitised curriculum on the platform, students and teacher will be informed about the purposes of the certain subjects provided on Quipper school, hence it will contribute to an effective learning goal.

**In-Built Messaging**

The Message feature on Quipper allows teachers and students maintain a communication and connection, discussing any particular topics. The ‘message’ menu has two functions; firstly, it facilitates teacher-student, student-peer, and group communication, and, secondly, it allows teachers to distribute notes to all students. Instant Messaging App or Chat Room added on online learning platform is reasonably needed. It might not be quite effective if students and teachers only conduct the linear communication outside of online meeting to discuss the recent topic or assignment. Students and teachers can stay in contact with our in-built messaging service, which allows students to highlight specific questions or topics that they need assistance with (Rivai et. al., 2017).

**The Manage**

This allows teachers to select course participants, group the students, and invite other colleagues to teach collaboratively within the virtual classroom. The introduction of more flexible approaches to learning and greater use of online tools offer new opportunities for student collaboration and new challenges for teachers supporting group work (Palloff & Pratt, 1999; Suwanda et al., 2021). Support for learning "anytime, anywhere" has also altered on-campus attendance patterns at several universities, resulting in inconsistent, occasional, or no class attendance. These alterations necessitate that instructors give chances and support for collaboration between students studying in different locations and at different times (Bennet, 2004).

**Study Note**

This feature functions literally like note-taking activity. This feature can only be accessed by the students. In Study Note, it is possible for students to compose personal notes about a topic or assignment. It is essential to note that student users can only access learning resources that correspond with the classroom (course) previously offered by their teachers. Giving students such handouts in advance may allow them to review the material prior to lecture, thereby enhancing their ability to comprehend the material during instruction, which may aid students (especially those with learning disabilities or cognitive impairments) in better remembering and storing the material in long-term storage (Boyle & Rivera, 2012). It will be such a creative step taken by Quipper by adding the in-built note on the platform. This might be helpful for students to note the important instruction provided by teacher before, during and after the class meeting.
**Gamified Features**

This becomes one of the exciting features offered on Quipper. Gamified feature is practically used by students to give gift to other students in the form of coins which can be swapped with themes, so students can customize the learning environment they want. Students can also see how their classmates process in chronological view (Mulyono, 2016). This kind of activity is included as one of the gamification values in educational practice. The use of gamified feature on Quipper similarly employ the gamification concept, in which takes the mechanics of gaming, like points, levels, badges, or leader-boards, and applies them to the way a course or module is taught (Nah, et. al., 2014). Gamification refers to the application of a pedagogical system derived from game design and implemented in a non-game context (Higher Education Academy). By adding Gamified feature in Quipper might gain students’ interest in maintaining the interaction with peer or teachers. If this continually occurs, Quipper will guarantee the strong engagement between students and another peer. Games are immensely motivating and engaging; typically use a variety of methods to urge people to interact with them, frequently for the sheer delight of playing and the prospect of winning. Not only do games enhance knowledge, but also crucial abilities such as problem-solving, collaboration, and communication (Dicheva et al., 2015).

**Quipper Video**

Quipper also adds another multimedia learning source, which is video. Through Quipper Video (https://video.Quipper.com), students can watch some tutorial, learning tips and tricks provided by teachers, tutors, or other students. Quipper Video is aimed only for Indonesian junior and senior high school students, especially in preparation for National Examination (UN) and SBMPTN (Standardised Test for Entering University). Students should register and pay to enjoy this feature. Video can be a beneficial source of learning. Video might attract students by providing an audio-visual media that is more attractive than printed material. According to Sherman (2003), video is today's media platform, and in fact, individuals spend more time with audio-visual content than with printed material. By watching video through Quipper Video, students with various learning types (Audio Learner, Visual Learner, or Kinaesthetic Learner) can contextually comprehend the educational values content.

Accordingly, the display interface of the Quipper offers the convenience for its user. The design and layout system provides the instant and easy access. The course development tools on Quipper are user-friendly, and the student and tutor assistance tools facilitate instructor and student participation in teaching and learning activities. For instance, teachers develop a course that their students can access (Mulyono, 2016). All the instant and easy access will affect the students’ motivation in learning in new learning experience. The ease of technology use, as argued by Teo, Lee and Chai (2008), may promote users’ positive attitudes towards the particular technology (such as Quipper), and may eventually be a contributing factor to using it. These features description will promise the interesting and fun learning activity. Thus, Quipper will interestingly enhance and engage the students and teachers to interact more.

Furthermore, Quipper as the product of Start-Up business will guarantee the customers’ satisfaction through an affordable access and installation. It is fascinating that the use of these facilities in Quipper is completely free, although it requires registration. Therefore, Quipper can save much money allocated by the government for online learning practice in school. Unlike other similar web-based learning management platforms such as Moodle, Blackboard, Claroline, ATutor, Omeka and Docebo that need installation on an existing hosting site (or a web server), Quipper provides teachers and students with a ready-to-use web-based
learning application (Mulyono, 2016). So that, students can access the Quipper directly from the personal computer, laptops, tablet, or even through smart phones connected with the Internet provided by Wi-Fi and even with low signal level, like 3G.

The Significance of Quipper as the Instructional Design in Language Learning

As the online learning platform that mediates teachers and students in mediating the online school activity, Quipper functions as the Instructional Design covering certain learning purposes. Quipper provides several subjects to be taught online by teachers and for secondary/high school students, which are Mathematics, Science, Social Science, and English subject. In this part of writing focuses on discussing the Instructional Design Concept offered by Quipper in assisting and improving the language learning, especially in teaching English.

Particularly, Quipper includes English as one of the learning subjects. Quipper School covers materials which focus on skills namely, listening, speaking, reading and writing. The combination of teaching English and the use of technology can be very supportive for students to improve their language skills. The results of a study conducted by Banados (2006) revealed that students who participated in technologically rich classrooms demonstrated a remarkable improvement in speaking ability as well as in all other language skills (listening, reading, and writing) and language components, particularly pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Moreover, the use of technology for the language learning purposes reflected in CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning) might also built a positive perception for students. Leakey and Ranchoux (2006) found that blended CALL made students respond more positively toward the learning process and they prefer this approach to the traditional class. Quipper potentially functions as the online learning platform that can assist and improve students’ language learning. The followings are several researches that describe the functions of Quipper in language learning.

Accordingly, the focus relies on how an educational technology like Quipper can build the learners’ motivation and encouragement in learning certain subject, especially language. The use of technology in education should be made to motivate learners to develop the learning outcomes toward educational technology (Paulsen, 2003). Accordingly, Lin's (2003) research revealed that the majority of Taiwanese EFL learners viewed the usage of multimedia tools in their language program favorably. They were encouraged to increase their language skills by navigating the Internet, to record and store their own writing, and to utilize multimedia reading materials. Further, As per Mulyono's (2016) study, students were encouraged to learn English through Quipper School, particularly for refining their listening skills, because time constraints prevented them from doing so in the classroom.

Practically, Mulyono (2016) also described that as a web-based learning platform, Quipper offers learners multimodal exposure (written, oral and visual) for foreign language input. For example, teachers can employ the multimedia tools available in ‘lesson’ and ‘assessment’ menus. Those menus can be used by teachers to develop learning materials that are enriched by visual and audio media, such as text with illustration, images, videos or other multimedia resources. Further, Chapelle (2003) added that the use of computer technology in the classroom should be beneficial for learners through enhanced linguistic input. Quipper employs the chat room or in-built messaging as one of the important tools to maintain the communication among users. Specifically, the chat room display using English sentences, maintained between teachers and students or between students and other students can potentially acquire the new vocabulary, punctuality and the grammar awareness (Mulyono, 2016).

Additionally, research conducted by Rivai, et. al. (2017), revealed that Quipper can be an effective online learning media that can improve students’ English writing skills, especially in writing recount text.
Quipper had attracted students’ attention to comprehend the recount text material. Students felt a new experience of writing directly on writing tool on Quipper. By utilizing Quipper, students had an easier time grasping the text, enjoyed the learning process, and were not bored while studying recount texts in the classroom. It can be inferred that students' comprehension of the text enhanced as a result of employing Quipper (Rivai, et. al., 2017).

Other reflected result of how gamified feature on Quipper can be beneficial in attracting students’ attention in answering the questions in descriptive text. Idin and Romadhoni (2016) described when students answered the questions correctly after read the descriptive text, they got the coin. On the contrary, when they did it incorrectly, they got motivational words. It is not like learning but it is adventure or game.

Last but not least, another research conducted in Surat Thani Province, in Thailand also revealed the advantage of Quipper towards students’ English listening skill. Practically, the learning material formed as the audio recording provided by the teachers on Quipper has motivated students to learn through the audio. The effectiveness of the Quipper School Program in SuratThani based on local content was 80.12/82.88. The English listening test results of children in SuratThani province who used the Quipper School Program based on local content were considerably higher than previously at a level of 0.05 (Bang, et. al., 2016).

To sum up, the implementation and application of Quipper as the online learning platform is gaining the popularity around teachers and students in secondary/high school level. Some interactive and advantageous features offered by the Quipper system have attracted teachers to use Quipper as the supplement teaching learning media. All the features also successfully motivated students to gain their enthusiasm of new learning experience offered by Quipper. The phenomena of Quipper happened in most south east Asian countries had found interesting by the researchers to conduct the role of Quipper application toward certain subjects, especially in language learning. Some researches revealed that features provided on Quipper are found very beneficial in motivating students in learning English and improving some skills (speaking, listening, and writing). Thus, it is presumed that the shortage of time for EFL learning in secondary schools could possibly be solved by adopting the advantages offered by integrating English learning with Quipper School as an extended learning platform (Agustina & Cahyono, 2017).

The Limitation of Quipper

Nevertheless, Quipper also has some limitations. First, Quipper is aimed for mostly teachers and students in high school level. The issue emerges when Quipper will limit the users (teachers and students) to access the application, because teachers and students need to be registered in a school selected by Quipper. In other words, not all teachers and students can freely access the Quipper to maintain the online classroom. Many schools in certain countries are not yet registered in Quipper.

Secondly, Quipper is expected can cover all the English skills learning using several features. The fact is, Quipper is not equipped with voice recognition technology, thus it could not facilitate the learning speaking. However, the interaction between teacher and students might not be occurred via Quipper online, but English-speaking performance could be maintained in face-to-face interaction, while Quipper is used as the additional learning media in teaching English. Mulyono (2016) concluded that based on the observation of the classroom interaction using Quipper School in teaching English was conducted during learning process in class. Based on the observation checklist, orally interaction occurred in teaching learning process which are in opening, student’s asking, answering question, and closing interaction.

Thirdly, in accessing Quipper, especially for a teacher, he/she should deal with the administrative system, because Quipper does not offer an administrative function. Teachers, therefore, need to set up a new classroom (course), create learning modules, and select the participating students themselves. This
administrative workload may be challenging for some teachers to some extent, particularly for those who are not familiar with a web-based learning management system (Mulyono, 2016). In other words, accessing and implementing Quipper requires the technology literate. In broad sense, Quipper School cannot be massively implemented if the teachers who are supposed to be technologically literate seem to be against the integration of technology with learning (Agustina & Cahyono, 2017). Then, not all features on Quipper can be accessed freely. Quipper Video has become one of the most interesting features, in which students can watch the video discussing about learning tips and tutorial. Yet, to enjoy this feature, the users need to pay for several amount of money.

Furthermore, in addition to being an additional learning media in addition to face-to-face meetings, Quipper cannot be used as a reliable media to measure students’ and achievement of students in certain subject as a whole. That is because, the “Score Analysis” on Quipper feature commonly provide the multiple-choice test form. This kind of test is known to be low in validity because it only requires students to memorize or guess the stems and since working the assignments through Quipper School is outside the school hours, the teachers cannot monitor how the students work on it (Agustina & Cahyono, 2017).

The Implication of Quipper as the Online Learning Platform in Indonesian Educational Context

Quipper is viewed as the breakthrough of the implementation of technology in Indonesian educational system. Quipper might influence Indonesian teachers and students to develop their awareness toward educational technology both theoretically and practically. The presence of Quipper in Indonesian since 2014 has been positively responded by many teachers and students in secondary/high school level. Since entering the Indonesian market in 2015, Quipper has helped the learning process of more than 2.5 million students -50,000 of whom are Quipper Video users, trained 200,000 teachers, and reached out to 5,000 schools across the country (Campos, 2016). Teachers and students can experience a new learning environment. For years, Indonesia has been in a challenge in preparing the future generation and resolving the issues related to the quality of national education. Due to globalization and technological progress in the 21st century, preparing young generations for the future has never been more difficult. Despite this, Indonesia struggles with education gaps and teacher incompetence (Nuraini, 2020; Rahman & Yuzar, 2020). Utilizing technology is regarded to be the best solution for this problem (Education National Day, Momentum for Technology Education Equality event held in Jakarta, April 28th). This indicates that Quipper is getting its popularity in national educational system.

Nevertheless, there might be some implications caused by the Quipper as the online learning platform. If the use of Quipper cannot be controlled or disoriented, there might be some impacts occurred in several educational parties, such as teachers, students, stakeholder, and the other local business. Firstly, Quipper cannot be used as the main learning media for teachers and students at high school level. According to research conducted by Agustina and Cahyono (2017), Teachers decided to use Quipper as the supplement and complement learning media beside conventional classroom activity. Teachers used Quipper when they wanted to give the extra learning material or homework for students, if during the face-to-face meeting, the material could not fully be taught (Agustina & Cahyono, 2017). If the use of Quipper cannot be controlled or misunderstood, then the teacher will get used to using Quipper as the main source of learning media, then there will be some unfavourable impact for teachers and students. First, teachers might be "spoiled" and not creative, because they only rely on the forms of tasks and materials available in Quipper. Secondly, the Quipper will continue to be used by the teacher when the teacher cannot enter the classroom, this will be the reason for teachers not to go to class and to rely on Quipper to provide tasks and materials to students outside the school. This will have an impact on the professionalism of teachers in schools. For students, Quipper will
cause students not to be interested in using conventional learning media in schools, such as reading textbooks in lab activities at school, because they can access videos to read and obtain information in different ways.

Other negative impacts might be experienced by the government or stakeholders. If Quipper continues to be used with high intensity, then the alteration toward the national curriculum might be happened again. This will add the bad government’s track record on the inconsistency in managing the curriculum. Accordingly, the government might also certainly allocate more funds to facilitate the use of Quipper or other forms of online learning media in every school across the country.

In 2016, 58% of its users passed the UN, and 50% of them pass the SBMPTN and gain admission to the best state universities in Indonesia. Quipper has received support from 45 provincial and district education departments in carrying out its goal (Yuningsih, Quipper’s Public Relation Officer, 2017). This positive result was contributed by the Quipper Video, proves to be a learning resource for high school students who want to continue college in college. Quipper Video will lead to competition with the tutoring agency. Thus, students no longer need to take additional tutoring in any learning counselling institution.

CONCLUSIONS

The implementation and application of Quipper as the online learning platform is gaining the popularity around teachers and students in secondary/high school level. Some interactive and advantageous features offered by the Quipper system have attracted teachers to use Quipper as the supplement teaching learning media. All the features also successfully motivated students to gain their enthusiasm of new learning experience offered by Quipper. The phenomena of Quipper happened in most south east Asian countries had found interesting by the researchers to conduct the role of Quipper application toward certain subjects, especially in language learning. Some researches revealed that features provided on Quipper are found very beneficial in motivating students in learning English and improving some skills (speaking, listening, and writing). Nevertheless, despite its positive impacts, the use Quipper implied some challenges for Indonesian education context. Quipper could not be fully used as the main platform for learning because there would be a great reliance from teachers to misuse the features that lead to the boring class activity and lack of teaching professionalism. Moreover, Quipper indirectly tended to require teachers’ creativity and commitment to develop teaching materials and require loads of teaching administration.

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