Exploring Teachers' Perspectives on the Use of Kahoot in English Language Teaching: Enhancing Engagement and Learning Outcomes

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Abstract

Game-based learning such as Kahoot! has transformed the conventional classrom settings into more fun and interactive learning experiences. Kahoot! as a digital game-based student response system allows teachers and students to connect through competitive knowledge games. It encourages active learning and provides assistance to educators in the process of developing quizzes with multiple-choice questions. The purpose of this research is to investigate teachers' perceptions of Kahoot in English Language Teaching and to assess the impact of Kahoot on student engagement and learning outcomes from the teachers' viewpoint. Mixed-method design was used to explore deeper perspectives and experiences of respondents. Survey and semi-structured interviews were employed to collect the data. The collected data were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. There were 50 primary school teachers selected through purposive sampling technique as respondents of this research. The findings of this research demonstrate that Kahoot is an effective gamified-learning tool to enhance student engagement and motivation in learning process. However its limitation in presenting deeper learning and its technical issues associated with the internet connectivity and devices capability must be carefully considered.

Keywords: Kahoot, English Language Teaching, Student Engagement, Learning Outcomes

INTRODUCTION

In today's swift-moving digital era, the capacity of educational technologies to create engaging and dynamic learning settings is increasingly vital. In traditional classroom environments, maintaining students' interest and encouraging them to participate actively in the learning process is difficult. Consequently, increasing focus has been placed on utilizing technological innovations to enhance student engagement and educational results. Ming & Degol (2014) states that focusing on student engagement is essential as it improves their learning experience and addresses challenges that can result in boredom and decreased achievement levels. Parn (2006) also indicates that students demonstrate engagement in classroom activities through their active listening and attentiveness to the lesson. Students who are actively engaged make valuable

psychological contributions to the classroom and work diligently to understand knowledge that will serve them well in life. Conversely, Young (2005) found out that disengaged students hinder the learning process, miss classes, and do not fulfill assigned tasks.

The engagement among students can be achieved when they are taught with interactive learning strategies. Interactive learning is essential in English language instruction since it raises student engagement, cultivates critical thinking, encourages linguistic experimentation, and improves collaborative learning, ultimately resulting in enhanced language acquisition and a more enjoyable educational experience. According to Krusche et al., (2017), interactive learning integrates tutorials and activities into engaging classes featuring multiple stages of theory, models, exercises, solutions, and reflections. Jahongirovna (2021) indicates that interactive learning depends on student uniqueness, fostering an environment conducive to open conversation in the classroom.

In order to create an interactive learning and promote students' engagement in English language teaching, teachers are expected to be technology savvy as nowadays students' daily activities cannot be separated from technology. They play games and interact with their peers using technology offered by devices they use. Therefore, bringing technology into classroom setting is no longer a choice for nowadays teachers. According to the American Institutes of Research written by Kristina et al., (2016), learners at high schools focusing on so-called "deeper learning" had greater results on standardized exams in mathematics and English, and a greater percentage of graduates than their classmates.

Technology offers lots of learning experiences especially when it is paired with the right tools such as game-based learning platforms. Game-based learning is a pedagogical strategy that incorporates elements of games into learning activities designed to instruct students on diverse subjects. They foster competition and promote student interaction through the utilization of entertainment as an educational instrument. This form of learning frequently entails materials and activities where students are organized into distinct teams that compete according to established rules or criteria. Boctor (2013) claims that the mechanism by which the game-based learning approach supports learning consists in two phases: first, games can inspire students to combine knowledge from many disciplines and use it when conducting decision-making procedures; second, students can test how outcomes of games change depending on the choices and decisions they make; this helps students engage with their peers regarding game-related moves; hence, coordination increases and social association skills improve.According to Dichev and Dicheva (2017), game-based learning can also help students process and decode fundamental information for understanding learning materials; it also offers a constructivist learning environment in which students use existing skills to solve problems relating to the subject matter in issue. Game-based learning thus gives students chances and tools to participate more actively with the learning process.

There are various game-based learning platforms that can be utilized by teachers either freely or for fee. One of the them is Kahoot. Using current infrastructure, Kahoot! is a digital game-based student response system allowing teachers and students to connect

through competitive knowledge games. It encourages active learning and provides assistance to educators in the process of developing quizzes with multiple-choice questions. There is a wide range of implementation options that can be simply modified to match the requirements of the learners. Whether instructors will be teaching in-person, hybrid, or online, Kahoot can serve to open opportunities for gauging the baseline knowledge of learners, supporting formative assessments, and offering challenges that are based on either individuals or teams in a way that is both fun and engaging. Any device that has an internet connection can be used to play the games, regardless of whether they are participated in in person or online. A research conducted by Lunden (2018) shows that with over 70 million monthly active unique users, the platform is among the most popular in the field of game-based learning. Additionally, fifty percent of students in grades K-12 in the United States use it.

A study conducted by Tenau et al., (2019) found out that it is possible to construct interactive teaching and learning activities through the utilization of Kahoot! as a formative assessment tool. These activities have the potential to have a beneficial impact on the students' motivation and achievement. Another study was also conducted by Mat Husin (2022). The findings of the study showed that the students who participated in the study viewed Kahoot! to be a game that was not only fun but also enjoyable, engaging, and intriguing to use. Wang (2020) also found out that the use of Kahoot! has the potential to contribute to improvements in learning performance, classroom dynamics, attitudes of both students and teachers, and anxiety levels among students.

The previous studies have not explored the way teachers perceive the use of Kahoot! and challenges as well as opportunity they might have experienced when implementing this game-based learning platform in classroom. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to investigate teachers' perceptions oh Kahoot in English Language Teaching and to assess the impact of Kahoot on student engagement and learning outcomes from the teachers' viewpoint.

METHODS

The study employs mixed-method design to figure out in-depth exploration of teachers' experiences of using Kahoot in various classroom settings. A survey was first conducted to find out the impact of Kahoot as a teaching tool on students' engagement and learning outcomes. A semi-structured interview was then administered to collect broader data and provide comprehensive understanding of the benefits, challenges and overall effectiveness of Kahoot implementation in English language teaching from the teachers' point of view. There were 50 primary school teachers from both private and public schools who had experiences in utilizing this platform at least one semester involved as participants of this research. They were chosen using purposive sampling technique.

The survey was distributed online through email and online platforms that are commonly used by teachers. After the data on online structured survey were collected, a semi-structured interview was conducted which involved 10 teachers from the survey

respondents. The interviews were conducted through video conference. This interview was aimed to focus on capturing deeper insights of teachers' personal experiences and reflections when using Kahoot in English language tecahing.

The data from survey respondents were analyzed by using descriptive statistics to present the frequency of Kahoot usage, perceived benefits and challenges. The Likert-scale responses from the distributed survey were also analyzed to identify trends in teacher satisfaction and common barriers encountered. While the interview transcripts were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes in the teachers' responses. A coding process was also used to categorize data into themes such as perceived effectiveness, technical challenges, student motivation, and pedagogical benefits.

FINDINGS

The findings of this research are presented into two different reports based on the data collection instruments used. The data are survey results and interview findings.
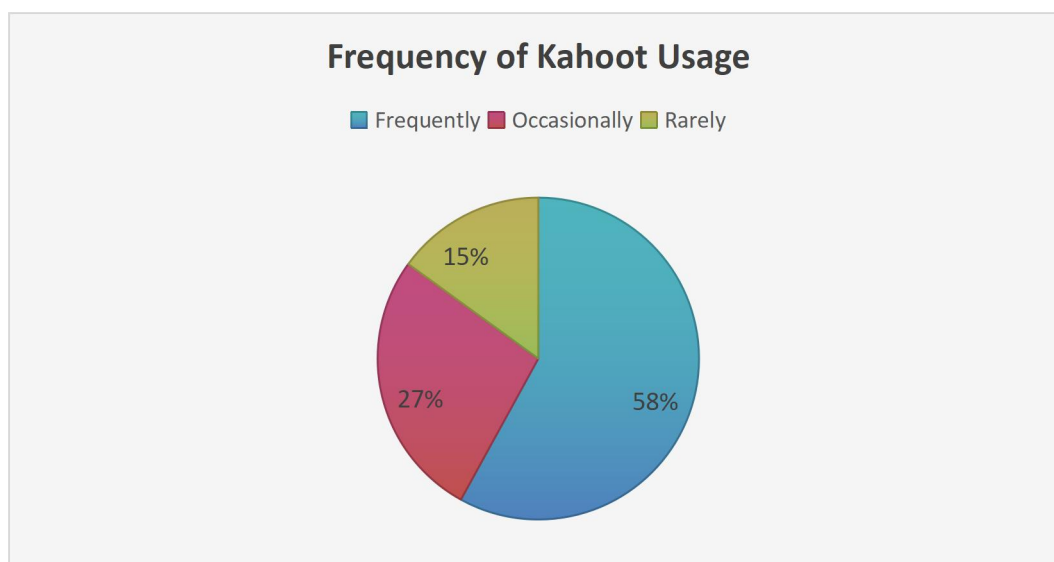
Survey Results

Figure 1. Frequency of Kahoot Usage

Data on the above chart show how often the respondents use Kahoot in their English teaching experiences. As much of 58% of the respondents reported that they make use of Kahoot frequently or at least once a week in their classrooms, while 27% used it occasionally or once a mont, and the rest, 15% used it rarely.
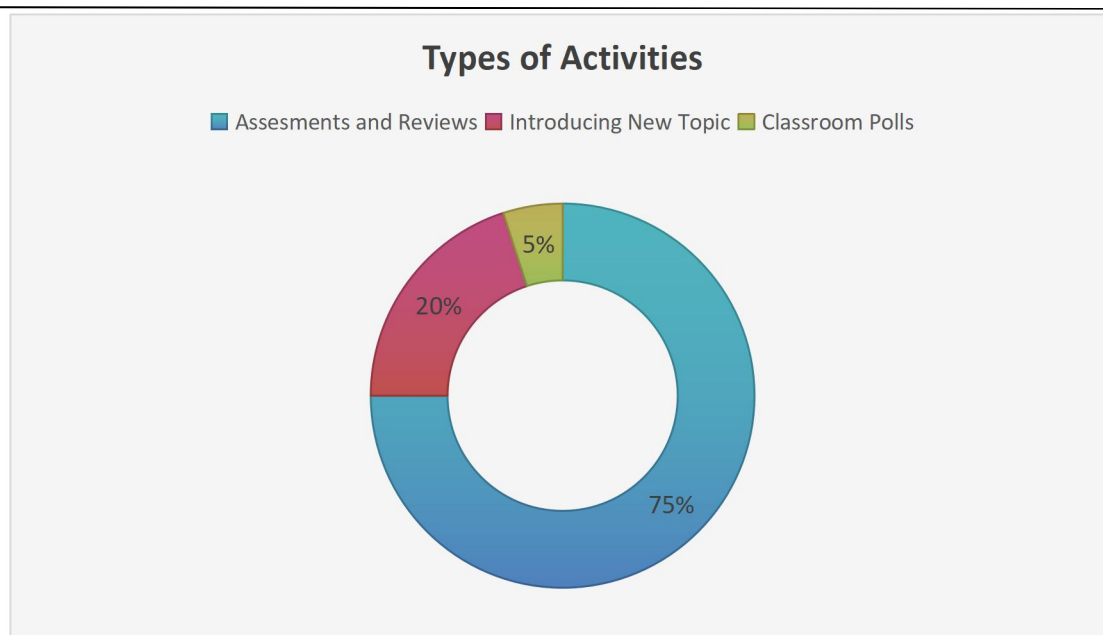
Figure 2. Types of Activities

From the above chart, it is found out that majority of respondents which is 75% used Kahoot primarily to assess students' understanding on the lesson and to review the previous session, while 20% of the teachers utilized it to introduce new topic in their English classrooms. As for the rest 10% used it for polling.
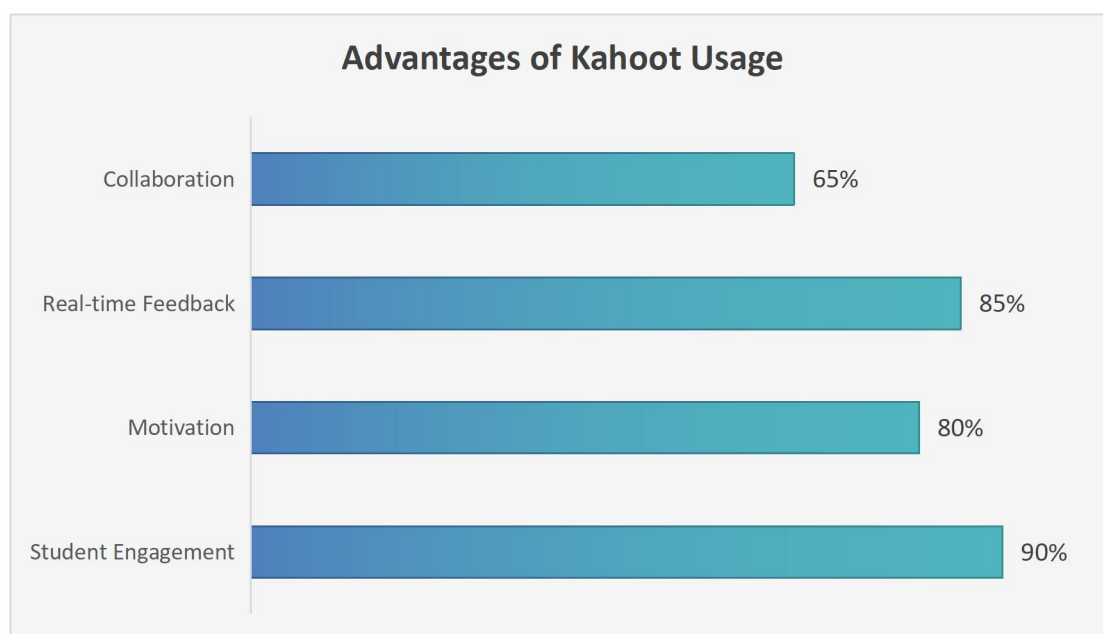

Figure 3. Advantages of Kahoot Usage

Kahoot significantly enhanced student engagement as reported by 85% of the respondents as shown on the above chart. Students were actively participated during the lessons. The respondents observed that features offered by Kahoot such as game-like format and competitive elements made the class more interactive and boosted student

enthusiasm. The students were also highly motivated to join their English lesson and were eager to participate and asked for more quizzes as part of their learning process. The chart shows that 80% of respondents believed that utilizing Kahoot in their classroom positively impacted students' motivation to learn. Kahoot also helped teachers and students to get direct feedback from the answers they chose as it gave them opportunity to identify the misunderstanding and 85% of respondents appreciated the quick feedback. Kahoot can also be played in team. 65% of the respondents noted that Kahoot also encouraged students to build their teamwork especially when they are grouped, although playing individually was more common.
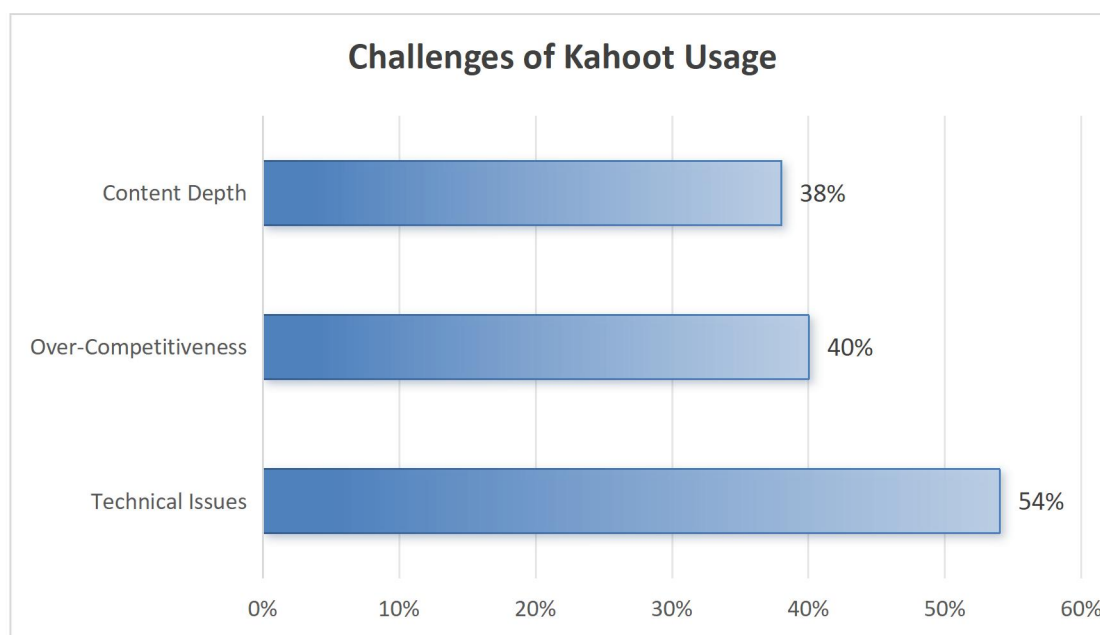

Figure 4. Challenges of Kahoot Usage

From the data shown on the above chart, 54% of respondents noted that they had some technical issues when using Kahoot in their classrooms such as unstable and poor internet connectivity, compatibility problems with both the students' and teachers' devices resulting delays when loading the quiz. This automatically made the flow of the learning activities less smooth. The 40% respondents also reported that the students became overly competitive which sometimes made the others especially who did not do well frustrated and distracted. Another challenge faced by respondents was content depth. 38% of respondents mentioned that students became more focused on memorizing rather than understanding the materials deeply. It was due to the oversimplification of learning through Kahoot.

Interview Findings

All respondents agreed that Kahoot helped them significantly improve student engagement. The features that Kahoot offer such as game-based learning and scoreboards

positively enhance their motivation to follow the lesson compared to traditional settings. One teacher said "Some students who are often shy and silent when asked during class become more active and involved when we play Kahoot". Therefore all teachers agreed that Kahoot is one of the most effective game-based platforms to implemented in their English classrooms.

Most of the respondents also appreciated the real-time feedback featured by Kahoot as it was displayed on the screen so both teachers and students could see which numbers the students made wrong and right. It gave them assistance to adjust their teaching strategies and also helped them identify which topics the students were struggling at. As one of the respondents said "I can see which topics need to be retaught and give more explanation and practices about the topics".

Witnessing students became over-competitive while playing Kahoot is one of the common challenges noted by the respondents. As the teachers observed, they found out that beside driving motivation, playing Kahoot also created tension among students. As one teacher noted "Some students become frustrated when they lost the game, therefore it is suggested to keep the game in balance and ensure the students that understanding the topic is more important than just winning the game".

Respondents showed mixed feelings toward Kahoot usage especially in delivering complex topics. Even though they considered Kahoot is a good platform to engage students with the class activities but it fostered less critical thinking. One teacher mentioned "Kahoot is a recommended platform to be used in reviewing the previous lesson and also giving quizzes but not for teaching complex lessons".

Respondents frequently experienced technical issues especially related the unstable and poor internet connection. Particularly the students who lived in rural areas in which the access to the internet is still lacking, the teachers had to deal with the problems when they play Kahoot. One teacher mentioned "Some students lacked access to their devices and it led to the difficulty in joining the Kahoot".

DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this research are in line with some previous studies that found out game-based learning platforms such as Kahoot as an effective tool in enhancing student engagement and motivation in learning process. As Wang and Tahir (2020) found out that Kahoot significantly impacted student motivation through its interactive and competetive design. Licorish et al. (2018) found that Kahoot assisted teachers in viewing the gaps among students when playing the game as its quick feedback so teachers can adjust their lessons.

Based on the elevated motivation and engagement among students this game-based learning platform can perform, the findings suggested that Kahoot is a valuable and recommended learning tool in stimulating student interest in learning English. Nevertheless, as found out at both interviews and survey, playing Kahoot can distract learners who did not do well in answering the questions due to over-competitiveness.

Therefore, teachers are suggested to keep the learning activities in balance which combining collaborative and non-competitive activities while teaching the lessons.

The capacity Kahoot possesses to deliver quick feedback has become one of its most valued advantages. This feature corresponds with formative assessment methodologies, allowing educators to continuously check student comprehension. This characteristic is especially beneficial for enabling teachers to implement rapid educational modifications, as indicated by study from Sánchez et al. (2021). Nonetheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that although Kahoot is proficient at evaluating factual knowledge, its capacity to foster higher-order thinking is constrained. Educators in this research articulated apprehensions that Kahoot's dependence on timed, multiple-choice questions might prioritize superficial learning, reflecting criticisms from Papadakis et al. (2020).

The technical challenges encountered by teachers aligned with the previous studies particularly found by Kaur and Nadarajan (2019) that technical issues were considered as barriers to the effectiveness of Kahoot usage during classroom activities. Integrating Kahoot into classroom settings seemed to be the most common experiences due to limited infrastructure in technology which points out the needs of improvement in accessibility and device compatibility. Furthermore, schools and teachers are required to concern on the equity issues when implementing digital tools in their classroom because it was found that some students lacked of internet access to participate fully in Kahoot activities.

Although Kahoot was considered as an effective learning tool due to its capacity in improving student motivation and engagement in learning process as well as its another feature which allowed teachers and students to get instantaneous feedback, respondents in this study voiced their concerns expressed their dissatisfaction about the inability of Kahoot in fostering deeper learning and understanding toward the lessons. Kahoot might be more suited in assessing student progress and understanding about the topics rather than promoting their critical thinking and enhancing their understanding towards complex topics. The findings in this research suggested teachers to use Kahoot as supplementary tool rather than as a primary method of instructions.

CONCLUSION

This research explored teachers' perspectives on the use of Kahoot as an engaging educational tool in classrooms, concentrating on its effectiveness in boosting student engagement, motivation, and learning results. The results show that Kahoot notably enhances student involvement and excitement, largely due to its game-like format and competitive nature. Teachers appreciate the tool's capability to deliver instant feedback, enabling real-time modifications in teaching and assisting students in evaluating their own grasp of the content.

Nevertheless, although Kahoot is effective at enhancing student involvement, educators noted several drawbacks as well. The intense competition among students can lead to distractions, and the platform's emphasis on quick, multiple-choice questions might promote superficial learning instead of a thorough understanding. In addition,

technical problems, especially those concerning internet connectivity and access to devices, were mentioned as major obstacles to successful use, particularly in schools that lack adequate technological resources.

Despite facing these challenges, teachers reported a general sense of satisfaction with Kahoot as an additional resource, especially for content review and formative assessments. To enhance its educational effectiveness, Kahoot ought to be combined with other instructional approaches that encourage critical thinking and more profound learning. Future studies should explore ways to modify Kahoot to tackle these issues and how its application can be broadened to promote higher-order thinking skills among students.

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