APPLYING "KAHOOT!" TO FOSTER CLASSROOM INTERACTION IN TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION TO EFL STUDENTS AT QUANG BINH UNIVERSITY

ỨNG DỤNG "KAHOOT" NHẰM THÚC ĐẨY TÍNH TƯƠNG TÁC TRONG DẠY HỌC ĐỌC HIỂU CHO SINH VIÊN KHÔNG CHUYÊN NGỮ TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC QUẢNG BÌNH

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ABSTRACT: *Applying technology in education in general and in teaching English as a second language in particular is no longer in teachers' dream and intention, but has been being widely and strongly applied in all levels of education system. Maximizing technology potential in teaching is one of the top priorities in the field of English language research and teaching. There is strong evidence showing the relationship between games and motivation and engagement in language class. This research investigates the use of Kahoot as the media in teaching reading and introduces Kahoot! - a descendant of "Personal Response Systems" (PRSs) - with 10 second-year students in Quang Binh University with the aim of finding out how Kahoot! would possibly enhance EFL students' learning experience as well as their engagement and collaboration in their reading comprehension class. The research reveals that students are generally more engaged and positive about its use, and tend to prefer interactive classes using the technology over those that do not. From the research findings, the paper suggests some possible methods to use Kahoot! as a web - based technology support to promote interaction, autonomy, equality and sociolinguistic competence as well as to encourage learners' ability to learn a second language positively.*

Keywords: *Technology, Kahoot!, Reading comprehension, EFL students.*

TÓM TẮT*: Áp dụng công nghệ trong giáo dục nói chung và việc dạy tiếng Anh như ngôn ngữ thứ hai nói riêng không còn là ước mơ của giảng viên mà đã được áp dụng mạnh mẽ trong các cấp của hệ thống giáo dục. Tối đa hóa tiềm năng công nghệ trong giảng dạy là một trong những ưu tiên hàng đầu trong lĩnh vực nghiên cứu và giảng dạy tiếng Anh. Có bằng chứng mạnh mẽ cho thấy mối quan hệ giữa các trò chơi và động lực và sự tham gia trong lớp ngôn ngữ. Nghiên cứu này điều tra việc sử dụng Kahoot làm phương tiện truyền thông trong việc dạy đọc hiểu và giới thiệu Kahoot! - hậu duệ của các hệ thống phản hồi cá nhân (PRSs) - với 10 sinh viên năm thứ hai của Trường Đại học Quảng Bình với mục đích tìm ra khả năng công nghệ Kahoot! có thể sẽ nâng cao kinh nghiệm học tập cũng như tham gia và hợp tác của các sinh viên không chuyên ngữ trong các lớp đọc hiểu. Nghiên cứu cho thấy sinh viên thường tham gia và tích cực hơn về việc sử dụng công nghệ "Kahoot" và có xu hướng thích các lớp học tương tác có sử dụng công nghệ.Từ những kết quả nghiên cứu, bài báo đề xuất một số phương pháp có thể sử dụng Kahoot! như một hỗ trợ công nghệ dựa trên web để thúc đẩy sự tương tác, tự chủ, bình đẳng và năng lực xã hội học, cũng như khuyến khích khả năng của người học học ngôn ngữ thứ hai một cách tích cực.*

Từ khóa*: Công nghệ, "Kahoot", đọc hiểu, sinh viên tiếng Anh không chuyên ngữ.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Taking advantages of technology in teaching English language is no longer in teachers' dream and intention, but has been being widely and strongly applied in all levels of education system. Integrating education and entertainment are widely observed over the last few decades as an innovation to increase student motivation. Zala'i (2006) remarked that the blending of education and entertainment called "edutainment" is now being used as a media to educate students better. At tertiary level, one of the most important components of English proficiency of EFL students is English reading comprehension (Ching & Hui, 2013). Improving students' ability in understanding reading texts requires EFL teachers not only have profound knowledge in the field but apply appropriate media as well. However, applying the appropriate media to promote students' achievement in learning English, particularly reading comprehension is not an easy task to EFL teachers.

In Vietnamese teaching context, English is regarded as a compulsory subject delivering its skills into four categories: reading, writing listening and speaking. How to improve the quality of teaching and learning English is an important issue concerned by all teachers and learners. Up to now, Vietnamese learners have been being approached with many new methods of learning English, many plentiful forms and the impact of web-based technology as well. As stated by Lai & Li (2011), communicating via computers promotes interaction, autonomy, equality, sociolinguistic competence, and also encourages learners' ability to learn a second language positively. Kahoot! an e-learning web-apps commonly used in conducting online quizzes, designed by Jamie Brooker and Johan Brand in 2015, is seen as the most popular and easily applied game of all. Teachers' use of Kahoot! in teaching English, especially in teaching reading skills helps improve the quality of class hours, makes students absorb lessons quickly and effectively, creates a good effect between lecturers and learners, highlights the contents of the lecture, and turns the classroom into an exciting playground at the same time.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1. Scoping and Studying site

Reading Comprehension:

Reading comprehension is a basic skill to be taught for every learner of English. It is not only a purpose, but also a useful means learners can reinforce and expand their knowledge of the language they are learning. There are different definitions of reading comprehension suggested by different researchers worldwide. According to Farrell (2012, p. 3), "Reading is the process of constructing meaning through the dynamic interaction among the readers' existing knowledge, the information suggested by the written language, and the context of reading situation". Reading is also viewed as an interactive process between a reader and a text in which learners are involved in processing, constructing texts, and elaborating its meaning to enhance comprehension' (Grabe & Stoller, 2013). Drawn on these perspectives, in the scope of this research, reading comprehension is defined as an interactive process between the reader, a given text, and the context in which the reader decodes information and understand the meaning of such triad.

Classroom interaction:

Hall (2003) viewed interaction between teachers and students in classrooms as one by which learning is accomplished in classrooms. This viewpoint reveals that in language classrooms, interaction takes on an especially

significant role since it is both the medium through which learning is realized and an object through which pedagogical attention is paid.

Together with teacher and students who are seen as two major elements to make language classroom interactive, the aid of technology does the great help. According to Bull and Ma (2001), technology provides offers unlimited resources to language learners. Harmer (2007) emphasized that teachers should encourage learners to find appropriate activities through using computer technology in order to be successful in language learning. Clements and Sarama (2003) declare that the use of suitable technological materials can be useful for learners. According to Harmer (2007), using computer-based language activities improve cooperative learning in learners.

In short, technology has always been an important part of teaching and learning environment, especially in language classes. It is an essential part of the teachers' profession through which they can use it to facilitate learners' learning. Designing games in teaching English to EFL classes such as Kahoot! not only has the great potential to change the existing language teaching methods but assists learners in adjusting their own learning process and make the classes more interactive as well.

Kahoot! - A Web App

Kahoot! a web-based student response system is used to encourages student to participate and keeps them engaged in the lesson thanks to its game-based platform (Dellos, 2015). It allows teachers to create online quizzes that can be accessed through student smart phones, tablets, or computers (Dellos, 2015; "The Kahoot! Guide," 2016). With Kahoot!, students can anonymously answer questions through their device (Wang, 2014). The ability to answer questions anonymously may encourage reluctant participants within a class to participate (Stowell & Nelson, 2007). This web app also allows the teacher to see how his/her students answered the question (Wang, 2014; Dellos, 2015), and to assess how the students are performing in the class in real time, which may make the subsequent instruction more effective. Kahoot!'s game-based learning platform features include the ability to earn points, engaging sound effects, and motivational music (Wang & Lieberoth, 2016). Furthermore, teachers can adjust the amount of points each question is worth and students can earn points for answering the questions correctly (Dellos, 2015; "The Kahoot! Guide," 2016). Students may enjoy the friendly competition with their classmates as they try to earn as many points as possible (Dellos, 2015). This feature of Kahoot! encourages participation and makes learning fun.

2.2. Sampling and Data Collection

The subjects for this study were 10 second - year students in Quang Binh University who are in the third semester of their four - year academic course, particularly, these students are participating in an ACCESS class, a project to support tertiary students better their English competence funded by the US Embassy. Due to the subjective and objective constrains, the researcher was only able to select 10 students as the main participants for this study. The selection of these student participants was grounded on a number of criteria such as their ages, majors, their background knowledge and the geological location as well. All of the participants are non-native speakers who have been learning English for more than seven years. Their age ranges from 19 to 21. All of

them came from different districts in Quang Binh province. Their reading classes were chosen to investigate how they employed and engaged into activities deployed by the teacher.

2.3. Methodology

In order to seek the answers to the study, semi - structure interview was chosen as the main instrument. The information collected from semi - structure interviews with ten students were used for data collection and analysis. In this study, it is clear that semi - structure interview was relevant because it, firstly, allowed the researcher to explore the participants' feelings and attitudes toward the subject that could not be found in the process of teaching and learning. Furthermore, it helped elicit information from the students about the games deployed, particularly focused on the importance, the usefulness of Kahoot! game activities to the improvement in reading comprehension skill from which they may benefit.

3. RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The results and discussion will be divided into two parts, the first part is about students' attitude towards Kahoot! to their Reading Comprehension class, the second one is designing multiple choice technique in teaching English Reading Comprehension with Kahoot!,

Students' attitude toward Kahoot! Web App to their reading comprehension class

Different means of media have been used in reading classes such as pictures, real objects, even technology to make the lessons more interactive, among which game-based activities have always been an integrated part in the teaching and learning process. Traditional games with paper and pens, posters, Power Point Slides utilized for years in the classroom have now been less frequently used. Thanks to the development of technology, Wi-Fi and Internet connection have been widely used in universities and schools at different levels nationwide since 2006. This new trend aims to improve the participation of students in classroom activities and improve learning experience, engagement, classroom interaction and collaboration (Wang, 2007).

Table 1. Benefits of Kahoot! in Reading Comprehension Class

Benefits	Students' responses (No. 10)				
	Strongly Agree	*Agree*	*Neutral*	*Disagree*	*Strongly Disagree*
Enhancing learning experience	7	2	1	0	0
Enhances student's engagement	8	2	0	0	0
Enhancing student's collaboration	6	2	1	1	0
Enhancing classroom Interaction	7	1	1	0	0

According to Clark and Mayer (2008), the benefits gained from the use of new technologies depend on the extent to which they are used in ways compatible with the learning process. Kahoot! not only helps provide immediate feedback but also offers the opportunity to assess students' conceptual understandings and support the construction of new knowledge and understanding through further explanation during or after the game.

When being asked *"Have you had any experience in using Kahoot! Web App before"*? None of the participants confessed that they had no Kahoot! experiences before, however, right after they got the teacher's instruction, 100% of them could use this app with their smart phone since they were all familiar with interactive technology. All of the participants emphasized on the merits of bringing games into their reading classroom. "The game is fun, relaxed and the competition is really interesting" (student's response). 100% of the participants totally agreed or agreed with the idea that bring Kahoot! game was beneficial in helping them enhance their learning experiences.

It was also shown from Table 1 that 8 out of 10 participants liked Kahoot! because it helped enhance their engagement. The answer of some interviewed students reaffirmed the usefulness of Facebook to their language learning in general and English writing in particular.

Q. How is Kahoot! useful to your English Reading comprehension?

S1: "It breaks up serious atmosphere in class. I really like it so much!"

S2: "I like Kahoot! because it makes me not too sleepy in the early morning. I can get the news and talk more with my friends. Our collaboration to do the game is also boosted. However, there are a lot of question that I didn't understand and many of my right answers depending on luck".

S3: "It is a very interesting warm-up activity before starting a reading lesson. It makes our study less boring, and less stress, too".

S4: "Kahoot! makes our lesson more fantastic. I don't have enough time to search the answers on internet so it really helps my brain work effectively".

From the result finding, it can be seen that an online media, Kahoot! made enthusiasm be real in the teaching learning process. With these interactive games, classroom interactions were built more effectively. By using Kahoot!, the students could learn how to socialize because they shared the use of the phones gadgets in each group happily, and how to help their friends who did not understand the answers. Furthermore, the students who used Kahoot! felt more enthusiastic and active which helps make the class more competitive.

3.2. Designing Multiple choice technique in teaching English Reading Comprehension with Kahoot!

Readers making meaning from multiple choice reading texts use many strategies in attempting to reach at the 'correct' meaning as identified by item writers. However, the success of a reader taking a multiple choice reading test is not necessarily a measure of the depth of textual understanding (Thissen, Steinberg & Fitzpatrick, 1989). Farr et al. (1990) confirm such findings and believe guessing is a major factor in making choices for the correct answer. Their strongest criticism of multiple choice questions suggests learners do not read and comprehend the reading selections accompanying them at all. 1) They aim to get an acceptable answer rather than understand what they have read. 2) Students choose responses which come closer to their text understanding whether or not they thought it was the best answer to the question. Although the multiple choice reading test remains an effective ranking tool in examinations, it only ranks students according to the preferred readings of an examining panel. Because it can be administered to large groups in a relatively short time, is cost effective and can be scored effectively (Van

Liersburg, 1991; Wood, 1988) those who hold the power by reinforcing its status are reluctant to question its ideological validity.

With Kahoot!, multiple - choice questions are projected on the screen; teachers go into create file and prepare the multiple choice questions based on the reading text or they can design the questions by themselves and students then have the capability to answer questions through a variety of devices (computers, laptops, pads and or smartphones) using colors and shapes to connect to the answer. The goal for the students is to choose the correct answer as fast as possible and to get as many points as possible (See Figure 5).The website even tracks participants' achievement by looking at what the they did during the Kahoot!, as well as overall achievement while logged in.

Below is a description of how to handle an English Reading Comprehension lesson with the Kahoot! application in the classroom. We designed the multiple choice questions on Kahoot! already and began with this kind of exercise with our students following the steps:
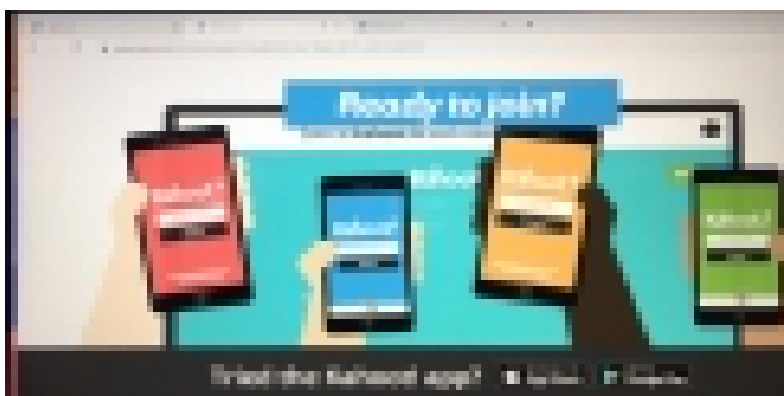
Step 1: Teacher logs into his/her Kahoot! account on the computer connected to the projector, as shown in Fig. 1.
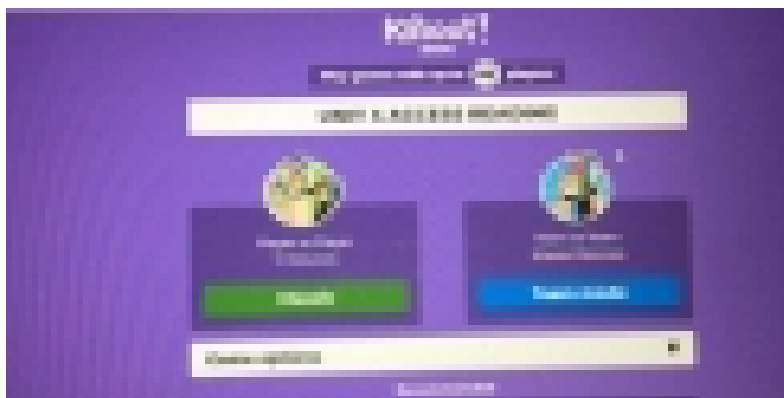
Figure 1. Teacher logs into his/her account

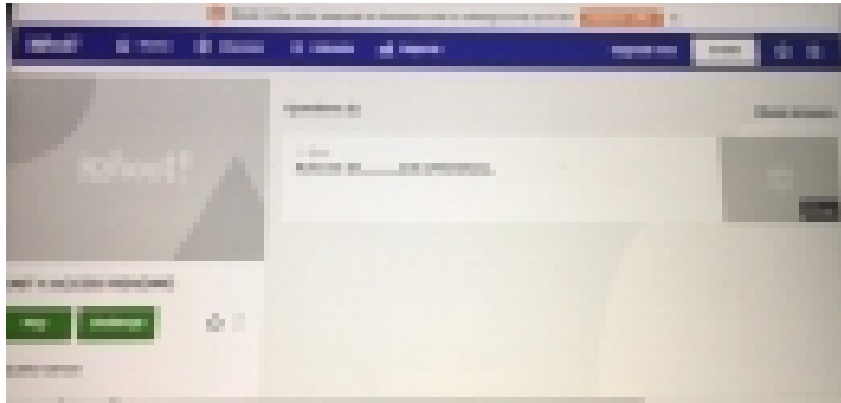*Step 2:* Kahoot! created on "My Kahoot!" before or Kahoot! games designed by other users can be listed. A new Kahoot can also be created, as shown in Fig. 2.

Figure 2. Students are ready to join in Kahoot!

Step 3: Teacher clicks on "play" button, and "launch" screen will appear, as shown in Fig. 3.
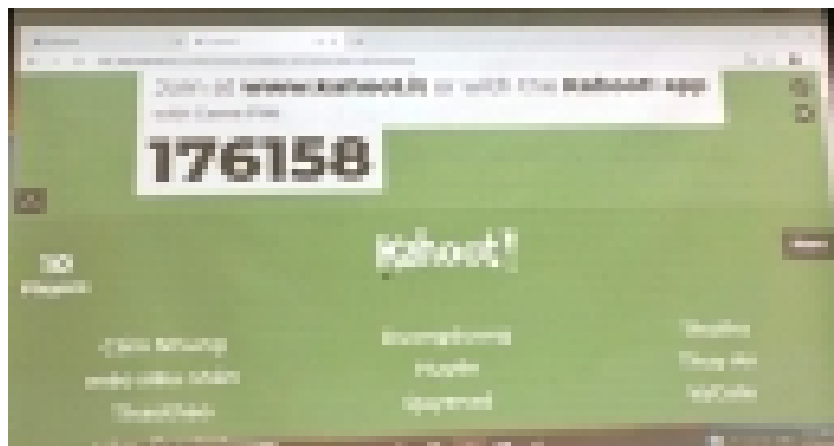

Figure 3. Teacher clicks on "play" button

Step 4: Students type Game PIN to register

A unique game PIN will be displayed at the top of the screen. Students go to kahoot.it and enter the Game PIN, then enter their nickname after they write their password. The names and number of the students who entered Kahoot! are shown on the screen of the teacher, as shown in Fig. 4.
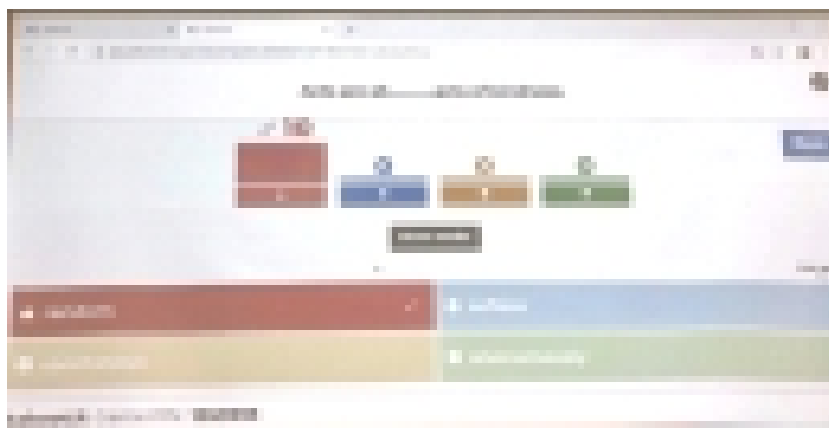

Figure 4. The names and the number of students

Step 5: Start game

After all the students join Kahoot!, it is started by Start Now button and play the Kahoot! with their teachers. Students choose their answers they think it is correct by click the button for each statement/ question that their teacher shows on the screen, as shown in Fig. 5.

Figure 5. Students choose the correct answers

4. CONCLUSION

Using Kahoot! in English learning, especially in English Reading Comprehension skill has a lot of advantages. Teachers can organize lessons with Kahoot! in the learning environment without technological failure or internet problems and they can easily motivate students to participate in the lessons by bringing a competitive feeling to the class environment. Kahoot! can focus students' attention on different extracurricular activities. Overall, these results provide strong support for the use of Kahoot! in the class as a tool to enhance classroom interaction in teaching EFL reading comprehension to EFL tertiary students.

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