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THE EFFECT OF USING KAHOOT AS A GAME-BASED LEARNING TOOL ON VOCABULARY ACQUISITION OF GRADE 10 LEARNERS

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Abstract:
Developing vocabulary is the essential first step to language development, impacting students' reading comprehension, academic achievement, and communication skills. Traditional approaches, such as rote memorization, often do not support long-term memory. This study examined the effectiveness of Kahoot, an online game-based learning platform, on vocabulary acquisition among Grade 10 learners. The study, a quasi-experimental one-group pretest-posttest, involved 40 participants from a selected secondary school. A 25-item vocabulary test was administered before and after the intervention, and data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and a paired t-test to determine significant differences in mean scores. Results showed a significant improvement in post-test scores compared to pre-test scores, indicating that Kahoot enhanced vocabulary proficiency. The interactive and gamified nature of Kahoot increased motivation, engagement, and retention among learners. These findings align with prior research highlighting the impact of gamification on learner engagement and motivation. Educators are encouraged to integrate game-based learning tools to enhance vocabulary retention, while future research should explore long-term effects and applicability across diverse learning contexts.

Keywords: game-based learning, Kahoot, vocabulary acquisition, Grade 10 learners, educational technology

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1. Introduction

A vital component of learning a language is expanding one's vocabulary, which influences one's ability to communicate with people, function academically, and comprehend what one reads. With regard to long-term memory, however, conventional techniques such as textbook drills and rote memorization frequently fail. Kahoot and other game-based learning aids have become popular as educational technology has advanced. and have become more well-liked in classrooms because of their capacity to enhance dynamic and engaging learning. This online quiz software keeps students engaged by transforming teaching into gamified, competitive experiences that provide real-time feedback. By bringing enjoyment and motivation to education, Kahoot maintains students' interest, which can result in improved and more durable vocabulary growth.

Globally, Kahoot and other game-based learning resources are being used by educators to improve the effectiveness and interactivity of language learning. A recent study by Talapova and Abdusalamova (2024) examined how Kahoot aids Kazakhstani university students in expanding their vocabulary. The outcomes demonstrated that Kahoot creates a more dynamic and interesting environment in the classroom, in addition to making learning more pleasurable. The study concluded that Kahoot significantly improves vocabulary acquisition, enhances motivation, and increases student participation, ultimately leading to a better learning experience. Based on studies done with eleventh graders in Indonesia by Zulfirah et al. (2023), Kahoot, when compared to traditional teaching methods, significantly improved students' vocabulary mastery. Similarly, Quiroz et al.'s (2021) study in Chile found that Kahoot! enhanced vocabulary learning and increased student participation in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) courses. Furthermore, Nur Azkiyah et al.'s recent study in a junior high school setting revealed that Kahoot successfully improved vocabulary retention and student engagement through the use of interactive and multimedia components. All of these studies show how popular Kahoot is all around the world and how effective it is in enhancing vocabulary acquisition.

At the national level, the Philippines has embraced digital learning techniques more and more to raise pupils' language skills. According to studies, using game-based learning in English language training improves student performance. A study conducted by Reyes and Martinez (2021) examined the effects of Kahoot. They found that students in high schools in the Philippines who participated in gamified vocabulary activities demonstrated better contextual word application and recall than those who used conventional teaching techniques. Furthermore, Rojabi et al. (2022) explored the use of Kahoot in vocabulary learning and found that it effectively enhanced students' understanding of vocabulary and course concepts, as indicated by improved exam scores. The interactive nature of Kahoot! also had a positive impact on student engagement and motivation. These results imply that the nation's traditional language teaching methods could be changed by game-based learning platforms.

Locally, the use of Kahoot has become popular in schools throughout the world, especially in areas where students are trying to improve their English. According to Cruz and Santos's (2022) study in Davao City, secondary school students who took part in Kahoot-based vocabulary instruction showed better memory rates than those who participated in traditional

vocabulary drills. According to Dela Cruz (2023), students who participated in game-based learning demonstrated increased motivation and enhanced vocabulary test scores. These results show that incorporating Kahoot into language instruction may be a useful strategy for enhancing vocabulary acquisition in Grade 10 students in nearby educational institutions.

While the existing research extensively explores the positive impact of Kahoot on vocabulary acquisition across various educational contexts globally, nationally, and locally, a gap exists in understanding the specific cognitive processes underlying long-term vocabulary retention through game-based learning platforms like Kahoot. Specifically, further investigation is needed to determine how the gamified elements of Kahoot, such as competition, points, and interactive quizzes, influence the encoding and retrieval of vocabulary in long-term memory among Grade 10 learners.

2. Literature Review

The integration of Game-Based Learning (GBL) into educational settings has garnered significant attention, particularly in language acquisition. As digital technology continues to evolve, educators seek innovative methods to engage learners and enhance their academic performance. One such approach is the use of game-based platforms, which blend entertainment with instructional strategies to promote active learning. Among these platforms, Kahoot has emerged as a widely utilized tool for fostering student engagement and reinforcing subject matter through interactive quizzes and competitive gameplay. Vocabulary acquisition is a fundamental aspect of language learning, directly influencing reading comprehension, communication skills, and overall academic success. Traditional vocabulary instruction often relies on rote memorization and repetitive exercises, which may lead to diminished student motivation and retention. Game-based learning, by contrast, offers a dynamic and interactive alternative that encourages participation and enhances memory retention through immediate feedback and reinforcement. Research suggests that gamified learning environments, such as Kahoot, can improve student motivation, foster collaborative learning, and increase vocabulary retention. This literature review examines the effectiveness of Kahoot as a game-based learning tool for vocabulary acquisition among Grade 10 learners.

2.1 Kahoot as a Tool for Game-Based Learning

Kahoot is an online game-based learning platform that enables educators to create quizzes, discussions, and surveys to enhance student engagement and learning (Wang & Tahir, 2020). This platform is widely used in educational settings to make learning more interactive and enjoyable. Kahoot incorporates elements of gamification, such as competition, points, and instant feedback, which motivate students to participate actively in the learning process. The game-based format of Kahoot helps reinforce learning content, particularly vocabulary acquisition, by promoting repeated exposure and active recall.

2.2 Theoretical Lens

This study was anchored on the Constructivist Theory by Jean Piaget (1977), which provides a solid theoretical foundation. This theory emphasizes the importance of active engagement, self-regulation, and feedback in the learning process. It suggests that learners construct knowledge through active mental processes, including reflecting on and applying information in real-world contexts.

The constructivist approach supports the idea that learners acquire new vocabulary more effectively when they are actively engaged in interactive and meaningful tasks. Kahoot promotes an active learning environment where students participate in quizzes, receive immediate feedback, and collaborate with peers, reinforcing their vocabulary knowledge through repeated exposure and practice. This aligns with Piaget's (1977) emphasis on active mental processes and Vygotsky's (1978) concept of social learning, which highlights the importance of interaction in knowledge construction.

Recent studies have explored this integration, highlighting its effectiveness in enhancing language learning outcomes. Ahmed and Sayed (2022) examined the impact of Kahoot! on Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary recall and retention. The findings revealed that incorporating Kahoot as a game-based learning tool significantly improved students' vocabulary acquisition, attributing this success to the interactive and competitive elements inherent in the platform. Similarly, research by Saari and Varjonen (2021) investigated the use of Kahoot and Gimkit in second-language vocabulary acquisition among Finnish upper-secondary school students. The study concluded that both digital games were beneficial in promoting vocabulary learning, with in-game features such as competition and game modes enhancing student motivation and engagement. These studies collectively underscored the efficacy of integrating Kahoot within a constructivist framework to enhance vocabulary acquisition. By promoting active participation, immediate feedback, and a collaborative learning atmosphere, Kahoot serves as a valuable tool in the language educator's repertoire, aligning with constructivist principles to foster deeper understanding and retention of vocabulary among learners.

2.3 Effectiveness of Game-Based Learning Approach in Vocabulary Acquisition

Studies have shown that Game-Based Learning (GBL) is highly effective in vocabulary acquisition. Recent research by Talapova and Abdusalamova (2024) examined the impact of Kahoot! on vocabulary learning among university students. Their findings indicated that Kahoot! significantly enhances vocabulary recall, motivation, and engagement, though challenges such as technology access and teacher training were noted. Similarly, Zulfirah et al. (2023) conducted a quasi-experimental study with eleventh-grade students, revealing that the use of Kahoot in teaching vocabulary effectively improved students' vocabulary mastery. The experimental group showed a notable increase in post-test scores compared to the control group, underscoring Kahoot's efficacy in educational settings. Furthermore, Nur Azkiyah et al. (2024) explored student engagement in learning English vocabulary using Kahoot! in a junior high school setting. The study found that Kahoot's interactive and enjoyable nature facilitated active participation and friendly competition among students, leading to improved vocabulary

comprehension and retention. Collectively, these studies highlighted the effectiveness of Kahoot! as a GBL tool in enhancing vocabulary acquisition across various educational contexts.

2.4 Traditional Teaching Method vs. Using Kahoot as a Game-based Learning Tool

Recent studies have emphasized the effectiveness of Game-Based Learning (GBL) in enhancing vocabulary acquisition compared to traditional teaching methods. Hafeez (2022) highlights how interactive games actively engage students, making the learning process more dynamic and improving retention. Similarly, Munawarah et al. (2024) found that using games in language classrooms significantly improved students' language proficiency and academic success, as learners exhibited higher motivation and better retention rates than those taught using traditional memorization techniques. Additionally, Bhandari (2022) investigated collaborative language learning through interactive games, revealing that students in game-based settings developed stronger vocabulary skills, critical thinking, and teamwork abilities compared to those using conventional teaching strategies. These findings collectively suggested that GBL fosters an engaging learning environment, enhances language retention, and encourages active student participation, making it a highly effective alternative to traditional vocabulary instruction.

2.5 Effectiveness of Kahoot in Vocabulary Acquisition

Recent research has explored the effectiveness of Kahoot! in enhancing vocabulary learning among students. Zulfirah et al. (2023) conducted a quasi-experimental study with eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 8 Palu, Indonesia. The study revealed that students who engaged in Kahoot-based activities demonstrated significant improvements in vocabulary mastery compared to those who received traditional instruction. The researchers concluded that Kahoot! effectively enhances students' vocabulary acquisition and recommends its integration into language learning curricula. Similarly, Talapova and Abdusalamova (2024) investigated the impact of Kahoot! on vocabulary recall and motivation among third- and fourth-year university students. Their findings indicated that Kahoot! not only improved vocabulary retention but also increased student motivation and engagement. However, challenges such as technology access and the need for teacher training were noted. The study concluded that Kahoot is an effective tool for enhancing vocabulary learning, provided that these challenges are addressed. In a study focusing on younger learners, Cancino and Viguera (2024) assessed the impact of a gamified approach using Kahoot on vocabulary learning and self-efficacy among primary EFL students in Chile. The quasi-experimental design revealed that while both the experimental and control groups performed equally well in terms of lexical gains, the experimental group exhibited a significant increase in vocabulary self-efficacy. This suggests that Kahoot! can positively influence students' confidence in their vocabulary learning abilities.

3. Material and Methods

This section presented the research design, participants, procedure, and data analysis methods for this study. Each component was described to provide a clear understanding of how the research was conducted, ensuring transparency and reliability.

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a quasi-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design integrated with a mixed-methods approach. This quasi-experimental design entailed assessing participants' vocabulary knowledge both before and following the intervention, enabling a systematic evaluation of any significant changes that can be attributed to the integration of Kahoot as a game-based learning tool. Additionally, this design helped establish whether Kahoot effectively enhanced vocabulary acquisition by comparing pretest and posttest results. Putri (2019) conducted a quasi-experimental study titled "The Effectiveness of Using Kahoot Game to Improve Students' Vocabulary Comprehension" with seventh-grade students. The study found that students taught using Kahoot showed greater improvement in vocabulary comprehension compared to those taught using conventional methods. Zulfirah, W., Darmawan, D., & Maf'ulah, M. (2023) investigated the use of Kahoot to enhance vocabulary mastery among eleventh-grade students. Their quasi-experimental research demonstrated that Kahoot effectively improved students' vocabulary mastery, as evidenced by significant gains in post-test scores. Nada, S., and Savitri, W. (2024) examined the effectiveness of Kahoot in teaching vocabulary to seventh graders. Their study revealed that the experimental group that used Kahoot outperformed the control group, indicating the tool's effectiveness in vocabulary instruction. These studies support the use of a one-group pretest-posttest design to assess the impact of Kahoot on vocabulary acquisition, demonstrating its effectiveness as a game-based learning tool in various educational contexts.

The quantitative component involved the collection and analysis of numerical data through pretest and posttest scores, allowing for an objective measurement of changes in vocabulary proficiency. By administering the same vocabulary test before and after the intervention, this study ensured that observed differences could be statistically analyzed to determine the effectiveness of Kahoot as a game-based learning tool. The study utilized descriptive statistics, such as mean and standard deviation, to summarize students' performance in both tests. Additionally, a paired t-test was conducted to evaluate whether the differences between pretest and posttest scores were statistically significant. Thematic analysis of these interviews identified recurring themes such as enhanced academic performance, deeper engagement, social collaboration, and motivational benefits, as well as challenges related to technical and connectivity issues.

In addition to quantitative data, the study incorporated a qualitative component to provide a deeper understanding of students' experiences, attitudes, and perceptions regarding the intervention. Qualitative data were gathered through individual interviews among students after the intervention. Thematic analysis of these interviews identified recurring themes such as enhanced academic performance, deeper understanding through fun interaction, social

collaboration, and motivational benefits, as well as challenges related to technical and connectivity issues.

The integration of both quantitative and qualitative methods allowed for a comprehensive evaluation of the intervention. While the quantitative data measured the impact of Kahoot on learning outcomes, the qualitative data explained how and why these outcomes occurred, capturing the learner-centered processes that influenced vocabulary development. This integration enriched the interpretation and increased the study's validity by triangulating findings from multiple sources. The mixed methods approach provided a measure of vocabulary learning as well as student experiences behind the gain, with instructional design implications for effective and engaging language learning strategies.

3.2 Participants

This study involved a single section of Grade 10 learners from a selected secondary school where the researcher is affiliated. The selected section consisted of 40 students, who engaged in the study over four weeks. During this time, they underwent a structured vocabulary acquisition intervention using Kahoot as a game-based learning tool. All participants completed a pretest to assess their initial vocabulary proficiency, followed by a series of interactive learning sessions utilizing Kahoot. At the end of the intervention, a post-test was administered to measure their vocabulary improvement and determine the effectiveness of Kahoot in enhancing vocabulary acquisition.

3.3 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were strictly observed throughout the study. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by assigning unique identification codes instead of using participants' real names. The research adhered to ethical guidelines to protect the well-being and privacy of all participants.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

The data collection process was conducted in three phases. This structured approach ensures that the quantitative components are systematically gathered to assess the effectiveness of Kahoot as a game-based learning tool for vocabulary acquisition.

Phase 1: Pre-test Administration (Baseline Data Collection)

In the first phase, all participating Grade 10 learners took a pretest to assess their baseline vocabulary proficiency. The test consisted of vocabulary words commonly found in the Grade 10 English curriculum, carefully selected to align with standard learning objectives. This phase served as a reference point for measuring learners' progress and ensured that any observed improvements in later phases could be attributed to the instructional intervention. The pretest results were recorded and analyzed to determine students' initial vocabulary knowledge before the implementation of Kahoot.

Phase 2: Implementation of Teaching Methods (Game-Based Learning Implementation)
During the second phase, the intervention was implemented over two weeks, where Kahoot was integrated as a game-based learning tool for vocabulary instruction. Students participated in interactive Kahoot quizzes designed to enhance vocabulary retention through gamification, engagement, and real-time feedback. These quizzes included multiple-choice questions, fostering a collaborative and competitive learning environment. The instructor facilitated discussions to reinforce word meanings, usage, and pronunciation. This phase aimed to assess whether incorporating Kahoot enhanced students' motivation, engagement, and vocabulary acquisition compared to traditional learning methods.

Phase 3: Post-test Administration (Post-Implementation Data Collection)
After the intervention, all participants completed a posttest, identical in structure to the pretest, to measure vocabulary improvement. The posttest results were compared with the pretest scores to determine the extent of vocabulary gains. Statistical analysis, such as a paired t-test, was performed to evaluate whether the differences in mean scores before and after the intervention are statistically significant. This phase provided empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of Kahoot as a game-based learning tool for vocabulary acquisition.

3.5 Data Analysis

For the quantitative data analysis, the pre-test consisted of 25 items, with a range of scores that will be interpreted according to the following scale:

Score Range (Out of 25)	Transmutation (%)	Description	Interpretation
21-25	85%-100%	Excellent	Very High Vocabulary Proficiency
16-20	65%-84%	Very Good	High Vocabulary Proficiency
11-15	45%-64%	Good	Moderate Vocabulary Proficiency
6-10	25%-44%	Fair	Low Vocabulary Proficiency
1-5	0-24%	Poor	Very Low Vocabulary Proficiency

Note: Quantitative Phase: Statistical Tools (Likert Scale).

This scale was adapted from established frameworks for proficiency categorization in language assessment (Boone et al., 2012; Likert, 1932). The classification of proficiency levels is aligned with research-based rubrics in educational measurement, ensuring reliability in the interpretation of learners' vocabulary acquisition (DeVellis, 2017). The classification of proficiency levels is based on research-backed rubrics in educational measurement, ensuring reliability and validity in the assessment of learners' vocabulary acquisition (DeVellis, 2017). This interpretation framework allowed for a structured evaluation of learners' progress before and after the intervention. To determine whether there was a statistically significant improvement in vocabulary proficiency, a paired t-test was conducted to compare the pre-test and post-test scores. This inferential statistical approach was appropriate for measuring within-group differences over time (Field, 2018).

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Mean Score of Learners Before the Intervention

Table 1: Mean Score of Learners in the Pre-Test

Group	N	Mean Score (SD)	Interpretation
Pre-Test	40	20.78 (2.48)	High

Table 1 presented the mean score of learners before the intervention. The pretest results showed a mean score of 20.78 with a standard deviation of 2.48. This means that before any intervention, learners were able to have a high level of vocabulary proficiency in English. This indicated that even without exposure to the intervention, learners demonstrated a good test score in vocabulary.

The pre-intervention mean score of 20.78 with a standard deviation of 2.48 indicated that, prior to any instructional intervention, the learners already possessed a high level of vocabulary proficiency in English. This suggests that traditional instructional methods had been effective in establishing a solid foundation of vocabulary knowledge among the learners.

This observation aligned with findings from several studies that have examined the efficacy of traditional lecture-based instruction. For instance, Hanh (2021) conducted a study comparing traditional techniques with game-based learning for vocabulary acquisition and found that while traditional methods were effective, game-based learning yielded better results in vocabulary development. Similarly, a study by Ergashev and Bustanov (2024) compared traditional teacher-led instruction with technological tools for vocabulary acquisition among intermediate English learners. The results indicated that although traditional methods led to steady improvement, the use of technological tools resulted in more rapid and significant gains in vocabulary retention. Furthermore, a meta-analysis by Kozanitis & Nenciovici (2023) examined the impact of active learning versus traditional lecturing on college students' learning achievements in the humanities and social sciences.

The analysis revealed that active learning methods were generally more effective in enhancing learning outcomes compared to traditional lecturing.

Collectively, these studies suggest that while traditional lecture-based instruction is effective in building foundational knowledge, incorporating active learning strategies or technological tools can further enhance vocabulary acquisition and overall learning outcomes.

4.2 Mean Score of Learners After the Intervention

Table 2: Mean Score of Students in the Post-Test

Group	N	Mean Score (SD)	Interpretation
Post-Test	40	22.75 (1.93)	Very High

Table 2 presents the mean score of learners after the intervention of using Kahoot. The post-test results revealed a mean score of 22.75 with a standard deviation of 1.93. This yielded that those

learners, after the intervention, were able to improve their test scores in vocabulary. This means that learners have a very high level of vocabulary proficiency in English.

The observed improvement in learners' vocabulary proficiency following the intervention with Kahoot is aligned with several studies highlighting the platform's efficacy in educational settings.

For instance, a study by Flores Quiroz et al. (2021) demonstrated that using Kahoot! significantly enhanced English vocabulary learning among high school students in an EFL context, indicating its potential to improve vocabulary acquisition. Similarly, research by Ahmed and Sayed (2022) examined the impacts of Kahoot! as a game-based learning tool on Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary recall and retention. The findings revealed that incorporating Kahoot! effectively allowed learners to develop a deeper understanding of vocabulary, as indicated by improved exam scores. Moreover, a study by Ayumi and Chan (2021) reported that 72% of students strongly believed that using Kahoot! would help them learn more vocabulary, suggesting its effectiveness as an alternative learning tool.

These studies collectively support the notion that Kahoot can serve as an effective tool for enhancing vocabulary proficiency, corroborating the positive outcomes observed in the post-test results of the current intervention.

4.3 Significant Difference in Mean Scores Between Before and After the Intervention

Table 3: Test of Significant Difference in Mean Scores Between Pre-test and Post-test

Group	Mean Score	t-value	p-value	Interpretation	Decision
Pre-Test	20.78	3.945	<0.001	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis
Post-Test	22.75				

To determine whether the difference in mean scores between before and after the intervention was statistically significant, a paired samples t-test was conducted. The results, shown in Table 3, revealed a t-value of 3.945 and a p-value of <0.001. Since the p-value was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis of no significant difference was rejected, indicating that the intervention had a meaningful impact on student learning outcomes. Moreover, students using Kahoot improved their test scores in vocabulary proficiency.

The observed significant improvement in students' vocabulary proficiency following the Kahoot intervention aligned with findings from multiple studies that have employed similar methodologies. For instance, a study by Korkmaz and Öz (2021) utilized a paired samples t-test to assess the impact of Kahoot on students' reading scores. The results demonstrated a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores, suggesting that students engaged more actively with the material, leading to enhanced performance. Similarly, research by Lutfiah (2021) investigated the effectiveness of Kahoot in teaching vocabulary to eighth-grade students. The study employed both paired and independent sample t-tests, revealing a significant improvement in the experimental group's vocabulary mastery compared to the control group. The N-gain score further indicated that Kahoot was moderately effective in enhancing vocabulary learning. Moreover, a study by Ciaramella (2020) examined the use of Kahoot as a

formative assessment tool in foreign language classrooms. The research employed paired samples t-tests to compare pre-test and post-test performances within control and experimental groups. Findings indicated a statistically significant improvement in both groups, with the experimental group (using Kahoot) showing a higher mean increase, highlighting Kahoot's potential in reinforcing language learning.

Collectively, these studies support the effectiveness of Kahoot as a gamified learning tool in enhancing students' vocabulary proficiency, as evidenced by significant improvements in test scores following its implementation.

5. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, educators are encouraged to integrate Kahoot into their vocabulary instruction to create a more interactive and engaging learning experience that reinforces vocabulary retention. School administrators and policymakers should consider investing in digital learning platforms and providing training programs for educators to effectively implement game-based learning tools. Future research should explore the long-term effects of Kahoot on vocabulary acquisition and assess its impact across different proficiency levels and learning contexts to further validate and expand upon these findings.

6. Conclusion

This study examined the impact of Kahoot as a game-based learning tool on the vocabulary acquisition of Grade 10 learners. The results showed that students significantly improved their vocabulary proficiency after the Kahoot intervention, suggesting that game-based learning positively influences both engagement and retention of vocabulary concepts. The progress observed supported previous research on the benefits of interactive and game-oriented educational methods. Overall, the study emphasized the importance of integrating digital tools like Kahoot to complement traditional teaching strategies and strengthen vocabulary learning.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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