

STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING ENGLISH VOCABULARY VIA GAMES IN KAHOOT!

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Abstract:

This study deals with how students are involved in the use of Kahoot in learning English. The aims of this study are to investigate the students' engagement about vocabulary using Kahoot and their interests when Kahoot! is implemented in their English classes. Kahoot! in this research is an online gamification method applied by teachers in the classroom used by students. This research employs a descriptive qualitative research. The data obtained through two main instruments, namely class observations and questionnaires. Class Observations show that Kahoot! helps students to be actively involved in learning vocabularies in English. Therefore, the use of Kahoot! in learning English is beneficial for students because it helps the student learning in variety of ways. The results of the questionnaire show that the students are interested in learning English vocabulary using Kahoot! because they do feel the benefits of using Kahoot! in their learning English as it helps them to learn better.

Keyword:

students' engagement, vocabulary, Kahoot.



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INTRODUCTION

In learning English, vocabulary mastery is a significant phase to improve language skills (Palmer et.al, 2014). Nunan (2005, p.121) states that vocabulary is a collection of words that a person knows. That is the reason students will have difficulty learning a language. Vocabulary is the most important aspect of learning English. Without vocabulary, we cannot learn or practice English. We cannot understand English or anything written in English while we have not enough vocabulary. Based on this fact, vocabulary is a very important aspect in learning English.

To assess students' vocabulary skills, teachers generally use several teaching methods such as asking students to look up word definitions in a dictionary and write sentences. This teaching frustrates students because they have to compose words into sentences (Palmer et.al, 2014). In addition, teachers also usually ask students to memorize 10-15 words then take a score based on the number of words the student has memorized (Kilickaya & Krajka, 2010). In this way, students will forget what they have memorized because they do not practice or use the words in their daily life.

Nowadays, the application of technology should be considered in English language teaching to improve the students' motivation and interaction in learning (Licorish et.al, 2018; Santosa, 2017; Wang & Lieberoth, 2016; Zarzycka-Piskorz, 2016). It is a challenge for language teachers to use technology as tools for general assessment (Godwin-Jones, 2015). Teachers believe that applying technology will help students in the learning process. Students will be bored when the teacher cannot develop good teaching and learning activities. Therefore, teachers are expected to be able to take advantage of technology in the classroom to create fun learning.

The use of smartphones in language teaching has different meanings for students; they are becoming more enthusiastic and interested in using cell phones to update their daily life. Applying vocabulary instruction using technology can increase study scores on exams, one of the technologies that have been used at Kahoot! (Sharma & Unger, 2016; YIP & Kwan, 2006)

There are many techniques to improve students' vocabulary. One of them is using the game. Games have many advantages for language teachers and students. They support learning the target language when students are involved games and have fun without realizing that they are learning the target language, and furthermore with pleasure for the teacher to present the language in a nice atmosphere. Another advantage of using games in foreign languages setting is to make the stressful moment go away. In a language learning atmosphere, a stress-free environment must be provided (Gozcu & Caganaga, 2016, p.127).

Kahoot is the one of game-based learning platform that purposes as a responsive system for students, providing an interesting way for the students to practice vocabulary that they already learned (Dellos. 2015). Kahoot! also allows the teacher to create a quiz that allows students to submit their answers via a laptop, or smartphone that fits this question displayed on a smart board (Johns, 2015).

The use of Kahoot! in teaching the English language has been widely recognized by some researchers. Nguyen and Yukawa (2019) found that Kahoot! has a positive impact in English language learning. Coca & Slisco (2013) and Papastergiou (2009) also found that using a game in teaching is more appealing and valuable for the students' performance. However, this study was limited in investigating the students' engagement in learning English vocabulary via games in Kahoot!.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review on this paper focuses on: definition of students' engagement, types of students' engagement, vocabulary, and Kahoot!

When being asked the definition of students' engagement, Galup (2013) states that students' engagement is a term used to describe an individual interest and enthusiasm for school, which impact their academic performance and behavior. Student's engagement involves positive students' behaviors, such as attendance, paying attention, and participation in class, as well as the psychological experience of identification with school and feeling that one is cared for, respected, and part of the school environment (Anderson, Christenson, Sinclair, & Lehr, 2004, p.97).

Student engagement is considered the primary theoretical model for understanding dropout, which is defined as graduation from high school with academic skills in a world of work education choice (Christenson et al., 2008; Finn, 2006; Reschly & Christenson, 2006b). Engaged students do more than just academic achievement; they also strive, set their own behavior toward goals, challenge themselves to overcome challenges and learn (Klem & Connell, 2004; National Research Council and Medical Institutes [NRC and IoM], 2004). It can also be positive with learning outcomes academic, social, and emotional desired (Klem & Connell, 2004).

Appleton, Christenson, Furlong (2008) and Newmann, Wehlage, Lamborn (1992) define student engagement as understanding of affective in the academic environment (e.g., positive student-student relationships) and active student behavior (e.g., attendance, participation, effort, prosocial behavior). Student engagement also reinforces the idea that effective instruction implementation takes into account the role of student motivation in learning outcomes (NRC and IoM, 2004; Russell, Ainley, Frydenberg, 2005). The increase in student engagement measures with adequate psychometric properties has strengthened the strength and value of student engagement as a useful variable for data-based decision-making efforts in schools. (Appleton, Christenson, Kim, & Reschly, 2006; Bet, Appleton, Reschly, Christenson, & Huebner, 2010; Darr, 2009; Fredricks et al., 2011).

Based on the above definition, students' engagement is an understanding of affective in the academic environment (e.g., positive student- student relations) and active student behavior (e.g., attendance, participation, effort, prosocial behavior), also considered the main theory. The dropout understanding model, which is defined as graduating from high school with academic ability in the world of work choice education, is a complex term that is increasingly difficult to understand. In addition, students' engagement involves positive student behaviors, such as attendance, attention, and participation in class, as well as psychological experiences in identifying with the school and feelings that someone is cared for, respected, and part of the school environment. As well as a term used to describe an individual's interest and enthusiasm for school which has an impact on their performance and academic behavior.

There are several types of students' engagement as stated by Archambault and Colleagues (2009) who identify three distinct types of students' engagement, namely: behavioral engagement, affective engagement, and cognitive engagement. Behavioral engagement includes a student's compliance to rules and involvement in the classroom and with extracurricular activities. Affective

engagement includes the experience, feelings, attitudes, and perceptions a student has toward school, specifically the student's sense of belonging, interest, willingness to learn, and general sense of liking school. Cognitive engagement refers to the cognitive function involved in a student's learning process. Because behaviors, emotions, and cognitions are all a part of development, it is important to consider all three categories (i.e., behavior engagement, affective engagement, cognitive engagement) when implementing a prevention program (Archambault and Colleagues, 2009).

In this paper, vocabulary is also discussed. What is the definition of vocabulary? As stated in The American Heritage Dictionary (2004), vocabulary is the sum of words used by, understood by, or at the command of a particular person or group. Alqahtani (2015) also highlights that vocabulary is the total number of words that are needed to communicate ideas and express the speakers' meaning. In short, as English learners we should convey the meaning through the words we read. Furthermore, Nattinger in Sanusi (2009) states that guessing vocabulary from context is the most frequently way of discovering the meaning of new word. Then, Hornby (2005) states that vocabulary is all the words that a person knows or uses; all the words in a particular language; the words that people used when they are talking about a particular subject. Lehr, Osborn, & Hiebert (2004) state vocabulary refers to the kind of words that students have to know to read increasingly demanding text with comprehension. This is in line with Neuman & Dwyer (2009:385) that cited vocabulary as "words we must know to communicate effectively; words in speaking (expressive vocabulary) and words in reading (receptive vocabulary)". Not only understanding the words someone says, but vocabulary also needs to be conveyed. It can be concluded that vocabulary is a word that must be mastered in any language in order to communicate both orally and in writing. Vocabulary will help to understand the meaning when communicating, so that communication runs smoothly and effectively

The next discussion is about Kahoot!, This paper highlights the definition of Kahoot!, and how it works. Dellos (2015) defines Kahoot! as a student response system that encourages student to participate and keeps them engaged because of its game-based platform. Some researchers have called Kahoot! a game-based student response system (GSRS), as it is a combination of a student response system and a game-based learning platform (Wang, 2014). Tan and Goh (2020) defines Kahoot! as a quiz-style game that allows teachers to create their own questions. Students score points based on the accuracy and speed of their response. As claimed by Byrne (2013), Cross and Thomas (2014), as cited by Perrin Muirhead and Betz (2015), Kahoot! is a student's response system that engages students through game-like pre-made or impromptu quizzes, discussions and surveys. Students do not need an account to join the quiz on Kahoot (Byrne, 2013). It only needs the teachers to have an account to create the quizzes (Thomas, 2014, as cited by Perrin et.al 2015).

According to Bicen (2018), Kahoot! is a learning game conducted in the classroom with the student. It can be defined as the response system of the student. Multiple choice questions may be formulated in debate format using the Kahoot application, and can be played with all students. It is also educational software that has the potential to prepare online questionnaires, discussions or exams, as well as to enable students to cooperate in terms of research topics (Bicen and Kocakoyun, 2018). Moreover, Chen et.al (2017) state that Kahoot! fostered wider and active student participation, and yet provided students with the opportunity to retain their most desirable personal choice of participation. In conclusion, Kahoot! is a system that encourages students to participate and keeps them engaged because of its game-based platform, Kahoot! interface takes the form of a multiple choices quiz. It is also a useful educational software for preparing online questionnaires, discussions or exams, as well as allowing students to work together on research topics.

Kahoot! works in four ways, namely: create, play, share, and reinforce. What is meant by create is that the users can create a fun learning game in minutes. Users can make a series of multiple choices questions or try new game. The format and number of questions are entirely up to the users. The users are able to add videos, images and diagrams to their questions to amplify engagement.

To play Kahoot!, students are encouraged to play in a group setting, for example, a classroom. Players answer the questions on their own devices, while games are displayed on a shared screen to unite the lesson. It creates a "campfire moment"; encouraging players to look up and celebrate together. Besides creating their own Kahoot!, users can search among millions of existing games. In Kahoot! social learning is promoted and it really has its pedagogical impact whether players are in the same room or on the other side of the globe. After a game, players are encouraged to create

and share their own Kahoot! to deepen understanding, mastery and purpose, as well as engage in peer-led discussions.

This app is also able to reinforce learning. With the challenge feature, teachers can assign Kahoot! as homework. Students play Kahoot! on their phones for revision and reinforcement, training their classroom superpowers anytime. In homework challenges, questions and answers will appear on the students' phone screens.

There are several steps to start the quiz in Kahoot, namely: logging in, adding a description, tags and cover image, adding questions, answers, and imagery. To create fun learning games in a minute, users can start to log in to create quiz in Kahoot! Next, the users should add a description to help defining learning objectives for the game and keep it focused. People can find the quiz easily when a user use description tags and to help the Kahoot! stand out, users can pick a great cover image. Finally, the users should follow instructions on screen to add questions, answers, and images, as well as video clips.

METHODS

There are two research questions in this paper, namely: (1) How are the students' engagement in learning English vocabulary via games in Kahoot!, and (2) Why Kahoot! is very engaging? To answer those question, the present study uses descriptive qualitative analysis method. As stated by Creswell (2013), a qualitative method makes the researcher seek for creating the significance of a phenomenon from the participants' views, or attitude of past event which means identifying a culture sharing group and studying how it expands shared patterns of behavior over time. Furthermore, Malik and Hamied (2016) provide that the purpose of qualitative research is to gain a rich and complex understanding of a specific context or phenomenon in depth rather than generalization to other geographical areas or population. Qualitative research is frequently referred to research studies which investigate the quality of relationships, activities, situations or materials (Fraenklen & Wallen, 2006). Hence, this qualitative method is considered to be an appropriate method for this research because it focuses on capturing real life situation concerning the use of Kahoot! in learning English.

This study is conducted at a junior high school in Bandung. This particular school is chosen as the location for this study for several reasons. The first reason is that the researchers are familiar with the teacher and the students at this school. The second reason is that researchers are given permission by the teacher to conduct research in this school. This study aims to explore the student's involvement in learning English vocabulary through Kahoot! games; Therefore, grade 7 junior high school students in the 2020 academic year are selected as the participants in this study. They were selected as the participants mainly based on the reason that they have been studying English for several years in the previous classes and also because they are already familiar with the application of Kahoot! in their English classes.

Some instruments are used in collecting the data in order to answer the two research questions which gained a richer and deeper understanding of the phenomenon under the study. The processes of data collection are elaborated using two instruments to collect data, namely questionnaires and observations. These two instruments are used to determine the differences in students' perceptions about the use of Kahoot! in learning English and how students are involved in learning English through Kahoot. A detailed description of each instrument is described below.

Questionnaires are printed forms that ask the same questions of all individuals, it is used to record respondents' answers verbally (Gall & Borg, 2007). As claimed by Arikunto (2006), in collecting the data, questionnaire is very beneficial in gaining information about individual's thinking of knowledge. Siniscalco & Auriat (2005) mention that questionnaire should be standardized in which each respondent is exposed to the same questions and the same coding system of responses. The questionnaire is distributed to all the participants in the class. The questionnaire is in the form of close-ended questionnaire in order to maintain the consistency of the responses among other participants. According to Creswell (2008), the close-ended questionnaire is useful to deliver data that is identified with the issue of the research.

The purposes of this instrument were to find out the students' engagement in learning English vocabulary via games in Kahoot!. In this research, the close-ended questions were in use in the form of Likert scale for gathering the information. The questionnaire was written in Bahasa Indonesia to make it easier for the students to express their opinions and to avoid misunderstanding while answering the questionnaire. The main aspects covered in the questionnaire were students' engagement in learning English via games in Kahoot!. To discover the students' responses, there were four ranges of Likert scale that cover four dissimilar categories which the students were allowed to choose one of the range numbers for each

statement that was appropriate with their thoughts. Likert scale was used to measure people's opinions, responses and their attitudes related to the social phenomenon (Sugiyono, 2009). The reason why the researcher chose the Likert Scale is to avoid the students to be biased when they answer the questionnaire. Besides that, the reason of using the scale is to take a look at the students' answers whether they are positive or negative.

Observation is one of the instruments to collect the data in a qualitative research. Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) claim that observation is conducted to get more detailed and accurate information about what the students and the teacher do in the class rather than the interview does. Moreover, Hamied & Malik (2014) point out that during the fieldwork, the behavior, actions and communication pattern were observed and written in details. In addition to that, Patton (1990) states that observational data can display the situation of the classroom originally. In this research, the observation was conducted during the teaching and learning process. There were two observers involved in this research which were a teacher-researcher as a participant observer and a colleague as an external observer to support the validity of the instrument. According to Creswell (2012), he states that the external researcher has to record the information by taking observation notes when the teacher-researcher is participating in the activities. Hence, in this particular study, the non-participant observer observed the use of Kahoot in learning English in classroom and noted it on the classroom observation checklist. All the class activities were also video recorded and as a support of the data that had been noted on the observation checklist. Fraenkel and Wallen (2009) also claim that video-taping can be replayed several times for checking and correcting the data. The classroom observation was conducted in a total of four meetings. Each meeting took approximately 80 minutes.

The material chosen for the teaching and learning process during the classroom observation research was taken from a book entitled *When English Rings a Bell* (grade 7). The materials consist of learning objectives and teaching steps. The teaching steps are as follows: (1) the students in this research do a vocabulary exercise guided by the teacher, using Kahoot! to check students' comprehension. The first material enables the students to learn 5 new vocabularies related to recipes and manual from text, (2) a power point presentation is presented by the teacher, students learn new vocabularies from context consisting 5 questions, (3) students' comprehension is checked using Kahoot!. (4) the second material is introduced. This material enables the students to learn 5 other new vocabularies related to recipes and manual from text with different themes, (5) the power point presentation with different theme is presented by the teacher, (6) the students learn new vocabularies from context, consisting of 5 new questions with different themes, (7) the students' comprehension is checked by using Kahoot!, (8) the third material reviews the first material and the fourth material reviews the second material.

In short, Kahoot! in this research focuses on vocabulary based on the book "*When English Rings a Bell*". In total, there are 10 vocabulary questions prepared. There are two designed lesson plans used in this study. The two lesson plans aim to find out how students are involved in learning English through vocabulary via games in Kahoot!. The lesson plan is developed in accordance with the competency standards in the 7th grade curriculum and is also in line with the overall learning objectives. Both lesson plans are used as guidelines for teachers to follow during teaching and learning sessions.

Class observations were conducted in two meetings for a total of two days. This involved a total of 6 out of 15 students who took Kahoot! activities. It aims to explore the students' engagement when the teaching and learning process are carried out, there is also a video recorder to record student involvement when Kahoot! is used in the class. The researchers are acting as the participant observer compiled the class observation list for the non-participant observer checklist as a guide to see what aspects were used to answer the second research question of the study. The questionnaire was distributed to 6 students. The questionnaire consists of 10 closed-ended questions and takes 10 minutes of the students' time. There are two purposes for distributing questionnaires to the students. The first reason is to find out whether or not the students are interested in learning English vocabulary through Kahoot!. The second reason is to figure out the students' involvement when Kahoot is implemented in the English classroom.

The first step in analyzing the data is through a questionnaire. The questionnaire is used to reveal their involvement in using Kahoot! in learning English. There are four ranges of the Likert scale to determine student involvement. This study uses the degree of conformity most often selected by participants as a way to analyze data in a frequency distribution. Participants are expected to mark (√) in the provided column based on their own choice to tell the researcher what their choice is. Next, the researchers calculate the degree of each statement and use the percentage formula to analyze the questionnaire data.

The classroom observation data are analyzed thoroughly from the recorded videos during the activities in the classroom. The footage of the recorded videos is very helpful to detect the real situation in the classroom. Other than that, it is beneficial in a way of getting more information about the classroom activities. Furthermore, the video records also support the data from the observation sheet. Then, the results are elaborated descriptively supported by some evidences to further strengthen the result.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the findings, students showed interest in learning vocabulary using the games in Kahoot!. They are very enthusiastic when learning vocabulary using Kahoot! On the findings, the students' interest in learning vocabulary by using Kahoot! is very visible and is affecting their academic performance. This is in line with Galup (2013) who mentions that students' engagement impacts student's academic performance and behavior.

During learning vocabulary using Kahoot! the students are engaged. They highlight that using media which involves games bring positive impact as it does not feel monotonous. This has been discussed by Akdogan (2017) saying that teaching vocabulary using games can obtain advantageous benefits because we not only learn a knowledge but also having fun with the learning media either. Wright, Betteridge and Buckby (2002) as cited in Masri and Najar (2014) also support the idea that games are often associated with fun. This is also in line with Al-Manar (2019) who states that using Kahoot! as a tool for reviewing student vocabulary is an interesting way where real time reviews are immediately seen and monitored. Because Kahoot's appearance is in the form of games, it attracts students to be active. Students actively participate during learning activities, by asking questions or giving responses.

Appleton, Christenson, Furlong (2008) and Newmann, Wehlage, Lamborn (1992) define student engagement as understanding of active student behavior (e.g., attendance, participation, effort, prosocial behavior). Moreover, Chen et.al (2017) state that Kahoot! fostered wider and active student participation, and yet provided students with the opportunity to retain their most desirable personal choice of participation. And Yann (2016) state that everybody likes to play and have fun. Games will enhance their motivation even more than a simple game. Furthermore, Flores (2016) state that the main objective of gamification is to increase the participation of a person during an activity and provide motivation by integrating game elements such as prizes or awards and leaderboards. As technologies grow globally, gamification has been proven to be an effective strategy for enhancing learning process a motivating learner to learn English vocabulary. All of the theories and findings above highlight games are considered effective for students to add and remember new vocabulary and games have been shown to have advantages and effectiveness in learning vocabulary in various ways. The students in this research reveal that adding new vocabularies using Kahoot! is more effective because it is easier to remember.

CONCLUSION

As mentioned on literature review that there are three distinct types of students' engagement: (1) behavioral engagement includes a student's compliance to rules and involvement in the classroom and with extracurricular activities, (2) affective engagement includes the experience, feelings, attitudes, and perceptions a student has toward school, specifically the student's sense of belonging, interest, willingness to learn, and general sense of liking school, (3) cognitive engagement refers to the cognitive function involved in a student's learning process (Archambault and Colleagues, 2009).

This research concludes that all three types of students' engagement can be obtained in learning vocabulary using Kahoot! based on the findings which reveal the students' eagerness to be in class on time, the students also really respect the teacher, the students can focus on what the teacher is saying and the students are very active and enthusiastic in learning.

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