



## USING ONLINE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES IN TEACHING-LEARNING AND EVALUATION

**Dr Digambar M. Ghodke**

Associate Professor

Department of English and PG Research Centre

Sangamner Nagarpalika Arts, D.J. Malpani Commerce and B.N.S. Science College (Autonomous)  
Sangamner, Maharashtra, India

### Abstract

With the advent of computer and internet, there has been a growing cry among the teachers of language and literature over the loss of reading habits among the students as they prefer spending most of their time on their mobile screens. Indeed, it is high time to ponder over the means that can help us customize students' dependency on mobile and internet for their educational needs constructively. Besides, on account of the Covid-19 pandemic recently, the world has changed at a quickening pace. The present paper is an attempt to share the personal experience of creating the active learning environment by the effective and efficient use of the online gaming and teaching models including the mobile based study applications (Quizlet) and tools for formative assessment (Kahoot). It underscores the fact that the problem of the excessive use of mobile phones and internet by students can be turned into a solution by using the mobile phones with internet connectivity as an effective way out in traditional classrooms.

**Keywords:** Active Learning, Covid-19, Kahoot, Mobile and Internet, Online Resources, Quizlet, Etc.

### 1. Introduction

With the advent of computer and internet, especially in this century, the whole socio-cultural set-up has turned upside down. Consequently, with this changing milieu and with the advent of mobile and internet, there has been a growing cry among the teachers of language and literature over the loss of reading habits among the school and college students as students prefer spending most of their time on their mobile screens (Anderson & Horrigan, 2016). Therefore, it is high time to ponder over the means that can help us customize students' dependency on mobile and internet for their educational needs constructively. Besides, on account of the Covid-19 pandemic recently, the world has changed at a quickening pace. Covid-19 has posed new challenges in every sphere of our lives and the field of education is no exception to it. Indeed, 'social distancing' seems to be the only way to prevent the outbreak of this disease. Amidst the situation of growing distancing among teachers and students, 'social distancing' may become a major intimidation to this bond. Hopefully, the world will soon come out of this life-threatening and catastrophic situation. As for the field of education is concerned, every possible step must be taken to not to let the bridge of the intimate relationship between a teacher and students fall asunder. Sooner the schools and colleges are expected to start functioning in the physical mode efficiently. Nonetheless, it is an underlined fact that this situation too has compelled us to contemplate over the possibilities of customizing the students' dependency on mobile and internet for the synchronous and asynchronous modes for the teaching-learning and evaluation process advantageously. Therefore, as teachers of this millennium, we need to ask ourselves:

1. How can students' dependence on mobile and internet be used for their educational needs constructively?
2. How should we transform our traditional classrooms-teacher-centric, lecture method by adopting 'student-centric' approaches to adapt to this changing scenario?
3. What methods/tools can we employ in our classrooms to transform the students' existing habits (dependency on mobile and addiction to social media) into constructive and creative ones?

With these reflections and questions, the present paper attempts to share the experience of using some of the student-centric online gaming and teaching models for blended learning environment by sharing the personal experience of using these models.

### 2. Literature Review

There are varied views regarding the usefulness of the online teaching-learning process. Some studies (Cabauatan et al, 2021) point out the factors affecting the intention to use blended learning approach in the tertiary level. The role of 'changing time' is yet another factor that has to be reconsidered and reflected over in this changing scenario. Several studies explain the role of the digital environment in empowering learners and teachers in changing times (Hargreaves and Goodson, 2006; Gibbons, 2016; Autor et al, 2019). Biesta (2009) focuses on the need to reconnect with the question of purpose in education with reference to the educational assessment, evaluation and accountability. Bolstad, et al (2012) in their report for the Ministry of Education, New Zealand share their perspective on supporting future-oriented learning and teaching in New Zealand. Loveless and Williamson (2013) explore the possibilities of rethinking creativity, education and technology in the context of learning in a digital age. Selwyn (2014) discusses the use of educational technology for changing times.



Thus, these studies underscore the fact that ‘changing time’ has brought these transformations. It is a known fact that the way we communicate, find information, shop, learn, and work have changed during the last two decades (Anderson, 2016; Smith & Anderson, 2016). Various studies have been conducted to determine the effects of using computer-aided instructions (Odeh, 2008; Janahi & Humaid, 2011; Schindler et al, 2017). Another study (Macaruso, Rodman, 2011) measured the effects of Computer-Aided Instruction/Learning (CAI/L) using a different programme. The revolution in mobile technology and internet has promoted affordable and steadfast communication across the globe during the last decade. It has enabled the effective use of CAI/CAL which involves the use of electronic devices especially computers effectively in the teaching-learning process at all levels of education. CAL helps not only in imparting knowledge by methods of teaching but also in creating a conducive learning environment. It can play a significant role in a situation wherein virtual education, online school, and distance learning systems is speedily replacing traditional education methods and devices, especially during the pandemic conditions under Covid-19 recently. With the advancement and evolution of technology, methods of language learning too have upgraded and advanced. One of the outcomes of these advancements is Mobile Assisted Learning (MAL). It has become a widespread technique today. This approach involves using smartphones (and/or other mobile devices) for learning. Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) involves learning a second language. MAL/MALL can be very useful in all kind of situations especially in traditional classrooms with limited or no ICT tools and limited space to create active learning environment in majority cases because the average language learner has a mobile phone. A mobile phone is useful in terms of its portability; it carried by people wherever they go and enables learners’ study anytime, anywhere. If the learning/language learning apps and activities are prepared by using amusing and entertaining methods, the learners will be motivated to develop interest in learning and studying outside of class as per the space and time convenient to them.

Further, some research scholars (Forsgren et al, 2014; Prince, 2004) emphasize on the concept of active learning as one of the prominent pedagogical strategies employed for motivating the learners to actively participate in the learning. It can rather help teachers reconsider their excessive dependence on the traditional lecturing method (Forsgren, Christensen, & Hedemalm, 2014; Prince, 2004). These learner-centric strategies include non-lecture-based teaching strategies like collaborative learning, problem-based learning, and experiential learning, etc. (Forsgren et al., 2014; Prince, 2004).

The Active Learning Classroom (ALC) not only transforms the pedagogy by making it more learner-centric but also encourages the learners to inculcate the self-learning attitude among students. For example, collaborative learning approach results into the socialization of the learners and the problem-solving method is helpful in developing the problem-solving aptitude among students. Subsequently, the ALC helps foster the kind of student-centred learning environment which is a key factor in enhancing students’ learning performance and success.

Of course, it goes without saying that for the effective implementation of the active classroom management techniques and tangible outcomes, ALCs require technology-enabled spacious classrooms. Consequently, it is a challenging task for the teachers/instructors in traditional classrooms equipped with limited or no ICT tools and limited space to create active learning environment in majority cases. Then, isn’t there a way out? Could we explore some more alternatives which may help us to this limitation? In the next section of this paper, I would like to share some of these possibilities that I have been exploring in my classrooms. Prior to that let me admit that this is the initial stage of my exploration. Hence, it would be too early to talk about the visible results of my efforts. However, the outbreak of the Covid -19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown has forced the teaching community to explore the alternatives to face to face teaching. Of course, there are differences of opinions in the effectiveness of the virtual or online teaching-learning process. However, my focus of discussion would be on blended learning.

### 3. Online Resources for Teaching-Learning and Evaluation

Nonetheless, the more positive one is, easier it is to find the ways out of the trouble. As mentioned earlier, teachers often grumble over the excessive use of mobile phones and internet by their students, especially for social media. However, this problem per se can be turned into a solution by using the mobile phones with internet connectivity as an effective way out for the teachers/instructors in traditional classrooms equipped with limited ICT tools and limited space to create active learning environment. At this point, I would like to share my personal experience of creating the active learning environment by the effective and efficient use of the online gaming and teaching models including the mobile based study applications (Quizlet) and tools for formative assessment (Kahoot, quizizz, etc.). Of course, there are other apps and tools too but I would like to share here only what I have myself practiced in my own my classroom milieu.

#### 3.1 Quizlet: An online study application

Quizlet, an American online study application that allows students to study information via learning tools and games. Quizlet trains students via flashcards and various games and tests. As a memorization tool, Quizlet lets registered users create sets of terms and



definition customized for their own needs. These sets of terms can then be studied under several study modes which include flash cards, learn mode, write mode, long term learning mode, speller mode, match mode, gravity mode, etc.

### 3.1.1 How do Quizlet Study Sets help learners?

As stated earlier, the Quizlet sets of terms can be studied under several study modes which include flash cards, learn mode, write mode, long term learning mode, speller mode, match mode, gravity mode, etc. The topic-wise terms and definitions in Quizlet study sets work as under:

- i) **The flash cards** can be flipped over by clicking or using the arrow keys or space bar to study the terms and definitions one by one either by reading or listening to the text auto read by the system.
- ii) **Learn mode** creates a personalized study plan based on students' familiarity with a set's content. As students answer more questions correctly, they advance from easier, multiple-choice questions to harder, written ones.
- iii) **In write mode**, users are shown a term or definition and must type the term or definition that goes with what is shown. After entering their answer, users see if the answer given was correct or not, and can choose to override the automatic grading and count their answer as right if needed.
- iv) In **Long-Term Learning** mode, users are given a recommended study set based on whether or not they answer study set questions correctly. Repetition of terms answered incorrectly increases in frequency and a dashboard shows learning progress over time. The mode uses spaced repetition concepts to focus on longer-term retention and subject mastery versus shorter-term memorization.
- v) In **Speller** mode, the term is read out loud and users must type in the term with the correct spelling. If the user gets every answer correct, they are rewarded with a video of a monster truck doing a jump, wheelie, and a flip.
- vi) In **Match** mode, users are presented with a grid of scattered terms. Users drag terms on top of their associated definitions to remove them from the grid and try to clear the grid in the fastest time possible. Micro-match is a related matching game geared towards mobile devices and devices with small screens.
- vii) In **Gravity** mode, definitions scroll vertically down the screen in the shape of asteroids. The user must type the term that goes with the definition before it reaches the bottom of the screen. It is one of the 'Play' study modes. Gravity was adapted from a previous game, Space Race. The user can pick the level of difficulty and game type.
- viii) In **Live** mode, a Quizlet user with a teacher upgrade (usually a teacher) breaks their class up into teams of however number of teams they want. The teacher chooses whether to start with a definition or term. Each team will have to choose the correct term/definition to win, with the team that has the most points winning. If the teacher decides to shuffle the teams, the groups are randomly put into new teams. This game works by choosing a set of flashcards and putting these flashcards into a format which works for the game.

I used Quizlet for teaching language, literature and literary criticism to my UG and PG classes. I found it very useful in helping my students learn literary, poetic and linguistic terms and definitions. Once the study sets with terms and definitions (by adding images as per availability) are created, students can use them in different modes. Study sets can be either created or copied from the available study sets in the Quizlet, edited and shared by the teacher. Further, students can be given the task of creating their own study sets as a part of the assignments under continuous internal assessment (CIA) in the recently introduced choice-based credit system (CBCS). Thus, Quizlet can be used as an effective means for collaborative teaching-learning and evaluation process on global level as the Quizlet study sets are available to the teachers and learners across the world.

### 3.2 Kahoot: a game-based learning platform

**Kahoot** is a game-based learning platform, used as educational technology in schools and other educational institutions. Its learning games, "Kahoots", are user-generated multiple-choice quizzes that can be accessed via a web browser or the Kahoot app. Kahoot! can be used to review students' knowledge, for formative assessment, or as a break from traditional classroom activities. Kahoot! also includes trivia quizzes. Teachers can use it to make classrooms more student-centric and engaging.

'Kahoots' are fun learning games which can be created in minutes. The format and number of questions is up to you. One can add videos, images and diagrams to the questions to amplify engagement. Kahoots can be created on the computer or in the mobile app. A game type can be a) Quiz (Multiple Choice questions) b) Jumble: Put answers in the right order c) Discussion: one question survey without points d) Survey: poll without points to gather opinions.

Kahoots are best played in a group setting. To join a game, students need a unique PIN. Teachers need a big screen if they wish to host the game. Students/Players answer on their own devices, while questions are displayed on a shared screen. Before Covid-19, I would frequently host a kahoot challenge on a big screen on poetry, figures of speech, linguistic concepts, literary terms, etc. in my UG and PG classes.



In addition to live games, a teacher can also send Kahoot challenges that students/player complete at their own pace – for example, for homework or remote training. Besides playing Kahoot! live, we can also try it in single-player mode in our mobile app or challenge others. Using the recently introduced new feature to create Kahoots in the Kahoot app, teachers can challenge students to create and share their own learning games, as part of Kahoot's "learners to leaders" pedagogy. Teachers do so by giving assignments of creating Kahoots on different topics from the given course as a part of an Internal Assessment.

I often assign the task of creating and sharing Kahoots on the topics from the syllabus to my students as one of the tools under CIA in CBCS. The students challenge their classmates to play the Kahoot on the given topic by sharing link created by them in the WhatsApp group of their class. After the game time (it is usually set for 24 hrs) gets over, the report downloadable in excel format is generated in the Kahoot account and they are asked to send the report to me by email. The report consists of the names of the participants, their score, and question wise performance. The report, further, accounts the learners who need help in learning. Kahoot challenges can be used at the beginning of the academic year to identify the slow and advanced learners in the class to devise and implement special activities for slow learners and advanced learners.

#### 4. Discussion

The effective use of Quizlet proved to be very significant in the teaching-learning and evaluation process in my classes. The major outcomes are discussed below:

1. As a teacher, I found 'Quizlet' very useful in helping my students learn the literary terms and concepts using their smartphones. The different study modes help learners to develop not only LSRW but also memorization and self-study skills.
2. I found both Quizlet and Kahoot advantageous in encouraging both independent or collaborative learning and creation by giving some basic training in using these applications, viz., downloading Quizlet and Kahoot apps from the Google play stores or visiting the weblinks, creating their accounts, creating their Quizlet study sets and Kahoots, sharing the links, playing Kahoots, studying Quizlet study sets in different study modes in one or two lectures.
3. I observed that the use of these tools was relevant in empowering students to take ownership of what they are learning, and present and share their new-found knowledge to their peers, in a lively and social way.
4. Furthermore, this pedagogy is innovative in a way as it increases knowledge retention.
5. This pedagogy is relevant as it boosts up deeper learning because learners reflect over not only correct answers to questions, but also understand potential incorrect answers.
6. The use of these applications helps students go from consumers of knowledge, to researchers, to creators, to facilitators, and finally to leaders, completing a full cycle of learning.
7. As a teacher, I would, rather, claim that this pedagogy enabled me to transform the traditional classrooms-teacher-centric, lecture method by adopting 'student-centric' approaches to adapt to this changing scenario.
8. The effective use of these online resources helps one transform the pedagogy by making it more learner-centric but also encourages the learners to inculcate the self-learning attitude among students. For example, collaborative learning approach results into the socialization of the learners and the problem-solving method is helpful in developing the problem-solving aptitude among students. Subsequently, the ALC helps foster the kind of student-centred learning environment which is a key factor in enhancing students' learning performance and success.
9. Lastly, in terms of the UGC guidelines for promotion under Career Advancement Scheme (CAS), teachers can score points under Category III by specifying this activity under "Innovative Pedagogy".

#### 5. Conclusion

Thus, my personal experience of using these online resources in the teaching-learning and evaluation process makes me believe that if we, the teachers, can employ such online resources in our classrooms to transform the students' existing habits (dependency on mobile and addiction to social media in this case) into constructive and creative ones. Instead of blaming our students for the excessive use of mobile phones and internet, this problem per se can be turned into a solution by using the mobile phones with internet connectivity as an effective way out in traditional classrooms equipped with limited ICT tools and limited space to create active learning environment.



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## Weblinks

1. <https://quizlet.com/>
2. <https://quizlet.com/>