

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GAMIFICATION TECHNIQUE IN ENGLISH CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

Gamification serves as a learning technique that enhances motivational opportunities by adding game-like elements and encouraging positive behavioral outcomes. How students perceive the use of technology involves both cognitive and affective aspects. This research aimed to investigate the students' perception toward gamification implemented in English language classrooms. This research was conducted in a Private Junior High School in Sukabumi. It involves 70 students among the 8th and 9th grade students as samples. This research uses a qualitative descriptive method; the instrument is questionnaire as well as interview to collect the data. The questionnaire consists of 30 sets of questions, with four indicators, while the interview consists of 10 questions. It is found that gamification creates a more engaging and enjoyable learning atmosphere. In the cognitive aspect, students perceived gamification as easy to use and beneficial for improving their understanding of vocabulary. Affective responses revealed positive feelings such as excitement and reduced anxiety. Additionally, the majority of students showed a desire to continue using gamification and were enthusiastic in seeking additional learning outside of class. Therefore, this research suggests that gamification can support more student-centered and interactive English instruction.

Keywords: students' perception, gamification

INTRODUCTION

Being knowledgeable in English is not only advantageous in the twenty-first century, but also necessary. This is because English is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, making it impossible to ignore or deny (Ilyosovna, 2020). English is one of the numerous languages spoken around the world that is utilized as an international language (Liando & Tatipang, 2022). From elementary school through higher education, students in Indonesia are supposed to learn English as a foreign language. According to Darma & Widiastuty (2023), English mainly serves as an instructional medium in formal and informal educational institutions when it is used as a foreign language, rather than being spoken in social or everyday contexts. As a result, the educators should use a variety of learning tools, including technology-based learning activities.

As times have changed, English Language Teaching has grown significantly in order to keep up with current developments. In order to improve the quality of teaching as well as make the classroom more effective, techniques are one thing that the teacher should consider (Prayudha &

Pradana, 2023). The advancement of technology in education has become increasingly popular as it provides opportunities for innovation and interactive teaching techniques (Darwis & Amal, 2023). Among these innovations, gamification has emerged as a powerful strategy to enhance student engagement and motivation.

By incorporating game-like elements such as points, timers, badges, and leaderboards, gamification fosters a more immersive and enjoyable learning environment (Adeoye, 2023; Vrcelj et al., 2023). Ofosu-Ampong (2020) appointed that Gamification is a technique in learning of raising motivational opportunities by adding game-like experiences and promoting behavioral outcomes. When it is applied effectively, Gamification also enhances the feelings of enjoyment and engagement in the learning process (Ratinho & Martins, 2023). Numerous gamified learning digital services already exist; Wordwall, Quizizz, and Kahoot! are a few examples of gamification. Kahoot! is gaining popularity as one of the most well-known platforms for gamified learning, as it makes learning more enjoyable for students. Ultimately,

the most obvious reason for using technology into language learning aims to enhance students' motivation and engagement.

Through their senses, students gather information about learning activities in classroom, which shapes their perception and helps them to see and understand it. In today's constantly shifting classroom environment, understanding the educational process from the eyes of the learners has become necessary. Since students are the center of any learning process, perception matters when it comes to learning activities (Ansow *et al.*, 2022). Perception is a process by which individuals organize and interpret their sensory impressions to give meaning to their environment (Biggs and Tang, 2011) as cited in (Olbata *et al.*, 2022). This process shapes responses to a variety of stimuli, including engagement, hope, motivation, and memory (Lindawati *et al.*, 2022). Reinforcing this notion, Benson *et al.*, (2020) further elaborates the dimension that construct perception by defining it as someone's thoughts, beliefs, and feelings about a person, situations, or event.

By understanding their own perception, it can lead the students to achieve a good result of learning English. It is in line with Kusuma & Pramesti (2020) stating that students' perceptions are the main thing for evaluating students in the teaching and learning process. The students' response to the learning strategy itself can be used to determine whether the perception is positive or negative (Zannah & Hidayanti, 2024).

In today's education, where technology is used as a learning tool, how students perceive the use of technology viewed as significant since technological advancements may eventually affect students' learning experiences, either positively or negatively (Ubaidillah *et al.*, 2020). In addition, Cohen *et al.*, (2022) pointed out that how students perceive the usefulness and ease of use technology itself significantly shapes student's actual use in learning activity. Therefore, it can be seen that examining students' perception of they how use technology is necessary, as their views directly impact their engagement in teaching and learning activity.

How students perceive the use of technology involves both cognitive and affective aspects. It means that students' engagement with technology depends not only the way they think but also on how it makes them feel while interacting

with it. To illustrate, Putra & Priyatmojo (2021) emphasized students expressed favorable feelings about gamification, which they found enjoyable and engaging despite some technical issues. For that reason, these findings may suggest that students' perceptions and acceptance of technology are interconnected in the learning process.

Alfadda & Mahdi (2021) highlight that the acceptance of technology use can be influenced by the students' experience, where those with positive experiences may demonstrate favorable attitudes toward technology, and vice versa. Frameworks such as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) have been widely applied in educational research (Xue *et al.*, 2024). UTAUT, in particular, expands upon TAM by incorporating additional factors—such as engagement, motivation, and perceived usefulness—that directly impact students' willingness to utilize technology in learning environments (Granic, 2022). Given the increasing role of gamification in education, examining students' perceptions through the lens of UTAUT provides valuable insights into their acceptance and engagement with technology-enhanced learning strategies.

At one of private junior high school in Sukabumi Regency, students have been exposed to gamification tools, particularly Kahoot! by their English teacher. While the way students learn English has changed since technology was brought into the classroom, there remains a gap in understanding how this experience differs across grade levels. Although 7th graders responded positively to gamification based on previous study by Ariati & Iswahyuni, (2023), there is room for deeper investigation into how 8th and 9th grade learners think about and perceive the use of technology as a supporting learning tool. It indicates that students' learning stages along with learning preferences may show different perceptions and outcomes across different grade levels. Therefore, an interesting issue comes up: how are students' perceptions towards the use of gamification in English classrooms?

METHOD

The method used in this research is a descriptive qualitative. Qualitative is used to investigate a problem to gain a clear understanding of a particular phenomenon (Cresswell, 2012) as cited

in (Zannah & Hidayanti, 2024). Johnson & Christensen (2008) as quoted by (Zannah & Hidayanti, 2024) state that “qualitative research is focused on understanding the insider’s point of view of people, requires direct personal contact and is often participatory”.

The sampling technique used in this study was purposive sampling. The sample chosen of this study consist of as much as 70 students from class VIII-A and IX-A. These classes were chosen by the writer to conduct the research due to the fact that the students often use the Gamification implemented by the English teacher, which has been used since the first year of junior high school. The data collection in this study is carried out by distributing paper-based questionnaire and interview.

Below is the UTAUT framework which consists of 7 indicators. However, in this study, the research instrument combines the dimensions of perception (thoughts, beliefs, and feelings) with the four main indicators of the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT): ease of use, usefulness, enjoyment, and engagement.

In this framework, the four UTAUT indicators serve as particular measurable components of the larger perception variable, allowing for a more thorough evaluation of students’ cognitive and affective responses to gamification in English language instruction.

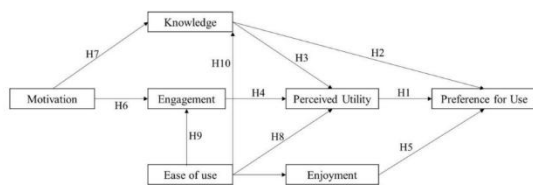


Figure 1. UTAUT Joint Model
Source: Acosta Medina et al (2021)

The total of question of questionnaire is 30 and interview is 10. The following table 1 is the components and indicators used in this study.

Table 1. Students’ Perception Questionnaire

Dimension	Indicators	Description
Thoughts	Ease of use	How students cognitively interpret the ease of

		use of gamified learning tools.
Beliefs	Perceive Utility	Students’ personal beliefs regarding impact of gamification in English language learning outcomes.
Feelings	Enjoyment and Engagement	Affective responses toward gamified learning, including motivation and involvement in classroom activity.

The data analysis techniques in qualitative research are used to answer the research question based on evidence and theory. It is the process of collecting data systematically to facilitate researchers in obtaining conclusions. According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) as cited in (Nurhendrayanti *et al.*, 2023) the analysis consists of three stages namely data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Thoughts

What students perceive in the cognitive aspect, which refers to how students interpret and understand their learning experiences. First, students reported having no difficulties using gamification, indicating that gamification reduced technical barriers and supported their learning process. Based on the percentage questionnaire answers stating that 41 of 70 participants (59%) strongly agreed that they can easily understand how to use kahoot! even for the first time. It was also supported by the interview result from several students in the following excerpt below.

S1: “At first, I thought it would be complicated, but it turned out to be really easy to do the quiz just by using the code.”

S5: “... I also thought it would be difficult to use, but it turns out it’s not, just scan the qr code and we can immediately do it.”

S7: “It’s not hard, it’s really easy to use.”

These findings align with those of Alfadda and Mahdi (2021), who found that students’ acceptance of technology use can be

influenced by their experience. Those with positive experiences may demonstrate favorable attitudes toward technology. This suggests that students can focus more on the learning material than on how to use the tool.

In addition, it was found that visual elements, colors, animations and music in gamification can create an interesting and interactive learning atmosphere. This can increase student engagement and help them stay focused, which in turn can strengthen understanding and retention of the material. Based on the percentage questionnaire answers it was found that 44 of 70 students (63%) strongly agreed that the elements that Kahoot! have is engaging. This finding is in line with Eftita *et al* (2023) who showed that gamified learning can facilitate students' retention of information while maintaining their interest in the material being studied. Therefore, it can be concluded that the many elements in gamification can encourage students in the learning process and improve knowledge retention.

Overall, the results of perception dimension on thoughts show that gamification not only reduces technical barriers for students, but also creates an engaging and interactive learning atmosphere. Visual elements, colors, animations and music in gamification contribute to increased student engagement, help them stay focused, and strengthen understanding and retention of the material. These findings confirm that students' positive experiences with technology can influence their attitude towards learning, allowing them to concentrate more on the material being taught. Thus, gamification is proven to be an effective tool in supporting the learning process and improving student learning outcomes.

Beliefs

Based on the analysis of the data, the results for students' beliefs toward the use of gamification in English learning activities, which is a measure of how confident the students are that their English can be helped by gamification. It was found that students believe that their English skills, especially in terms of vocabulary and tenses, can improve due to the repeated use of gamification. This can be seen from the questionnaire result in which 41 of 70 students (59%) agree that utilizing Kahoot! will improve their knowledge of English, such as learning new vocabulary and understanding tenses.

It is also supported by the statements from several students below.

S1: "The most noticeable improvement from practicing with Kahoot! is vocabulary. Because there are many questions that repeat new words, so the longer I practice, the more I memorize them."

S3: "I feel like my vocabulary knowledge in English has increased."

S8: "I think vocabulary is easier to remember because we often practice in Kahoot! Because we often see the word over and over again when playing. The tenses also help a lot, so we can know the correct sentence patterns in English because when we click the wrong answer there is an explanation of why it is wrong."

This finding aligns with the Alharti (2020) research, which mentioned that the use of gamification in English teaching can improve students' language skills, including the ability to acquire vocabulary. This finding indicates that the use of gamification in the classroom can be a supplement to classroom instruction that leads to improved language proficiency. In other words, students believe that the use of gamification engages their interest in English class, which in turn contributes to the development of their knowledge.

Furthermore, it was found that gamification elements, particularly competition, had a significant influence on students' learning motivation. The students reported that the experience of competing in Kahoot! made them more excited and motivated to learn compared to continuously learning with conventional methods. This finding is in line with research conducted by Acosta Medina et al (2021) which shows that rather than continuously using traditional teaching methods, students prefer to use gamification in their learning environment. This suggests that students form favorable opinions about learning through gamification due to the engaging and lively learning environment they experience when doing digital game-based activities.

In addition, the findings show that the competition features in gamification, such as leaderboards and points, serve as stimulus for students to continue learning. The students confirm that these elements of competition not only increase motivation, but also create a sense of responsibility to continue learning. Statements from S2 and S6 as well as S4 and S5 in the

following excerpt, confirm that these elements of competition not only increase motivation, but also create a sense of responsibility to continue learning.

S2: "It's really exciting but nerve-wracking. Especially when I see my name at the top of the rankings and in the top 10, I feel proud, so I want to keep getting high scores."

S4: "It makes me want to understand the material better."

S5: "I'm happy and quite excited to learn English."

S6: "I was ranked in the top 5, and I was really happy, there was a sense of satisfaction, and it made me want to continue to be in that position."

The previous statement from the students were supported by Kladchuen & Srisomphan's (2021) research which found that leaderboards can motivate students to maintain their performance over a longer period of time. This indicates that students have an expectation to understand the learning material well so that their performance does not decrease by maintaining or improving their position on the leaderboard.

Feelings

Based on the analysis of feelings dimension, the researcher found the result of what students perceive of the use of gamification in English language learning activity that refers to the emotional and motivational aspect. In the affective aspect, it was found that students felt a positive learning environment for motivation, enjoyment, and understanding, as well as creating a more interactive and enjoyable learning experience. A majority of the students felt they were more likely to learn English as they competed with others in the class for a favorable position. This statement is in line with research conducted by Pratama (2020) which states that the wider involvement of students in the class also promoted a more meaningful engagement to learning. It indicates that the positive learning environment students feel comfortable with has a positive impact on English learning participation in the classroom. Therefore, this means that the more learners participate in class, the more they are motivated to participate more in learning.

A desire for continued learning was also found. The students expressed willingness to continue using Kahoot! as a learning tool. The

following are the result of the interview documented from the students participating in the study.

S1: "I think I would continue using Kahoot if it had a ranking feature. It would tell me whether I understand the English material I'm learning or not."

S5: "... the quizzes given by the teacher or the practice questions in Kahoot! are quite helpful so that I know whether I have understood the English material learned or not. I also sometimes like to look for practice questions in Kahoot! when I'm at home to study."

S9: "I want to keep using it because I can see how well I understand the material from all my answers and I also know which parts I need to improve."

S10: "I want to, if I'm bored of studying because it's just the same thing, I can try the practice questions in Kahoot by myself to check how much I understand. So, if something is wrong, I can study again."

Based on the students statements it can be seen that they felt that Kahoot! helped them learn English material more effectively and encouraged them to practice more at home. This finding is consistent with Putra & Priyatmojo (2021) study, in which they stated that 'students' interest in learning material, in this case, English outside the classroom, also increases.' This suggests not only that gamification increases participation in classroom interactions, but also that gamification increases the positive learning behavior of individuals outside the classroom. Thus, it indicates that students are able to nurturing positive learning behaviours through the use of gamification.

CONCLUSION

In the student's perception there are three indicators namely thoughts, beliefs and, feelings. Overall, the result show that students have a positive perception towards the use of gamification in English language instruction. It is found that gamification create a more engaging and enjoyable learning atmosphere. It comes into conclusion that in the cognitive aspect, they perceived gamification as easy to use, besides the students also believe that the use of gamification is beneficial for improving their understanding of vocabulary, tenses, or short reading activity. Affective or emotional responses showed positive feelings such as excitement and

decreased anxiety. This suggests that the interactive and gamified nature of Kahoot! supports a more enjoyable learning process, allowing students to learn in a fun and stress-free environment. Additionally, the majority of students showed a desire to continue using Kahoot! and were enthusiastic in seeking additional learning outside of class. It provides an opportunity for students to learn independently and study material they have not yet understand. These findings have important implications for teaching practice, showing that the integration of gamification can improve student engagement and learning outcomes. Future research could explore the long-term impact of gamification in different learning contexts and how gamification elements can be optimized for different types of subject matter.

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