



STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON THE USE OF KAHOOT IN ENGLISH LEARNING MOTIVATION AT GRADE 10 OF SMA YP HKBP PEMATANGSIANTAR

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ABSTRACT

English is an international language that plays an important role in communication, education, and future career development. However, many Indonesian students still struggle with low motivation when learning English because teaching practices are often teacher-centered and lack interactive media. To address this issue, this study explored Grade 10 students' perspectives on the use of Kahoot! as a game-based learning platform to enhance their motivation in English learning at SMA YP HKBP Pematangsiantar. This research employed a quantitative descriptive method with a survey design, using a Likert-scale questionnaire administered to 16 students who had experienced Kahoot!-based activities. The findings revealed that 68.75% of the students showed very positive perceptions toward Kahoot!, indicating that the platform increased their excitement, participation, and enjoyment during English lessons. Students also reported improvements in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of learning, suggesting that Kahoot! made the classroom atmosphere more active, engaging, and student-centered. Overall, the study concludes that Kahoot! effectively enhances students' learning motivation by offering a fun, competitive, and interactive learning experience. Therefore, integrating Kahoot! into English classrooms is recommended as a strategy to improve students' motivation and encourage their active involvement in learning.

Keywords: Students' Perspective, Learning Motivation, Kahoot

A. INTRODUCTION

English has become a crucial global language for communication, academic advancement, and professional mobility, making its mastery increasingly important for students preparing to participate in a competitive and interconnected world. In the Indonesian context, English is taught as a foreign language and plays a vital role in accessing global knowledge, higher education, and employment opportunities. However, despite its significance, many Indonesian



learners continue to demonstrate low motivation and limited engagement in English learning. This condition is often attributed to instructional practices that remain predominantly teacher-centered, emphasizing textbook-based instruction and conventional assessment methods with minimal integration of interactive learning media (Laila & Adityarini, 2023); (Fauzi et al., 2024). Such practices tend to restrict students' active participation and autonomy, resulting in monotonous classroom experiences that reduce learners' enthusiasm, confidence, and willingness to use English (Damayanti et al., 2022). Consequently, enhancing students' motivation requires the adoption of more engaging, student-centered, and technology-supported instructional approaches.

The integration of technology in language learning has been widely recognized as an effective means of improving learner motivation, engagement, and achievement. According to constructivist learning theory, students learn more effectively when they actively construct knowledge through interaction, collaboration, and meaningful experiences rather than passive reception of information. Technology-enhanced learning environments support this process by providing interactive tasks, immediate feedback, and opportunities for self-directed learning ((SaThierbach et al., 2015)((Jonassen, n.d.)). In addition, self-determination theory emphasizes that learners' motivation increases when learning activities satisfy their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Digital learning tools, particularly those incorporating game elements, have been shown to address these motivational needs by allowing students to make choices, experience achievement, and interact with peers in enjoyable ways.

Recent advancements in digital education have introduced various interactive platforms that support more dynamic and learner-centered English classrooms. Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) have transformed traditional EFL instruction by enabling multimedia input, interactive practice, and authentic language exposure (Chapelle et al., n.d.). Furthermore, digital assessment tools have gained increasing attention for their ability to provide formative feedback, promote learner reflection, and reduce test anxiety compared to traditional paper-based assessments (Shute, 2008; Brown & Abeywickrama, 2019). Digital assessments are particularly effective when they are integrated into learning activities and designed to be interactive, engaging, and learner-friendly.



Among technology-based approaches, game-based learning and gamification have emerged as powerful strategies in English language education. Game-based learning incorporates game mechanics such as points, competition, rewards, and instant feedback into instructional activities to increase learner motivation and engagement ((Deterding, 2011)). Previous studies have demonstrated that gamified learning environments can improve students' vocabulary acquisition, grammar mastery, reading comprehension, and speaking confidence in EFL contexts ((Plass et al., 2015); Hung, 2017). These approaches are particularly effective for adolescent learners, as they align with students' interests, learning preferences, and digital literacy.

One widely used game-based learning platform is Kahoot!, a digital quiz-based application that allows teachers to create interactive learning and assessment activities. Kahoot! integrates visual design, time-limited questions, music, and instant feedback, creating a competitive yet enjoyable learning atmosphere. Previous research has reported that Kahoot! enhances students' motivation, attention, and classroom participation in English learning (Figuccio & Johnston, 2025); (Prayudi, 2023); (Ismail et al., 2015) found that Kahoot! increased students' willingness to participate actively in English lessons, while (Ramaila, 2024) highlighted its effectiveness in fostering positive emotions and reducing anxiety during assessment. Moreover, Kahoot! functions not only as a learning tool but also as a form of digital formative assessment, enabling teachers to monitor students' understanding in real time and adjust instruction accordingly.

In addition, the effectiveness of technology-enhanced language learning can be explained through the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). (SaThierbach et al., 2015) states that learners are more likely to engage with educational technology when it is perceived as useful and easy to use. In EFL classrooms, this suggests that digital platforms such as Kahoot! can increase students' motivation and engagement when they are viewed as enjoyable, practical, and supportive of learning goals.

Moreover, students' engagement in game-based learning can be understood through flow theory, which emphasizes optimal learning experiences. (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) explains that learners become highly motivated when they are fully immersed in activities that balance challenge and skill. Game-based platforms like Kahoot! create such conditions by offering



clear goals, immediate feedback, and interactive challenges, which can enhance students' intrinsic motivation in English learning.

Finally, previous research confirms that gamification positively influences learners' motivation in EFL contexts. Deterding et al. (2011) argue that the integration of game elements in non-game learning environments increases engagement and sustained motivation. This finding supports the use of Kahoot! as an effective gamified learning and assessment tool in English classrooms.

To address these challenges, the use of Kahoot is proposed as an innovative instructional strategy in English classes at SMA YP HKBP Pematangsiantar. Kahoot is implemented as an interactive, game-based learning platform that enables students to actively participate in the learning process through real-time quizzes accessed via their smartphones. In practice, the teacher prepares Kahoot quizzes that are aligned with the lesson objectives, such as vocabulary development, grammar practice, or reading comprehension. During the lesson, students join the game using a provided PIN and respond to the questions either individually or in groups, allowing learning to take place in an enjoyable and competitive atmosphere. The immediate feedback and score display provided by Kahoot help students reflect on their understanding and increase their motivation to engage with the material.

In terms of timing, Kahoot is strategically integrated into different stages of the English learning process at SMA YP HKBP Pematangsiantar. At the beginning of the lesson, Kahoot can be used as a warm-up activity to activate students' prior knowledge and create a positive learning atmosphere. During the lesson, it serves as a reinforcement tool to strengthen students' understanding of newly introduced material. At the end of the lesson, Kahoot functions as a formative assessment to evaluate students' comprehension in an engaging and less intimidating way. Through this systematic implementation, Kahoot helps create a more interactive, student-centered learning environment that aligns with students' interests and learning preferences, thereby improving motivation and participation in English classrooms.

Despite the growing interest in digital game-based learning, empirical research on the implementation of Kahoot! in Indonesian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, particularly at the senior high school level, remains limited. Many existing studies focus primarily on general student perceptions or classroom engagement, with fewer studies



examining how learners' motivation is shaped by gamified learning tools within specific school settings. Additionally, research exploring students' perspectives is essential, as learners' attitudes and experiences play a crucial role in the successful integration of educational technology.

In response to this research gap, the present study aims to explore Grade 10 students' perspectives on the use of Kahoot! in English learning at SMA YP HKBP Pematangsiantar. By examining learners' experiences and motivational responses, this study seeks to provide empirical insights into the role of gamification and digital assessment in enhancing student motivation. The findings are expected to contribute to the growing body of research on technology-enhanced EFL instruction and to inform English teachers about the potential of Kahoot! as an effective tool for fostering motivation, engagement, and positive learning experiences in Indonesian senior high school classrooms.

B. METHOD

This study employed a quantitative descriptive method using a survey approach to examine Grade 10 students' perceptions of using Kahoot! in English learning. A descriptive survey is appropriate for identifying existing conditions without manipulating variables and allows researchers to describe trends and attitudes within a population (Creswell, 2017).

A descriptive survey design was used to collect quantitative data regarding students' motivation toward Kahoot!-based learning activities. The independent variable was the use of Kahoot! in English lessons, and the dependent variable was students' motivation. The study involved distributing a structured questionnaire to students who had previously participated in Kahoot!-assisted English learning sessions.

The population consisted of 55 Grade 10 students at SMA YP HKBP Pematangsiantar in the 2025/2026 academic year. A purposive sampling technique was applied to select 27 students who had taken part in at least two English learning activities using Kahoot!. This ensured that participants had sufficient experience with the platform to provide reliable responses.



The main instrument used in this study was a questionnaire, which was the most important part of the research because it directly dealt with the main goal of the study. The questionnaire was used to find out if students felt motivated when their teacher used Kahoot! during English lessons. Since motivation is something that comes from inside and relates to how students feel, what they think, and how they behave while learning, a questionnaire was seen as the best way to collect students' responses about their motivation in a clear and measurable way. Questionnaires are commonly used in educational research to gather reliable numerical data on students' attitudes and their motivation towards different teaching methods (Creswell, 2017).

The questionnaire had 20 statements, and each was made to show how motivated students felt after taking part in English lessons that used Kahoot!. Each question was answered on a five-point scale, where 1 meant strongly disagree, 2 was disagree, 3 was neutral, 4 was agree, and 5 was strongly agree. This way, students could show how much they agreed or disagreed with each statement. It helped the researcher understand both how strong their motivation was and what general feelings they had. Using this scale also made it easier to do statistical analysis and look at the results in a clear way.

To measure motivation fully, the questionnaire was designed around three main areas of learning: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. These areas were chosen because they cover how students think, feel, and act during the learning process.

The cognitive part looked at how students used their thinking skills when learning English with Kahoot!. It checked how focused they were, how well they understood the material, how they thought about the questions, and how well they remembered information during quizzes. This part asked if Kahoot! helped students understand lessons better and made them think more during activities.

The affective part looked at how students felt about using Kahoot! for English learning. It measured emotions like happiness, interest, excitement, confidence, and less worry during lessons. It also asked if Kahoot! made English lessons more fun, if it made students more interested in learning, and if it made them feel more excited to take part in class.

The psychomotor part looked at what students did during Kahoot! lessons. It checked how quickly they answered questions, how willing they were to participate, how involved they were



in class activities, and how responsive they were. This part asked if Kahoot! made students more active, involved, and eager to take part in English lessons.

The researcher worked with one of the English teachers at SMA YP HKBP Pematangsiantar, who had experience using Kahoot! in teaching. This teamwork helped make sure the questions in the questionnaire were suitable for the students' level, matched the goals of English learning, and fit the real classroom setting. The teacher helped improve the way the questions were worded so they were clear and easy to understand.

Before using the questionnaire in the study, it was checked for validity and reliability. Validity means the questions properly measured what they were meant to, like students' motivation. Reliability means the questionnaire gave consistent results each time it was used. Because of these checks, the questionnaire was considered both valid and reliable for measuring students' motivation towards using Kahoot! in English classes.

Since the questionnaire covered motivation in three areas—thinking, feelings, and actions—it became the main tool for collecting data. The answers from the questionnaire gave real evidence about how students felt about using Kahoot! in their lessons, which was key to reaching the study's goals.

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, to summarize students' perceptions and motivation levels. Percentage calculations followed Apriani's (2024) formula:

$$P = (f/N) \times 100\%,$$

where P is the percentage, f the frequency, and N the total number of participants. The analysis focused on identifying overall trends in students' motivation and determining which learning aspects were most influenced by the use of Kahoot!.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This study involved 27 Grade 10 students of SMA YP HKBP Pematangsiantar who had experienced Kahoot!-based English learning activities. Students' motivation scores, obtained

from the questionnaire, were classified into four categories: *Very Good*, *Good*, *Fair*, and *Poor*. The distribution of students' total motivation scores is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Students' Total Motivation Scores

No	Interval Score	Frequency	Percentage	Category
1	85–100	11	68.75%	Very Good
2	75–84	2	12.50%	Good
3	65–74	2	12.50%	Fair
4	55–64	0	0.00%	Poor
Total		16	100%	

The results show that the majority of students (68.75%) were categorized as having very good motivation toward English learning after the implementation of Kahoot!. A smaller proportion of students fell into the *good* (12.50%) and *fair* (12.50%) categories, while no students were classified as having poor motivation.

In addition to the overall motivation scores, students' responses across the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects revealed generally positive tendencies.

1. In the cognitive aspect, students reported improved concentration and understanding of English material during Kahoot!-based activities.
2. In the affective aspect, students expressed positive emotions such as enjoyment, enthusiasm, and increased confidence when participating in English lessons.
3. In the psychomotor aspect, students demonstrated active participation, faster responses, and greater involvement during classroom activities.

These findings indicate that students responded positively to the use of Kahoot! across all three motivational dimensions.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study show that using Kahoot! greatly improved students' motivation when learning English. A high number of students fell into the "Very Good" motivation group, which suggests that Kahoot! made the learning experience more exciting and engaging than traditional teaching methods. This finding agrees with earlier research that found game-based learning tools can boost student motivation and class participation (Ismail et al., 2023; Ramaila, 2024).

From a theoretical angle, these results fit with Self-Determination Theory (SDT), developed by Deci and Ryan (2000). SDT says students are more naturally motivated when their learning



includes feelings of autonomy, competence, and connection. Kahoot! helps students by letting them answer questions on their own (autonomy), giving them quick feedback on how they're doing (competence), and encouraging competition or teamwork in class (connection). These features probably helped explain why students in this study felt so motivated.

The good results in thinking and learning show that Kahoot! helps students understand and stay focused when learning English. The pretty look of the app and the way quizzes are organized might make it easier for students to take in information, which matches what Figuccio and Johnston (2021) found they said Kahoot! improves understanding and keeps students more engaged.

When it comes to feelings, students having more fun and feeling less stressed means Kahoot! makes learning feel less scary. This agrees with (Goffman, 2017), who found that using games for tests can make students feel less anxious and more interested in learning a language.

Looking at actions, students being more involved shows that Kahoot! makes them take part in learning in a real way, like paying attention and responding. This backs up the idea that digital games not only check what students know but also make them actively take part in learning.

However, the fact that some students fell into the good and fair motivation categories shows that Kahoot! didn't work the same for everyone. Things like not knowing much about technology, not having reliable devices, or having poor internet might have affected how students learned. These issues have been seen before in studies about using technology in Indonesian classrooms (Lin & Chen, 2020).

In general, the discussion shows that Kahoot! is more than just a tool for checking knowledge. It also helps to motivate students in English learning. Its positive effects on thinking, emotions, and physical actions show that it can help make English lessons more student-centered and interesting, especially in high school settings.

D. CONCLUSION

This study shows that using Kahoot! in English classes helps boost students' motivation and how much they engage in class. Most students were very excited, participated a lot, and had a positive attitude toward learning. This suggests that using games in learning can change the



way teaching is done, making it more interactive and student-focused. Kahoot! helps in three important areas: understanding material, feeling happy and involved, and being active in learning.

From a theory point of view, these results back up Self-Determination Theory, which says that having control, feeling capable, and connecting with others are key for being motivated. Kahoot! lets students answer on their own, get quick results on how they did, and take part in group or competition-based activities. These things together make learning more motivating and match what other studies have found about using games to improve learning in English classes.

This study has important real-world applications for teaching English, especially in Indonesia. First, English teachers should use digital game-based tools like Kahoot! both for teaching and checking students' understanding. Using Kahoot! in class can make learning more lively and help students feel more engaged and less nervous about learning English.

Second, schools and education centers need to offer good support and training to make sure teachers can use technology well. This includes having reliable internet, enough digital tools, and proper training for teachers. This support helps make sure all students can take full advantage of technology in their learning and avoid problems that might stop them from learning effectively.

Even though the study found some good results, there are some things that could be improved, which point the way for more research in the future. Future studies might use bigger groups of students and include people from different schools or educational levels to make the results apply to more situations. Also, more research could use experiments or mix different methods to look not just at students' motivation, but also at how Kahoot! affects language skills like vocabulary, grammar, reading, and speaking. Using information from interviews or watching classes could help better understand how students feel and what challenges they face when using digital games for learning.

In short, Kahoot! is a useful and practical tool for learning English that can make lessons more interesting and focused on students. If used carefully and with enough support, game-based



learning has a big chance to improve English teaching and learning in high schools in Indonesia.

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