TEACHERS’ AND STUDENTS’ VOICES TOWARD THE USE OF QUIPPER SCHOOL ON ENGLISH SUBJECT IN SMP N 40 SEMARANG

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Abstract
The rapid development of technology plays a certain part on the improvement of teaching-learning strategy. Recent studies on teaching learning strategy in teaching English as Foreign Language show an interest on the use of innovative methods. The advanced of information and communication technology (ICT) leads to various learning strategies, one of those is blended learning. Blended learning combines traditional and modern teaching methods (Throne, 2003). Despite having lecturing and having face-to-face activities all the time, teachers are able to use ICT devices such as computer and smartphone to conduct teaching-learning activities. Nowadays, there are a lot of websites and applications which help teachers to conduct blended learning, among those is Quipper School. Quipper School is a free online platform for teachers and students (Nurdiana, 2016). This qualitative study aims to investigate how Quipper School has been used. Furthermore, it also focuses on teachers’ and students’ perception toward the implementation. This study was carried out at SMPN 40 Semarang, one of public junior high schools in Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia. The data was gathered by conducting semi-structured interview, both English teachers and students. The interviews were recorded, were transcribed and were interpreted in order to have detail information on how Quipper School has been used and the teachers’ perception as well as the students’. It was found that during the implementation, the application helps the teachers to administrate students’ work and progress during the learning process. Quipper School makes teaching-learning process more fun for the students. Students views this learning more effective and very helpful compared with the previous way of learning.

Keyword: QUIPPER SCHOOL, blended-learning, EFL, TEFL

Introduction
Indonesia places at the third among countries in Asia-Pacific after China and India in term of the use of smartphone (eMarketer, 2016). Therefore, it is not a surprising picture to see people always bring and use their gadget everywhere and every minute, not to mention students. Most of students in big cities in Indonesia have their own smartphone. Palekahelu, Hunt, Thrupp, and Relmasira (2016) reported that in Kota Salatiga, Central Java, 80.5% out of 1738 students own smartphones. Smartphone has become students’ life in Indonesia. This phenomenon leads to the increase of online learning platforms which are able to be accessed through gadgets. This situation is seen as a good opportunity to the process of students’ learning. Teachers may collaborate face-to-face learning at school with learning via online. In
other words teachers may start to apply blended learning in their class. There have been a lot of studies on the use of online platforms as well as social media in teaching learning process. Abdillah (2016) conducted a research to know how the computer science students use social media in their learning. By observing 100 students, it is found that social media can be used as online attendance tool, as learning repository and dissemination, and as online event scheduling. Another study which focuses on the use of Moodle in Electrical Engineering Department of Sam Ratulangi University shows that a positive effect on increasing students' performance and raising exam pass rates in the courses (Paturusi, Chisaki, & Usagawa, 2012). Moreover, there are several studies which have been conducted by several researchers on the use of Quipper School in teaching English. A study which focuses on teacher’s experience in using Quipper School in the teaching process was conducted by Waluyo (2016). He claimed that Quipper School helps teacher to assign learning task to students outside the classroom. Teacher is also able to monitor students’ tasks and is able to evaluate the students learning achievement in reading, listening and writing. Furthermore, Nurdiana (2016) conducted a study which focuses on the use of Quipper School in teaching English at tenth grade of MAN 2 Ponorogo. It claims that this platform is very helpful for teachers in making, sharing and evaluating the material as well as the students in learning independently. Furthermore, Quipper School is also claimed enhancing listening skill and increasing students’ motivation (Bang, Kanokkarnkittichartchaowalit & Saekhow, 2016). The previous studies reported there are a lot of benefits after applying Quipper School. Thus, we would like to know English teachers’ and students’ perceptions at SMP N 40 Semarang, one of the public schools, which has started applying Quipper School application as teachers’ aid in the learning process since the beginning of second semester of the academic year 2016/2017.

Methodology

This research belongs to a qualitative study which was conducted at SMP N 40 Semarang, one of the public schools in Semarang. Two teachers and twenty students were interviewed regarding to their perspective toward the use of Quipper School platform in English class. The data were collected through interviewing two English teachers at that school. In addition, interviews were also conducted to gain students’ perceptions toward the use of Quipper School. The interviews were semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interviews were conducted since this method allows the interviewer to develop the questions, and allows the interviewee to elaborate their answer. Harrel and Bradley (2009) stated that the interviewer has some discretion about the order in which questions are asked, but the questions are standardized, and probes may be provided to ensure that the researcher covers the correct material. This kind of interview collects detailed information in a style that is somewhat conversational. Kajornboon says the strengths of semi-structured interviews are that the researcher can prompt and probe deeper into the given situation. And the researcher also be able to explain or rephrase the questions if respondents are unclear about the questions. The collected data from the interviews are transcribed followed by data reduction. The data were sorted and categorized into several categories. Then those data were reported in the form of words. To validate the data, the analysis of the collected data are checked by the
Finding and Discussion

This section provides the finding of the research as well as the discussion. The findings will be divided into two sub-sections as follow: Quipper School for teacher and Quipper School for students.

Quipper School for teachers

Based on the interviews which were conducted toward two English teachers at SMP N 40 Semarang, it is claimed that Quipper School helped them in preparing their teaching-learning process. Furthermore, Quipper School provides materials which are accordance to the curriculums, such as KTSP or Curriculum 2013.

We are helped by the application. It is easier than before. We can prepare the material before the class easier. And the material is the same with the curriculum 2013. (DW)

Quipper School provides material that we can used as supplement. And those materials are in line with the curriculum. So, it helps me a lot. (ES)

Quipper School is provided by a menu in which makes the teachers easy to monitor students’ tasks. Teachers may give several tasks to the students for several materials, and ask the students to do and submit them. Through this menu, they can check students’ tasks, whether or not they have completed the whole tasks given.

We can see students’ effort in completing the tasks. We can monitor their activity. For example they have done three tasks from four tasks given, we can check and re-check it to the students, and ask them to complete the tasks before the due date. (DW)

This application helps us in collecting students’ tasks that we gave. We can see who have submitted and who haven’t. When the class starts, I will call the students’ one by one regarding to the tasks completion. (ES)

This platform also provides a service which can be used to help teachers in conducting behavioral assessment of Curriculum 2013.

We can also conduct behavioral assessment for the students. For example the aspect of discipline, we can use students’ tasks to see who submit in time and complete the tasks and who do not. (ES)

I use students’ tasks to assess their responsibility as the one of the aspects of behavioral assessment. (DW)

National Exam’s test sheets are also provided by this platform. And the teachers use this test sheets to conduct daily tests and practices. When the students are asked to do the test, their score will be automatically saved and stored.

I have conducted daily test twice for grade nine. The test is taken from the national exam test from previous years. (ES)

The score of students’ test, we can see it automatically after they complete the test. And this helps us to administer the score. I use it as daily test score. (DW)
Teachers are also helped in analyzing which material which may difficult for their students. And based on the analysis, teachers re-explain the materials.

After the students finish the test, we can see the analysis of the test item. We can see in which material they have difficulties. And after that in the next meeting, I explain again to them about the materials. (DW)

Quipper School also motivates teachers to conduct various learning strategies, media. It also motivates them to share this learning strategy toward other teachers.

After knowing this application, I feel motivated to search other strategies to make the students enjoy learning English, such as I conducted outdoor learning. They learn out of class. And that’s very helpful to let their stress out. I also start to make use of WhatsApp in teaching learning. (DW)

I realize that there are a lot of strategies that can be used to make students love to learn English. Knowing this application is really helpful. We share it to other teachers. Because our students also tell us that it will be helpful for them to learn other subjects such as mathematics, science. (ES)

Teachers are also motivated to check their students’ progress regularly. They may check their active participation toward the tasks given, their activities using Quipper School, their understanding toward the materials.

There are a lot of efforts to monitor students’ progress before using this application. But now, it is easier to monitor them. We can check it everywhere, at home, school. We can see their activities by using Quipper School. How often they practice. (DW)

Despite a lot of the benefits in using the Quipper School, internet connection is being the issue in conding blended learning using Quipper School. School has provided wifi, yet the connection has not reached all of the classes.

One of the weaknesses in using this application is the internet connection. The connection can not reach several classes, so that I have to bring the students to the area in which the connection can reach their gadgets. (DW)

Wifi connection is one of weakness. The students have brought their gadgets but the internet connection does not reach their class, so we move to other part of the school which provides strong signal. (ES)

**Quipper School for students**

Students argue that learning via online allows them to practice and to do exercises everywhere. They may do the tasks and the exercises given by their teachers at school, after the class is over.

For me, it is very helpful, because I can use it to do the assignments everywhere, and anytime. I can do the tasks at home, at school. And if I have finished the tasks, I can send it directly. (CM)

I can do the homework everywhere and anytime by using my smartphone. I can do that at home, school, or even when I hang out with my friends. (RH)

I can finish the tasks that my teacher gave, and I can submit it at that time without waiting for next meeting. (ED)
One of the benefits in using Quipper School is I can do my homework and submit to my teacher at that time. (RD)

I can do my homework at school, after I got the task and submit it right away. (RA)

Since the platform provides a lot of exercises, some students claim that they are motivated to do several exercises. That makes them eager to check their understanding toward the material taught. Furthermore, they are able to complete the task I group or they may work with their friends.

Quipper School provides a lot of exercises, and I can practice more. (GZ)

Quipper School helps me learning grammar, because there are a lot of exercises. Not only exercise but also there is explanation of the use of grammar. (YE)

There are a lot of exercises of texts. And through the exercises I learn a lot about vocabulary. There are new vocabularies that I found after doing the exercises. (MD)

The texts that are provided by Quipper School allow me to know new knowledge and information. (IM)

We can do the exercises alone or with our friends. Before we use Quipper School, we rarely have group work. Working with friends is helpful, because we can share and discuss the tasks rather than doing on our own. (RD)

Because there are some friends who do not have gadget, we sometime have group work. And it is much more fun than working the tasks alone. (EP)

They also add that learning through Quipper School is simpler than the usual. It is because all of the materials have been stored on the application, so that they do not have to bring text book to school.

It is more practical. We still can learn and study without bringing the textbook. (CM)

When we have to do group work, we usually bring textbook which is usually thick. But now, we just need to bring our gadget to do the tasks. We can do the task at our friend’s house. (RD)

Regarding to the character building, students are aware of it. They stated that through this platform they are taught to be discipline and responsible.

With this application, we are more discipline than before. For example, we have assignment and there is due date of the submission. It triggers us to do and submit the assignment as soon as possible. (RH)

I fell more discipline now. When my teacher gives us task, I try to do it as soon as possible, because usually my teacher gives us deadline to submit the task. (GT)

Compared with the previous learning, I am more discipline. Previously, when my teacher gives us homework, usually it will be discussed on the next meeting, so I don’t fell in a hurry to do it. But now, she gives us deadline. So, I have to finish it before the deadline. (RD)

My teacher gives us not only individual work but also group work. When we do the group work usually we divide the work, so that each member has their part. This teaches us to be responsible to do our part. (RA)

I learn to be responsible to the task given by my teacher. If I do not do this task means that I do not do my responsibility and it will effect on my score. (IM)
They also claim that they start to learn independently, doing the tasks by themselves. Therefore they also stated that they still need teachers’ guidance to explain the material that they do not understand.

Since we can do the tasks, practice the exercises everywhere, it means that we do it ourselves without teacher. When we have difficulty, we usually search through the internet. (GT)

Usually if there are difficult question, we try to search first. Then when we meet our teacher, we ask her. (RH)

Sometimes when I found difficult question, I will try to search it. And if I can not find the answer, I ask my teacher to explain about it. (FD)

Quipper School provides service in which students are able to check and redo their exercise. Thus they are more motivated in trying the online practices. They are not afraid in learning and doing the English exercises.

This is the first time I learn using online application. I am very curious about it. And I know that I can do the exercise and check my answer. So, I know which question I am right and wrong. (YE)

When I do the exercise I can check my answer. If I am wrong I know the right answer, and I learn why it is the right answer. It helps me a lot to practice. (MD)

Not only I can know the right answer, I can also re-do that exercise. That’s very interesting. (RH)

Because I know that I can check and re-do the exercise, I am not afraid of doing the exercise like before. (RD)

Before using this application, I am very afraid of English. I am afraid of making mistake. But now, I can check and re-do my practice. And it encourages me to keep learning. (RD)

Discussion

Nowadays, there are a lot of teaching media which are used by teachers in conducting teaching learning process. E-learning is one of the teaching media which is promoted since the rapid development of online learning. And Quipper School is one of e-learning platform that supports students’ independent learning (Nurdiana, 2016).

Teaching learning by using Quipper School has proved that it helps both teachers and students at SMP N 40 Semarang especially on English subject. Both teacher and students are able to keep performing their duties such as monitoring students’ progress for teachers and learning for the students everywhere and anytime. Beside the students are able to learn everywhere and anywhere, they are also able to learn with their other friends. It shows that learning via online such as using Quipper School is more flexible, convenient, and more interactive (Munashinge, 2013:389). Teaching learning process no longer has to be performed at school (Condie & Munro, 2007). This will lead to the students’ engagement toward the learning environment. Furthermore, the students are able to create their learning habit away from school (Hayes, Mills, Christie & Lindgard, 2005). They are able to search for learning material, for enhancing their knowledge, for searching for information assigned by a teacher,
finding the meaning of difficult words, translating English to Indonesian, and for communicating learning material and assignment given by teachers (Palekahelu et.al., 2016).

Combining face-to-face learning and online learning makes the process of teaching learning more interesting for teachers as well as students (Silviyanti & Yusuf, 2016). Teachers may use ICT devices such as computer, laptop, and LCD Projector in explaining and discussing the material on the class, while out of the class teachers may use their gadget to inform their students regarding to the assignments. Furthermore, Osguthorpe and Graham (2003) stated that “Those who use blended learning environments are trying to maximize the benefits of both face-to-face and online methods—using the web for what it does best, and using class time for what it does best.” Thus, teaching learning process using blended-learning is more efficient than conventional learning.

Moreover, learning through Quipper School motivates and elevates students’ self-regulated learning or in other words independent learning. Students learn to be independent and in control of their communication and learning, recognizing that they do not need to depend on teachers and schools for learning. (Palekahelu, 2016). In addition, independent learning is seen as goal of language teacher (Healey, 2002). Students are consciously and actively practice their language through the help of technology. They may practice their listening skill along with vocabulary and pronounce as well as reading, writing, and grammar. However, students are still difficult to practice their speaking skill. It is seen from the interviews that most of them claim that they are help in those aspects, yet no one states that they are helped in practicing speaking.

Quipper School allows teachers to monitor their students’ learning. This is one of the ways to maintain interaction between teachers and students. This way, teachers will show their attention toward their students. As the result students are aware toward their teachers’ effort and attention, and this leads to the development of teacher-student relation (Jeffrey, Milne, Suddaby, & Higgins, 2014). When teacher and students have a good relation, they will be more engaged on the process of teaching-learning process in and out of the school. Students feel comfortable in learning and asking questions to their teachers. Thus, the learning outcome will be more satisfying.

Learning though online such as using Quipper School also elevates various characters building. Students are taught to be discipline and responsible to what is assigned by the teachers. Teachers use due date strategy to awaken students’ awareness toward their responsibility. This way, students try to fulfill their duty, to be on time in submitting the tasks. Moreover, both individual and group work is assigned by the teacher. This is meant to make the students familiar with group work. Group work engages student to join the group activities, to share information, to help each other, to discuss topic given, and to solve problems (Wenger, 2012). Consequently, students actively participate on the process of teaching-learning.

The use of Quipper School as the aid to the teaching learning process also effect on the teachers. Teachers are more creative in conducting the teaching learning process (Padurean & Margan, 2009). They may use different kinds of materials, such as pictures, audio, and video. They also may provide different texts to enhance students’ knowledge especially English.
Teachers are able to access authentic text and share it to the students, so that learning language is more meaningful.

Conclusion

One of the finding which is significant from this research is that Quipper School elevates both teachers’ and students’ motivation in teaching learning process of English. Teachers are helped by the platform in preparing until evaluating the teaching materials. They are also motivated for being active in giving the tasks for their students, checking the tasks, and assessing students’ works. Furthermore, this platform motivates the students to learn English more actively compared with the conventional one. They may practice the materials everywhere and anytime.

These findings have important implications toward future practice of English at school. This learning which combines and blends online and face-to-face learning is seen to be more effective to for the teachers to develop courses (Aritonang, 2014) and to broaden students’ knowledge of English.

References


