

The Use of Kahoot in Assessing Students' Reading Comprehension

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the use of Kahoot, a game-based learning platform, in assessing students' reading comprehension of narrative texts among tenth-grade students at SMK Negeri 2 Indralaya Utara. Using a qualitative descriptive method, this research investigated how Kahoot could enhance student engagement and provide meaningful feedback in the reading classroom. Data were collected through classroom observation, student interviews, and document analysis. The findings revealed that Kahoot had a positive effect on students' motivation, encouraged active participation, and helped teachers assess students' understanding in a fun and interactive way. The study suggested that Kahoot could be an effective alternative assessment tool for English language teachers, especially in the context of reading comprehension.

Keywords: *Kahoot; Reading Comprehension; Narrative Text; Assessment*

A. Introduction

Assessment in language learning constitutes a fundamental component of the educational process, serving not only to measure learners' linguistic competence but also to provide feedback that informs pedagogical decisions. In the realm of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), assessment plays an even more pivotal role, especially in reading comprehension, where evaluating students' ability to interpret, analyze, and infer meaning from texts is critical to language development (Yulianto & Nugroho, 2021). Effective assessment techniques are necessary to ensure that students are not merely decoding words but are engaging in higher-order thinking and comprehension. However, traditional assessment methods, such as paper-based tests and written quizzes, often fail to stimulate learners' interest or provide immediate feedback, leading to decreased motivation and less meaningful learning experiences (Rahmawati & Dewi, 2020).

In response to these limitations, there has been a growing interest in the use of digital technologies to enhance the assessment process. The integration of technology in educational assessment offers various advantages, including increased interactivity, real-time data collection, individualized feedback, and greater student engagement (Huang & Hew, 2021). Among the digital tools that have gained prominence in recent years is Kahoot, a game-based learning platform that allows teachers to create quizzes, surveys, and discussions that students can participate in using their smartphones or computers. Its gamified format, which includes points, leaderboards, and time limits, transforms the assessment experience into an interactive and competitive activity, thereby fostering greater enthusiasm and involvement among students (Susanti, 2022).

Recent empirical studies have highlighted the potential of Kahoot not only as a tool for formative assessment but also as a means to improve classroom dynamics and enhance students' motivation (Putri & Wijaya, 2023). In the context of reading comprehension, particularly of narrative texts which require students to identify plot structures, characters, settings, and themes-Kahoot offers an engaging way to review content and assess understanding through multiple-choice and true-false questions. The platform's immediate feedback mechanisms also allow students to reflect on their learning and correct misconceptions in real time (Ramadhan & Fitriana, 2021).

This study aims to explore the effectiveness of Kahoot in assessing the reading comprehension of narrative texts among tenth-grade students at SMK Negeri 2 Indralaya Utara, a vocational senior high school in Indonesia. By employing a qualitative descriptive method, the research seeks to investigate how the implementation of Kahoot influences students' motivation, participation, and comprehension in reading activities. It also examines the perceptions of students toward the use of game-based assessment and identifies the benefits and challenges associated with its application in the EFL classroom. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on digital formative assessment and provide practical insights for teachers seeking to innovate their assessment strategies.

B. Research Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design, which is commonly used to explore and interpret phenomena in natural settings without manipulating variables. The aim of this approach is to understand participants' perspectives, behaviors, and experiences in a detailed and contextual manner (Sugiyono, 2021; Creswell & Poth, 2018). By using a qualitative framework, this research sought to investigate how students interact with Kahoot as an assessment tool in reading comprehension activities, particularly those involving narrative texts, and to understand their perceptions and responses toward the use of game-based digital assessments in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom.

The study was conducted at SMK Negeri 2 Indralaya Utara, a vocational high school located in South Sumatra, Indonesia. The participants of this research were the students of class X TKJ 1 during the 2024/2025 academic year. This class was selected using purposive sampling, a technique often employed in qualitative studies to select participants based on specific characteristics relevant to the research focus (Etikan et al., 2016). The choice of X TKJ 1 was based on preliminary observations and informal discussions with English teachers, which revealed that this group of students demonstrated relatively low engagement and motivation in reading activities, especially when conventional assessment techniques were used.

The primary focus of this study was to assess students' reading comprehension of narrative texts, a genre widely used in EFL classrooms for its structured story elements-such as setting, characters, and plot-that support student understanding and engagement (Utami & Lestari, 2023). To evaluate comprehension, the Kahoot platform was integrated as the main tool for formative assessment. The quizzes consisted of multiple-choice questions tailored to the narrative texts presented during the reading lessons. These questions targeted various aspects of comprehension, including identifying main ideas, understanding vocabulary in context, drawing inferences, and recognizing narrative structure.

Data collection was carried out through observations, student reflections, and documentation, which included screenshots of Kahoot activities and students' written responses. Observations were conducted during the teaching and assessment sessions to document students' participation, enthusiasm, and responses while interacting with Kahoot. Reflections were gathered through short interviews and informal discussions with selected students after the Kahoot sessions. These reflections provided insights into the students' attitudes toward digital assessment and their perceived learning experiences. Additionally, field notes were maintained by the researcher throughout the process to record instructional activities, classroom dynamics, and emerging patterns of behavior.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, this study applied several qualitative validation techniques, including triangulation, member checking, and thick description (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Triangulation was achieved by comparing data from multiple sources-observations, student reflections, and Kahoot documentation. Member checking involved verifying key observations with students and the collaborating English teacher to confirm the accuracy of the interpretations. Thick description was used to provide detailed contextual information that allows readers to understand the setting and the meaning behind participants' behaviors and responses.

The qualitative descriptive methodology was chosen for its appropriateness in capturing the nuances of student behavior and perception in an authentic classroom setting. The flexibility of this approach allowed the researcher to focus on the real-time experiences of learners, which are often missed in more structured quantitative designs. Moreover, this approach aligns with recent educational research advocating for context-sensitive, learner-centered methods in evaluating digital innovations in pedagogy (Azizah & Ardi, 2023; Siregar et al., 2021).

C. Research Finding and Discussion

The findings of this study indicated that the integration of Kahoot as an assessment tool in reading comprehension activities had a positive and significant impact on the motivation, participation, and comprehension of the tenth-grade students

at SMK Negeri 2 Indralaya Utara. The data, obtained through classroom observations, student interviews, and documentation, showed that students were more engaged, enthusiastic, and active when Kahoot was used in reading assessments compared to traditional paper-based methods. The gamified elements of Kahoot, such as instant feedback, leaderboards, point systems, and time limits created a dynamic and interactive classroom atmosphere that encouraged students to participate more confidently. They appeared more focused, competitive, and eager to respond, even those who had previously been passive during conventional assessments. The learning environment became more lively, student-centered, and supportive.

These results aligned with the findings of Wichadee and Pattanapichet (2019), who found that gamification significantly enhanced student engagement and classroom interaction. Likewise, Licorish et al. (2018) emphasized that Kahoot's interactive design and instant feedback contributed to students' motivation and participation in learning. In this study, the presence of visual stimuli and real-time scoring stimulated both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, leading students to perceive the activity as a game rather than a test. Students at SMK Negeri 2 Indralaya Utara reported during interviews that Kahoot made reading activities more exciting and less intimidating, and that they looked forward to participating in future assessments. This finding supported the research of Zarzycka-Piskorz (2020), who observed that digital games reduced anxiety and increased motivation by transforming formal assessments into enjoyable learning experiences.

In terms of reading comprehension, students showed noticeable progress in identifying the main ideas, characters, settings, conflicts, and plot sequences in narrative texts. The immediate feedback feature of Kahoot enabled them to quickly identify their mistakes and improve their understanding in real time. The analysis of quiz results revealed that comprehension accuracy improved gradually over successive sessions, suggesting that repeated exposure to game-based assessments reinforced learning and memory retention. These results were consistent with the studies of Huang and Hew (2021) and Putri and Wijaya (2023), who found that students who participated in Kahoot-based activities achieved higher comprehension scores and demonstrated

greater reading engagement than those using conventional assessments. The findings in this study confirmed that Kahoot helped students at SMK Negeri 2 Indralaya Utara deepen their understanding of narrative structures while simultaneously enhancing vocabulary mastery and inferential thinking skills.

Documentation, including screenshots of Kahoot sessions and field notes, supported these findings by showing that students interacted not only with the content but also with their peers. The collaborative and competitive aspects of Kahoot fostered cooperation, peer discussion, and mutual encouragement among the students at SMK Negeri 2 Indralaya Utara. They often discussed answers, shared strategies, and celebrated each other's success, which promoted a supportive and communicative classroom atmosphere. This outcome corroborated the findings of Azizah and Ardi (2023), who reported that digital game-based platforms enhanced social interaction and collaboration, as well as Susanti (2022), who found that Kahoot increased learners' confidence and participation. Although minor challenges such as unstable internet connections and unequal device access were encountered, these issues did not significantly disrupt the learning process, which was consistent with Siregar et al. (2021), who noted similar infrastructural constraints in digital classrooms.

Overall, the findings of this study reinforced the growing body of literature supporting the use of game-based assessment tools in EFL classrooms. Kahoot's accessibility, immediate feedback, and engaging interface transformed reading assessments into enjoyable, meaningful, and less stressful learning experiences. The integration of Kahoot in the reading comprehension lessons of students at SMK Negeri 2 Indralaya Utara enhanced not only their cognitive outcomes, such as comprehension and critical thinking but also their affective aspects, including motivation, confidence, and participation. These findings were consistent with the conclusions of Huang and Hew (2021) and Putri and Wijaya (2023), who argued that game-based learning supports both academic and emotional growth. In conclusion, Kahoot proved to be an effective and innovative alternative assessment tool that promoted active engagement, improved comprehension, and created a positive learning atmosphere suitable for modern digital pedagogy.

D. Conclusion

This study explored the use of Kahoot as a digital assessment tool for evaluating students' reading comprehension of narrative texts in an EFL classroom at SMK Negeri 2 Indralaya Utara. The findings revealed that Kahoot not only enhanced student engagement and motivation but also served as an effective platform for assessing key elements of narrative understanding, such as plot, character, setting, and inference. The gamified features of Kahoot created a more dynamic and less stressful learning environment, fostering active participation and improved comprehension outcomes. Students responded positively to the immediate feedback provided by the platform, which allowed them to recognize and correct misunderstandings in real time. Despite minor challenges such as connectivity issues and device availability, the integration of Kahoot proved to be beneficial in transforming assessment into a more interactive and meaningful process.

The results of this study supported the growing body of literature advocating for the incorporation of game-based technology in formative assessment, particularly in language learning contexts. Kahoot's flexibility, accessibility, and engaging interface made it a suitable alternative to traditional testing methods, especially for digital-native learners who benefited from interactive and visually appealing learning experiences.

In light of these findings, it is suggested that English teachers integrate Kahoot or similar game-based platforms into their classroom assessments to increase student motivation, participation, and comprehension. Teachers are also encouraged to combine digital assessments with collaborative learning activities to maintain engagement and enhance deeper understanding of reading materials. Furthermore, future researchers may explore the application of Kahoot in other language skills, such as listening, speaking, and writing or compare its effectiveness with other digital learning tools to provide broader insights into technology-based formative assessment in EFL classrooms.

E. References

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