

Abstract:

The article looks at the use of mobile devices in high schools. Our qualitative research was based on a multiple case study carried out in three grammar schools and was composed of interviews with teachers who use mobile devices in lessons and their pupils. Our study shows that mobile devices are used in these schools in almost all subjects, mostly to search for information on the internet or do quizzes. Tablets increase the degree of individualization of lessons, promoting independence and boosting pupil activity. However, tablets do have their drawbacks. Pupils can be distracted and lose concentration due to announcements generated by applications running in the background. Moreover, they can easily access activities that have nothing to do with a lesson. Complications can also be caused by technical problems, which prevent pupils from working effectively with their device.

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Introduction

The decision whether to use digital technologies in lessons depends on teachers themselves. Teachers' beliefs are the main factor in digital mobile technology acceptance. If teachers feel that digital mobile technology are stable, comfortable or have interactivity for the educational context, they can positively use it for educational purposes (Leem and Sung, 2019).

There are a number of Czech publications dealing with the possibilities of using tablets in lessons, less attention is paid to the actual use of tablets in lessons. Benediktová (2017) is an exception, claiming that only around half of lower secondary school teachers use or would like to use tablets in their lessons.

The above mentioned findings led us to the decision to find out how mobile devices are used in lessons in Czech high schools, specifically grammar schools. The aim of the study is to examine the way tablets are used in grammar school lessons. The aim of the study gave rise to our research questions concerning subjects and types of activity where tablets are used; advantages and disadvantages of using tablets; difficulties preventing them from being used effectively; rules regarding their use and pupils' opinions on the benefits of using them.

Materials and methods

Our research was designed and carried out as qualitative. This approach was chosen because it was intended to give a detailed description of the way tablets are used in lessons from both pupils' and teachers' perspective. On the contrary, it was not intended to obtain a representative sample of schools and to interpret the results statistically.

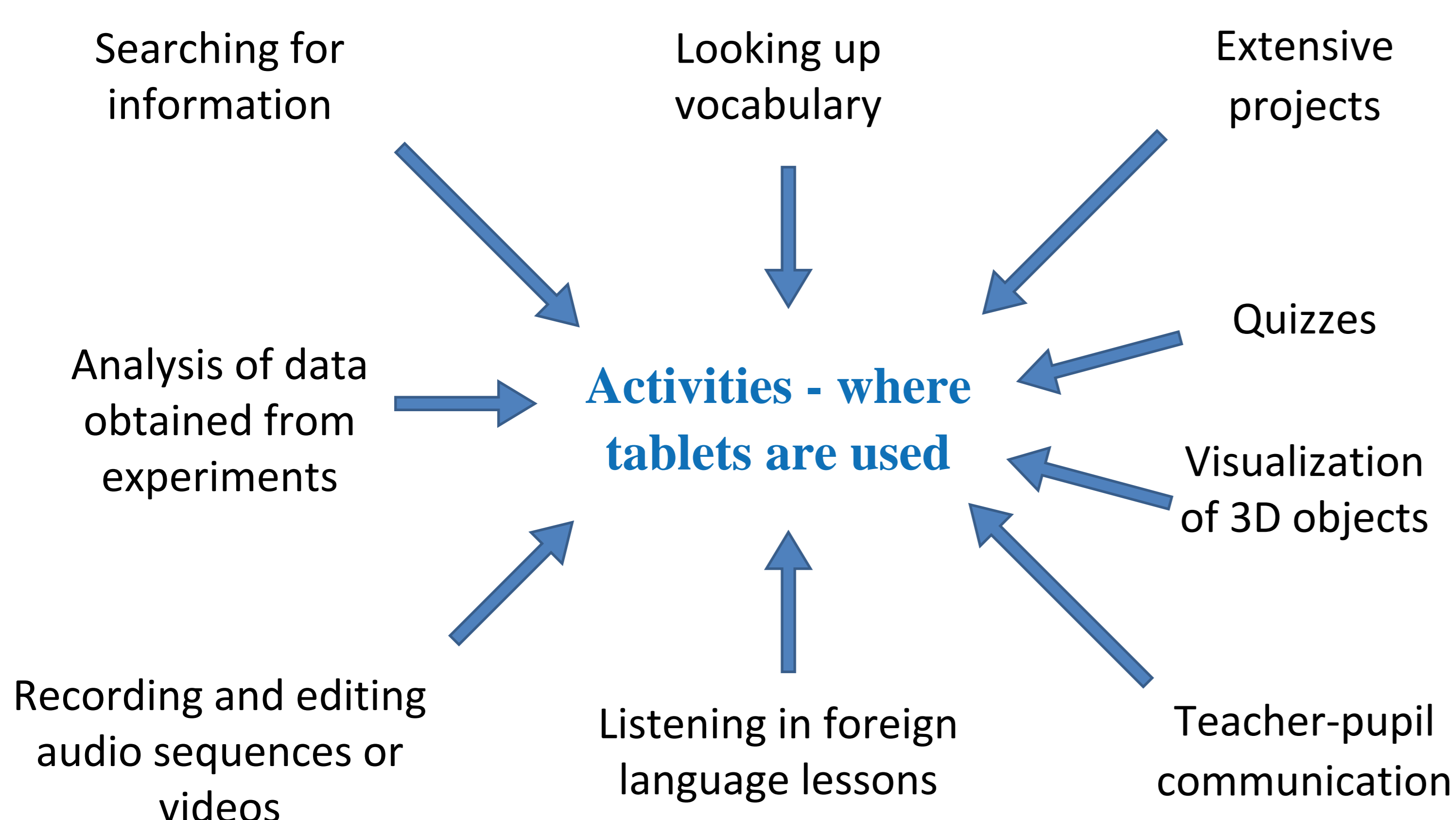
Participants chosen for the research were teachers and pupils from three grammar schools where tablets are used in lessons. One grammar school was chosen due to it having special so-called tablet classes. Moreover, pupils at this particular school use electronic course books in lessons. The other two grammar schools loan school tablets to pupils for a particular lesson and do not use electronic course books. We realized semi-structured in-depth interviews with:

- 33 pupils
- 4 teachers

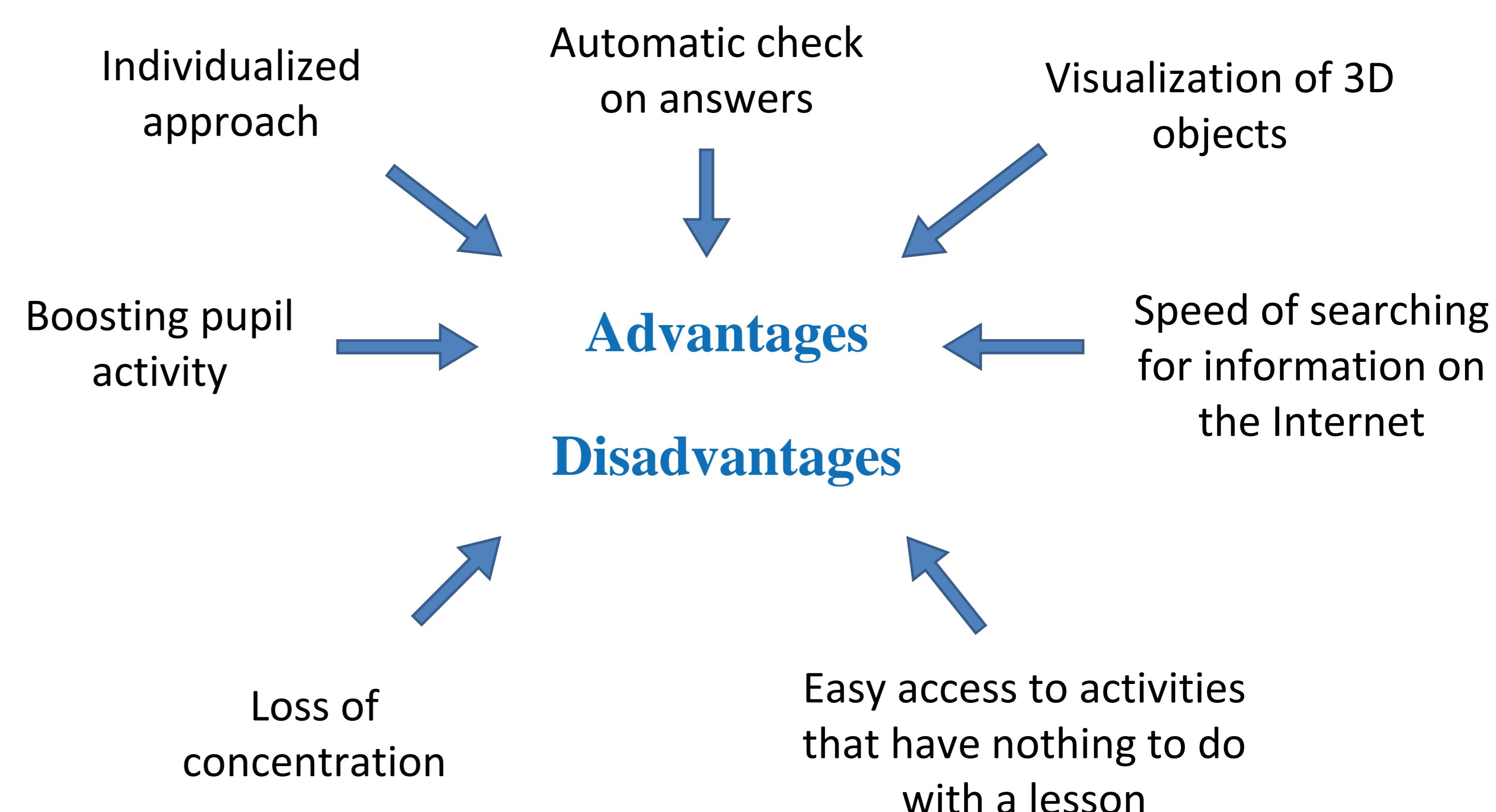
Analysis of acquired data was based on the open coding method, and creating categories. (Strauss and Corbin, 1999). The principle of constant comparison was included in the process of overall analysis (Švaříček, Šed'ová et al., 2007). The aim of this comparison was to find differences within data sources relating to one research participant and within data concerning various participants.

Results

Activities - where tablets are used



Advantages and disadvantages of using tablets



Difficulties preventing the effective use of tablets

Technical difficulties

- Wi-Fi connection problems
- Operating system updates
- Low battery problems
- Outdated tablets

Pupils' lack of ability to use tablets

- Lack of experience in working with particular applications
- Lack of experience in working with tablets
- Active notifications

Difficulties related to a teacher's lesson preparation

- Demanding nature of creating lesson curriculum and preparing lesson materials

Conclusion

Our qualitative study focuses on the use of tablets in lessons at grammar schools that proclaim their use of tablets in lessons. However, some teachers at these schools disapprove of tablets while others mainly have their pupils using them as a tool for acquiring information and for working with instructional programs.

Since tablets were found to be used in almost all subjects, the argument that tablets are not suitable for use in some subjects is disproved. It is clear that tablets cannot be used in all activities and there are activities where traditional methods cannot be replaced by tablets. On the contrary, there are areas where such devices can be of appropriate help. It emerged that some teachers have trouble finding appropriate ways to use tablets in their lessons. This problem could be related to a lack of high quality electronic course books, didactic software or teachers not knowing how to put tablets to good use.

References

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