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Exploring the Integration of KAHOOT! in Practicing Vocabulary in Use: The Case of Master Two Students at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to:

My dearest mother — the kindest human being I have ever met. Your love, support,
and sacrifices mean the world to me.

My beloved father — thank you for your encouragement and for never giving up on
me, even when I was on the edge of failure.

My brother and sisters — your support has always meant more to me than I can
express. I love you all.

My beautiful grandmother and all my family members.

My friends, whom I consider brothers.

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And lastly, I would have loved to dedicate this to my wife — but sadly, I'm still
single!

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Abstract

This study investigates Algerian Master 2 EFL students' perceptions of using Kahoot! as a tool for practicing vocabulary in use. It seeks to explore how learners evaluate the platform in terms of ease of use and usefulness within vocabulary learning tasks. A structured questionnaire was administered to examine students' experiences with Kahoot!'s interactive and gamified environment, and a vocabulary-based classroom activity using Kahoot! was conducted to observe students' engagement and interaction with the tool. The findings reveal that most participants found Kahoot! intuitive and accessible, noting its engaging features and competitive elements as beneficial for motivation and recall. Students also reported increased attention and enjoyment during vocabulary practice sessions. While the study focused on receptive vocabulary learning, students' feedback indicated potential for supporting active engagement and contextual understanding of vocabulary. The results suggest that Kahoot! can serve as a complementary approach to vocabulary instruction, especially in contexts seeking to integrate technology into language learning. Limitations include reliance on self-reported data, a single classroom setting, and limited focus on productive vocabulary use. Future research should incorporate multiple tools, objective assessments, and longitudinal approaches to examine deeper vocabulary gains.

Keywords: Kahoot!, vocabulary in use, gamification, EFL learners, learner perceptions, educational technology.

Table of Contents

Exploring the Integration of KAHOOT! in Practicing Vocabulary in Use: The Case of Master Two Students at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra.	1
Dedication	2
Acknowledgement.....	3
Abstract.....	4
List of Figures	9
List of Tables.....	10
List of Abbreviations and Acronyms	11
GENERAL INTRODUCTION.....	12
1. Background of the study	13
2. Statement of the Problem.....	16
3. Literature Review	16
4. Significance of The Study.....	19
5. Aim of the Study and Research Questions.....	20
6. Research Methodology:	21
6.1. Data Collection Tools	21
6.2. Population and Sample.....	21
7. Structure of thesis	22
CHAPTER ONE: VOCABULARY LEARNING IN SECOND LANGUAGE EDUCATION: THEORETICAL INSIGHTS AND THE ROLE OF KAHOOT!	24
Introduction.....	25
1. VOCABULARY IN SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING 26	
1.1. The Central Role of Vocabulary in Language Proficiency	26
1.2. Dimensions of Vocabulary Knowledge	28
1.3. Traditional Approaches to Vocabulary Teaching.....	29
1.4. Challenges in Vocabulary Retention	30
1.5. Contemporary Perspectives on Vocabulary Acquisition	32
1.5.1. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT).....	32
1.5.2. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).....	33
1.5.3. Integration of Cognitive Learning Theories	34
1.5.4. Technological Tools and Online Platforms	34
1.6. The Role of Technology in Vocabulary Learning	35

1.6.1.	Gamification and Learner Engagement.....	35
1.6.2.	Impact on Vocabulary Acquisition	35
1.6.3.	Advantages and Disadvantages	36
1.6.4.	Broader Implications for Language Acquisition	36
2.	KAHOOT! AS AN ALTERNATIVE ENVIRONEMENT FOR VOCABULARY LEARNING.....	37
2.1.	Understanding Kahoot! and Its Educational Features	37
2.2.	The Role of Gamification in Vocabulary Acquisition.....	38
2.3.	Enhancing Engagement and Motivation Through Kahoot!	39
2.4.	Customization and Accessibility in Vocabulary Instruction.....	41
2.4.1.	Tailored Content for Diverse Learning Needs.....	42
2.4.2.	Multimedia Integration Enhancing Learning Modalities	42
2.4.3.	User-Friendly Interface and Technological Accessibility.....	43
2.4.4.	Encouraging Engagement through Personalization	43
2.5.	Addressing Limitations and Challenges.....	44
2.5.1.	Technical Constraints.....	44
2.5.2.	Impact on Learner Anxiety.....	44
2.5.3.	Limitations in Assessing Productive Skills	45
2.5.4.	Integration into a Comprehensive Instructional Framework.....	45
2.6.	Empirical Evidence Supporting Kahoot!'s Effectiveness	45
2.6.1.	Vocabulary Acquisition and Retention	45
2.7.2.	Learner Engagement and Motivation.....	46
2.7.3.	Positive Learner Perceptions	46
2.7.4.	Comparative Effectiveness	47
2.7.5.	Limitations and Considerations	47
	Conclusion	47
	CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY.....	49
	1. Introduction	50
	2. Research Approach	50
	2.1. Adoption of a Mixed-Methods Research Approach.....	50
	2.2. Descriptive Nature of the Study	51
	3. Research Design: Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) Framework	52
	3.1. Theoretical Framework: The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM).....	52
	3.2. Operationalization of TAM Constructs in the Questionnaire	53
	4. Population and Sample	54

4.1. Target Population and Rationale for Selection.....	54
4.2. Sampling Procedure: Convenience Sampling	54
4.3. Limitations of Convenience Sampling	55
5. Data Collection Tools	55
5.1. Students' Questionnaire	56
5.2. Supplementary Kahoot! Activity and Observations	57
6. Validity and Reliability	57
6.1. Content Validity	58
6.2. Limitations in Reliability and Pilot Testing	58
7. Data Analysis Procedures	59
7.1. Quantitative Analysis.....	59
7.2. Qualitative Analysis.....	60
7.3. Triangulation of Findings.....	61
8. Ethical Considerations	62
8.1. Voluntary Participation and Informed Consent.....	62
8.2. Confidentiality and Anonymity.....	62
8.3. Right to Withdrawal and Data Control	63
9. Conclusion	63
CHAPTER THREE: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	65
1. Introduction	66
2. Questionnaire results.....	66
2.1. Section One: Familiarity with Kahoot!	66
2.2. Section Two: Perceptions (TAM).....	69
3. Kahoot! Activity Results.....	75
3.1. Section One: Overview	75
3.2. Section Two: Final Scores.....	76
4. Conclusion.....	77
GENERAL CONCLUSION	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1. Introduction	80
2. Answer to Research Question 1 (To what extent do Algerian EFL learners find Kahoot! easy to use to practice vocabulary?)	80
3. Answer to Research Question 2 (To what extent do Algerian EFL learners find Kahoot! useful to practice vocabulary?).....	81
4. Implications	82
5. Limitations of the Study.....	83

6. Recommendations for Future Research	85
References.....	87
Appendices.....	93

List of Figures

Figure 1	66
Figure 2	67
Figure 3	68
Figure 4	69
Figure 5	70
Figure 6	71
Figure 7	72
Figure 8	74
Figure 9	75

List of Tables

Table 1	75
Table 2	76

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

MA: Master of Arts

PhD: Doctor of Philosophy

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

TAM: Technology Acceptance Model

TBLT: Task-Based Language Teaching

UI: User Interface

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1. Background of the study

Vocabulary is the foundation of any language, serving as the building blocks for communication. In the context of language learning, vocabulary encompasses not just the knowledge of individual words but also an understanding of their meanings, uses, and relationships within a linguistic system. Without a sufficient vocabulary, learners struggle to express ideas, comprehend texts, or engage in meaningful interactions. As Nation (2001) highlights, vocabulary knowledge is essential for fluency, accuracy, and overall language proficiency. Moreover, it encompasses both receptive knowledge, which refers to recognizing words during listening and reading, and productive knowledge, which enables learners to use words effectively in speaking and writing. This dual nature of vocabulary underscores its complexity and importance in language acquisition. Therefore, vocabulary learning is not merely about memorizing word lists but about developing a deeper understanding of how words function in context and how they contribute to communication.

Vocabulary plays a crucial role in language acquisition, as it is directly linked to learners' ability to comprehend and produce language. Nation (2001) argues that "vocabulary knowledge is central to language proficiency and to the effective use of language in both receptive and productive skills." This highlights that vocabulary is not only necessary for understanding spoken and written texts but also for enabling learners to express their own thoughts and ideas clearly. The acquisition of vocabulary allows learners to access the full range of language functions, from casual conversation to more complex academic discourse, making it an essential aspect of second language proficiency.

Traditional methods of teaching vocabulary have primarily focused on rote memorization, using techniques such as word lists, flashcards, and explicit instruction. While these methods may help students remember individual words, they often fail to

engage learners in using those words meaningfully in context. Schmitt (2010) suggests that traditional approaches, while useful for building initial vocabulary knowledge, do not necessarily promote long-term retention or the ability to use words in a variety of contexts. These methods often emphasize passive learning rather than active engagement with language. Consequently, there has been a shift toward more interactive and context-based approaches to vocabulary learning.

Despite the importance of vocabulary in language learning, teaching vocabulary presents several challenges. One of the main obstacles is ensuring that learners not only memorize words but also retain and actively use them in real-life situations. Deterding et al. (2013) note that "the challenge is not simply in getting learners to memorize vocabulary but in helping them to use it appropriately and naturally in communicative settings." This challenge is compounded by the fact that many learners struggle with the retention of vocabulary over time, especially when words are learned in isolation without meaningful context. These issues highlight the need for more dynamic and engaging methods that can support both the retention and the contextual use of vocabulary.

Kahoot! has emerged as a gamified tool that provides a more engaging alternative to traditional vocabulary teaching methods. By incorporating quizzes, competitions, and interactive activities, Kahoot! fosters an environment where learners can practice vocabulary in a fun and dynamic way. As Deterding et al. (2013) argue, "gamified tools engage learners by providing interactive, competitive, and motivating experiences that enhance learning." Kahoot! allows learners to test their vocabulary knowledge, compete with their peers, and receive immediate feedback, making it a powerful tool for reinforcing vocabulary retention in an enjoyable and motivating way.

Kahoot! is an online learning platform that uses gamification to enhance the educational experience. Gamification refers to incorporating game-like elements, such as points, rewards, and competition, into non-game contexts to foster engagement and motivation (Deterding et al., 2013). In the case of Kahoot!, students participate in quizzes where they answer questions related to vocabulary or other subjects, earning points for correct answers and competing against their peers. This competitive element not only makes learning more fun but also encourages students to stay engaged and motivated throughout the lesson.

Gamification has gained significant attention in the field of language learning due to its ability to increase learner engagement and motivation. According to Gee (2003), "games create powerful learning environments by offering immediate feedback, fostering collaboration, and encouraging problem-solving." In the context of language learning, gamified tools like Kahoot! provide a platform for learners to practice vocabulary in an interactive and competitive environment, which may enhance both motivation and retention. By transforming the learning process into a game, students are more likely to engage with the material and continue practicing their vocabulary skills.

The potential of Kahoot! in vocabulary learning lies in its ability to combine competitive elements with interactive learning. This not only makes vocabulary practice more enjoyable but also encourages learners to actively engage with new words in a meaningful way. As Schmitt (2010) emphasizes, "active engagement with vocabulary through context-based learning enhances long-term retention and usage." Kahoot!'s interactive format provides learners with frequent opportunities to practice vocabulary, receive immediate feedback, and compete with peers, all of which contribute to deeper learning and better retention. Moreover, the competitive nature of

Kahoot! can serve as a motivator for learners, making vocabulary practice more appealing and less monotonous.

2. Statement of the Problem

Even though everyone knows how vital vocabulary acquisition is for foreign language learning, many EFL students still find it a real challenge to remember new words. As Schmitt (2010) notes, “traditional approaches, while useful for building initial vocabulary knowledge, do not necessarily promote long-term retention or the ability to use words in a variety of contexts”. Because of this, vocabulary knowledge tends to stay superficial and temporary.

Moreover, Deterding et al. (2013) argue that “the challenge is not simply in getting learners to memorize vocabulary but in helping them to use it appropriately and naturally in communicative settings”. This highlights the persistent issue of vocabulary learning not transferring effectively to real-life use, particularly when traditional methods dominate.

Although several studies across the globe have looked into using Kahoot! in language learning, not much attention has been paid to how it works in Algerian higher education. More specifically there is a lack of empirical research focusing on how Kahoot! influences vocabulary retention among university-level EFL learners.

This study aims to fill that gap by exploring the use of Kahoot! as a tool for practicing and retaining vocabulary and evaluating student responses to this gamified approach.

3. Literature Review

Several studies have emphasized the importance of vocabulary in second language acquisition, where it is widely regarded as central to learners’ ability to understand

and produce language. Without a sufficient range of vocabulary, learners are unable to express their ideas clearly or comprehend texts effectively. Nation (2001) argues that vocabulary knowledge is essential for fluency and accuracy in both receptive and productive language skills, and that successful communication depends on knowing not only word meanings but also their contextual usage, collocations, and appropriate register.

Despite its importance, vocabulary instruction often faces significant challenges. Traditionally, vocabulary has been taught through decontextualized methods such as rote memorization, isolated word lists, flashcards, dictionary use, and gap-filling exercises. While these techniques may assist with initial recognition, they often fail to support long-term retention or the ability to use vocabulary meaningfully in context. Schmitt (2010) highlights that traditional approaches encourage passive learning and tend to result in superficial knowledge that learners struggle to apply in authentic communication. Similarly, Laufer and Hulstijn (2001) stress the limitations of such practices, noting that vocabulary learned in isolation is easily forgotten unless reinforced through real-life use.

A major obstacle in vocabulary learning is retention. Learners frequently forget new words over time, especially when they are not presented in meaningful or engaging contexts. Studies have shown that contextualized instruction significantly improves vocabulary recall. Hassani et al. (2024) found that teaching vocabulary through context was more effective than simply focusing on definitions or synonyms. Additional strategies like spaced repetition and retrieval practice also contribute to long-term retention. Saksittanupab (2024) demonstrated that learners who practiced spaced repetition retained nearly 80% of target words after ten days, while Karpicke and Roediger (2008) showed that active retrieval strengthens memory more than

passive review. These findings underline the need for engaging and cognitively stimulating approaches to vocabulary instruction.

In recent years, gamification has emerged as a promising pedagogical method in language learning. Gamification involves applying game elements—such as points, competition, and immediate feedback—to non-game contexts to foster learner motivation and engagement (Deterding et al., 2013). In language learning, it transforms repetitive exercises into interactive experiences that promote deeper focus and sustained interest. According to Gee (2003), game-based learning environments provide powerful educational opportunities through challenge, feedback, and meaningful context. In this context, Kahoot! has gained popularity as an interactive platform that incorporates game mechanics into the learning process.

Kahoot! is a digital learning tool that allows teachers to create quizzes and surveys that students can access through smartphones, tablets, or computers. Its time-based challenges, point scoring, and leaderboards encourage learners to stay focused and perform better. Teachers can also integrate multimedia—images, audio, and video—into quizzes, allowing students to associate words with visual or auditory stimuli, which supports memory and understanding. The user-friendly interface and competitive element have made Kahoot! an increasingly common tool in both language classrooms and broader educational settings.

A growing body of empirical research has investigated the impact of Kahoot! on vocabulary acquisition. Quiroz et al. (2021) conducted a quasi-experimental study in Chile and found that students using Kahoot! showed statistically significant improvements in vocabulary recall compared to those taught with worksheets. Similarly, Rojabi and Setiawan (2022) reported strong vocabulary development and higher motivation levels among Indonesian university students exposed to Kahoot!,

attributing this to the platform's interactive nature and immediate feedback. Mansur and Fadhilawati (2019) also observed improved vocabulary scores among senior high school students after Kahoot! was implemented in two instructional cycles.

While the overall findings are positive, some studies highlight contextual limitations. Reynolds and Taylor (2020), studying Korean university classrooms, noted only a modest increase in vocabulary performance, although students expressed enjoyment and teachers praised the platform's motivational benefits. Hadijah et al. (2020) found that students appreciated Kahoot!'s fun and competitive nature but also reported anxiety caused by time pressure and the visibility of the leaderboard.

One critical observation across these studies is that while Kahoot! appears effective in enhancing learner engagement and motivation, its influence on vocabulary production (i.e., using words in writing or speaking) is less commonly examined. Most studies have focused on vocabulary recognition and recall. Additionally, although Kahoot! has been implemented in diverse settings such as Chile, Indonesia, Vietnam, and South Korea, little empirical attention has been paid to its integration in Algerian EFL classrooms. This represents a significant research gap, especially considering the unique technological, pedagogical, and cultural context of Algerian higher education. More localized research is needed to explore how gamified learning platforms like Kahoot! affect vocabulary learning outcomes and how such tools can be adapted to meet the needs of Algerian EFL students.

4. Significance of The Study

This study focuses on how Kahoot! can make learning vocabulary more engaging and effective for students. For teachers, it offers a fresh, interactive way to help learners stay motivated and actually remember new words. Researchers can rely on this work to explore how gamification shapes language learning, especially in

Algeria, where digital tools have just started to grab attention. For policymakers, the findings highlight the potential of integrating technology into classrooms, making education not just more modern but also more enjoyable and impactful for students.

5. Aim of the Study and Research Questions

This study aims to explore the integration of Kahoot! as a digital tool for practicing vocabulary in use among Algerian EFL learners, with a particular focus on learners' perceptions of its ease of use and usefulness in the learning process. To address this aim, the study seeks to answer the following questions:

Main Research Questions

1. To what extent do Algerian EFL learners find Kahoot! easy to use for vocabulary learning?
2. To what extent do Algerian EFL learners find Kahoot! useful in supporting vocabulary learning?

Sub-questions

1. What motivates EFL learners to engage with Kahoot!-based vocabulary activities?
2. What challenges do students face when using Kahoot! in vocabulary practice?
3. What are learners' preferences regarding the design or content of vocabulary-based Kahoot! quizzes?
4. How do students compare Kahoot! to conventional vocabulary learning tools?

6. Research Methodology:

To answer the above questions, the current study will follow a descriptive design in order to explore Algerian EFL learners' perceptions towards the use and usefulness of Kahoot! Within the context of practicing vocabulary in use.

6.1.Data Collection Tools

The current study will employ a mixed-methods approach to gather both qualitative and quantitative data. The primary data collection tools are:

Questionnaire: A questionnaire will be administered to assess learners' perceptions regarding the ease of use and usefulness of Kahoot! for vocabulary practice. The questionnaire will include both closed-ended questions, which will be analyzed quantitatively, and open-ended questions, which will provide qualitative insights into the learners' experiences.

The data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics for the quantitative responses, and thematic analysis will be applied to the qualitative responses to identify patterns and key themes regarding learners' experiences.

Kahoot! Classroom Activity: a vocabulary-focused Kahoot! activity will be carried out at a private language school as part of the study's data collection.

6.2.Population and Sample

The study will be conducted at the University of Biskra, specifically within the English Department, and will focus on Master 2 students enrolled in the "Sciences of the Language" program. These students are considered suitable participants because they have advanced academic exposure to language learning and are likely to provide informed and reflective feedback regarding the use of Kahoot! for vocabulary practice.

The sample will consist of Master 2 students who are currently enrolled at the University of Biskra. Participants will be selected based on their availability and

willingness to complete the questionnaire. The final sample size will depend on the number of respondents, ensuring sufficient data for meaningful descriptive analysis.

As for the Kahoot! activity, the sample will consist of a group of students present during a scheduled vocabulary lesson at a private language school, selected based on their availability and willingness to participate.

7. Structure of thesis

This thesis is structured as follows:

- **General Introduction:** Sets the stage by outlining the background of the study, problem statement, literature review, research questions, significance, objectives, and methodology overview. It provides the reader with the context and rationale for the study.
- **Chapter One:** Provides the theoretical foundation for vocabulary learning in second language education. It delves into key concepts such as the importance of vocabulary for language proficiency, traditional and modern instructional methods, and the emergence of gamified learning tools like Kahoot! within the landscape of digital pedagogy.
- **Chapter Two:** Outlines the research methodology adopted in the study. It presents the mixed-methods approach guided by the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), detailing the population, sampling procedure, research instruments (questionnaire and classroom observation), procedures for ensuring validity, and ethical considerations.
- **Chapter Three:** Presents and analyzes the results obtained through both quantitative and qualitative methods. It explores learner perceptions, engagement with Kahoot!, and performance during the Kahoot! activity, offering a critical discussion in light of relevant literature.

- **General Conclusion:** Summarizes the main findings in relation to the research questions, discusses implications for educators and policymakers, acknowledges limitations, and provides recommendations for future research.

**CHAPTER ONE: VOCABULARY LEARNING IN
SECOND LANGUAGE EDUCATION:
THEORETICAL INSIGHTS AND THE ROLE OF
KAHOOT!**

Introduction

Vocabulary plays a crucial role in second language acquisition, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning environments where students rely heavily on vocabulary knowledge to develop proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. A solid vocabulary base enables learners to comprehend authentic input, express ideas effectively, and engage in meaningful communication. However, vocabulary instruction has long posed challenges for both teachers and students, ranging from low retention rates to limited student engagement, particularly when taught using traditional, teacher-centered methods.

This chapter provides a comprehensive theoretical and practical overview of vocabulary learning and teaching, with a specific focus on approaches relevant to the Algerian EFL context. It begins by presenting the conceptual foundations of vocabulary knowledge, exploring its dimensions, and discussing both traditional and modern instructional strategies, including task-based and communicative methods. The chapter then turns to the use of digital tools in vocabulary learning, with an emphasis on the role of gamification in enhancing learner motivation. In particular, Kahoot!, a game-based learning platform, is examined as an alternative learning environment that aligns with current trends in learner-centered instruction. This theoretical background lays the foundation for the next chapter, which outlines the methodology adopted to investigate learners' perceptions of using Kahoot! for vocabulary practice.

1. VOCABULARY IN SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

1.1. The Central Role of Vocabulary in Language Proficiency

Vocabulary is an inherent aspect of language proficiency, and it is the basis of all four communication skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Nation (2001) points out that vocabulary knowledge forms the core of language proficiency as well as language proficiency in using the language appropriately in both productive and receptive skills. Learners cannot express themselves properly or understand others if they lack a suitable vocabulary, despite their knowledge of grammar (Wilkins, 1972).

Lexical knowledge is both breadth (i.e., word knowledge, or the number of words that one knows) and depth (the acquaintance with features of word knowledge), e.g., meaning, use, collocation, and register. Nation (2001) distinguishes between receptive vocabulary (words that are heard or read and known on hearing or reading) and productive vocabulary (words that one can use appropriately on speaking or writing). Effective communication requires both because learners must comprehend input and generate the appropriate output.

The relationship between vocabulary knowledge and language ability is widely established. In reading, vocabulary number has been established as an effective predictor of comprehension. Hu and Nation (2000) state that learners need to know a minimum of 98% of the words in a text in order to achieve adequate comprehension without assistance. Similarly, in listening, a big vocabulary is needed to understand oral language, especially in academic or work contexts. In speaking and writing, a good vocabulary allows varied and more precise expression, increasing fluency and coherence.

While it is important, vocabulary learning is problematic for students. Unlike grammar, which has rules, vocabulary is vast and often lacks patterns that can be predicted, and thus it is difficult to learn. Meara (1980) notes that vocabulary is among the most problematic aspects of language learning because it is open-ended and lacks clear boundaries. This necessitates the need to have good teaching methods that go beyond memorization.

Current approaches to teaching vocabulary emphasize the use of contextualized and meaningful learning. Schmitt (2010) is convinced that vocabulary can be taught through rich and varied contexts so that learners get to hear and utilize words in a context. Nation (2001) proposes a balanced model with explicit instruction, incidental acquisition through extensive reading and listening, and the use of strategy such as word cards and word part analysis.

Technology has also been employed to facilitate vocabulary learning. Computer programs and applications, such as flashcard software and educational games, offer interactive and personalized learning environments. Technology is capable of offering immediate feedback, spaced repetition, and multimodal input, which enhance retention and motivation. Conscious integration of technology into the curriculum with the intent of supplementing traditional instruction is, however, required.

In conclusion, vocabulary is the building block of language competence and one of the most significant variables in successful communication and educational achievement. Due to its complexity and crucial nature, vocabulary instruction must be a paramount focus area in SLA, employing diverse and powerful methods for promoting significant and sustained learning.

1.2. Dimensions of Vocabulary Knowledge

Vocabulary knowledge has both receptive and productive functions, both of which are crucial in second language acquisition. Receptive vocabulary knowledge refers to the capacity to recognize and understand words when listening and reading, while productive vocabulary knowledge is the ability to employ words in speaking and writing contexts appropriately (Nation, 2001).

Effective vocabulary learning requires complete understanding of various aspects of a word, including meaning, use, pronunciation, spelling, collocations, register, and syntactic behavior (Alqahtani, 2015). Such multi-faceted understanding enables the learners not only to understand words immediately but also to use words correctly and appropriately in various communicative situations.

Research indicates that receptive vocabulary size is often larger than productive vocabulary size among language learners. Webb (2008) found that learners typically know more words than they can actually use, and the gap between receptive and productive knowledge widens for less frequent words. This means that even though learners may know a word when listening or reading, they may not be able to recall and use it when speaking or writing.

This transition from receptive to productive knowledge of vocabulary is not a coincidence and must be deliberate. Webb (2005) demonstrated that active involvement of learners in productive tasks such as sentence writing enhances active use of new words. Moreover, explicit instruction and repeated exposures to target vocabulary have been shown to drastically reduce the difference between receptive and productive knowledge, leading to improved vocabulary maintenance and application (Vincy, 2020).

Briefly, a balanced methodology in building receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge is essential for total language competence. By incorporating

explicit teaching, contextualized practice, and varied exposure, instructors are able to support learners in attaining the range and depth of vocabulary for effective communication.

1.3.Traditional Approaches to Vocabulary Teaching

Conventional vocabulary teaching techniques tend to depend on decontextualized strategies like rote learning, dictionary consultation, and gap-filling activities. Although these techniques can help enable initial vocabulary learning, they tend to fail to ensure long-term retention and the capacity to apply vocabulary in authentic situations (Schmitt, 2010). These techniques generally focus on passive learning, in which learners are presented with vocabulary without taking part in meaningful usage.

Rote memorization, for instance, is extensive drilling of lists of words in the lack of any contextual backing. Although the application of this procedure can produce short-term vocabulary recognition benefits, it will often fail to promote the deep semantic ties important to long-term recollection and practical application (Nation, 2001). Similarly, dictionary work and gap-filling exercises can facilitate the acquisition of word meanings but do not encourage learners to use new words in communicative situations and thus inhibit the application of knowledge to real situations.

Evidence shows that contextualized learning strategies, which place vocabulary instruction within situated contexts, are more effective in enhancing vocabulary retention and utilization. For example, extensive reading exposes learners to new words in varied and authentic situations, promoting more in-depth processing and better retention (Webb, 2008). Moreover, engaging students in tasks where they must use new words in speaking or writing activities can solidify word knowledge

and offer the jump from passive awareness towards active usage (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001).

Moreover, the addition of retrieval practice into learning vocabulary (getting students to practice recalling and utilizing new words) has been shown to enhance memory consolidation and produce better long-term recall (Karpicke & Roediger, 2008). Unlike passive exposure, the technique naturally involves active student engagement in acquiring knowledge because it actually aids learners in creating stronger traces in memory.

In summary, though some benefits might be realized by traditional methods of vocabulary instruction during initial vocabulary learning, these techniques tend to lack contextual richness and active use crucial for long-term retention and useful application. Embedding contextualized learning approaches and retrieval practices in vocabulary instruction has the potential to yield more powerful and relevant learning experiences, and ultimately to increased language competence.

1.4.Challenges in Vocabulary Retention

Vocabulary retention remains a significant hurdle to second language acquisition (SLA). Students typically do not retain newly acquired vocabulary, particularly where instruction depends largely on memorizing by rote with limited opportunities for authentic practice. Deterding et al. (2013) point out that the primary issue is less to do with memorizing words and more to do with developing means of prompting its appropriate and spontaneous use in communicative situations.

One of the reasons why retention is poor is a lack of contextualization in word instruction. In the event that learners are presented with words in abstract, meaningless context, there are low chances of forming the connections to retain in long-term memory. Hassani, Zarei, and Sadeghpour (2024) agreed that teaching

vocabulary through contextual methods significantly outperformed approaches that focused on definitions or synonyms in short- and long-term retention tests. This corroborates the necessity to present new words in relevant and engaging contexts in order to maximize retention.

Another effective strategy to combat vocabulary loss is the use of spaced repetition. This technique involves learning vocabulary at increasing intervals, leveraging the psychological spacing effect to develop memory. Saksittanupab (2024) demonstrated that learners completed spaced-repetition tasks recalled approximately 79.77% of target words at 10 days, and retention rates were quite high even at 31 days. These findings support the efficacy of spaced repetition in promoting both short-term vocabulary learning and long-term retention.

Retrieval practice in which individuals work to actively retrieve information has been proven to assist in vocabulary retention also. The Retrieval Effort Hypothesis posits that effort exerted towards retrieval of information strengthens the memory and improves long-term storage. Smith, Roediger, and Karpicke (quoted in MedCrave Online, n.d.) gathered empirical data confirming the hypothesis that learning from challenging retrieval practice demonstrated more resilient retention over longer timeframes than subjects that utilized less stressful retrieval methods. Spaced repetition alongside retrieval practice is able to construct an optimal study experience, reaffirming memory traces and enhancing word acquisition.

The incorporation of technology into vocabulary learning offers additional channels for enhancing retention. Computer software and applications, such as Anki, Quizlet, and Memrise, utilize gamification and spaced repetition algorithms to present interactive and adaptive learning experiences. The platforms facilitate frequent practice and immediate feedback, which are important determinants in assisting in

consolidating vocabulary skills (Learn Smart, n.d.). Moreover, reading exposure to various reading texts and communication with native speakers can expose learners to words in a variety of settings, therefore triggering understanding and memory (Sanako, n.d.).

In summary, retention of vocabulary in SLA relies on a number of factors, including contextualization of instruction, implementation of spaced repetition and retrieval practice, and the use of technology and authentic language use. By intervening in these areas, teachers can enhance learners' ability to retain and utilize new words, thereby raising overall language ability..

1.5. Contemporary Perspectives on Vocabulary Acquisition

According to Nation (2001) and Schmitt (2010), traditional vocabulary instruction, which often relies on rote memorization and decontextualized exercises, is inadequate for promoting long-term retention and the practical use of words. In contrast, modern second language acquisition (SLA) models emphasize the importance of authentic communication, meaningful interaction, and contextualized practice as essential components of effective vocabulary learning. Ellis (2003) and Webb and Nation (2017) argue that vocabulary is better acquired when it is presented in communicative and cognitively engaging contexts, especially when new input connects to learners' existing knowledge. These perspectives reflect a shift from isolated word learning to more holistic, use-based approaches grounded in cognitive and communicative theories of language learning.

1.5.1. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

Ellis (2003) characterizes Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) as an instructional approach that emphasizes the use of authentic language through

meaningful tasks to facilitate language learning. Nunan (2004) elaborates that these tasks often mirror real-life situations, such as visiting a doctor, conducting an interview, or calling customer service for assistance. Unlike traditional methods that prioritize the explicit teaching of grammatical structures, TBLT focuses on the completion of real-world tasks, thereby promoting practical language use. Willis (1996) notes that assessment in TBLT primarily centers on the successful completion of these tasks, rather than solely on the accurate use of specific language forms. This approach is particularly effective in enhancing learners' fluency and confidence, as it encourages pragmatic and interactive use of the target language in contextually rich environments..

1.5.2. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an instructional approach that emphasizes interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of language learning. According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), CLT focuses on enabling learners to communicate effectively and fluently in real-life situations, rather than merely mastering grammatical structures. This approach encourages students to engage in communicative activities that require the practical application of the target language, thereby fostering communicative competence (Savignon, 2002).

Unlike traditional methods that prioritize grammatical accuracy through rote memorization and translation exercises, CLT places a greater emphasis on the functional use of language. Learners are encouraged to participate in tasks such as role-plays, interviews, and group discussions, which simulate authentic communication scenarios (Littlewood, 1981). This shift towards meaningful interaction allows students to develop the ability to use language appropriately across

various contexts, enhancing both their fluency and confidence (Canale & Swain, 1980).

1.5.3. Integration of Cognitive Learning Theories

Contemporary learning theory, as discussed by Sternberg (2018), posits that language acquisition is more effective when new information is connected to existing knowledge and applied in meaningful contexts. This principle underlies instructional strategies that promote active engagement, such as problem-solving and collaborative learning, which have been shown to enhance vocabulary retention and comprehension (Moody et al., 2018). Vygotsky's sociocultural theory emphasizes the role of social interaction in cognitive development, suggesting that collaborative learning and scaffolding within the Zone of Proximal Development facilitate the internalization of new vocabulary (Vygotsky, 1978; Moody et al., 2018). Authentic learning approaches, involving real-world tasks and problem-solving, align with cognitive theories by providing contexts that make vocabulary learning more relevant and transferable (Donovan et al., 1999).

1.5.4. Technological Tools and Online Platforms

Batu and Hashim (2022) highlight that the integration of technology into language learning has introduced innovative methods for vocabulary acquisition, particularly through gamified applications. Omranpour (2022) discusses how applications like Anki, Quizlet, and Memrise utilize spaced repetition algorithms to enhance memory retention by scheduling reviews at optimal intervals, thereby reinforcing long-term recall. Gortaire Díaz et al. (2022) emphasize that these platforms incorporate gamification elements—such as points, levels, and interactive

challenges—to increase learner engagement and motivation. Su et al. (2022) note that the availability of web-based content and multimedia materials provides learners with access to authentic language resources, facilitating the development of vocabulary through exposure to real-life contexts.

1.6. The Role of Technology in Vocabulary Learning

Technological advancements have greatly transformed vocabulary learning, introducing novel forms of tools that maximize motivation, interest, and retention. Online websites and app-based games, such as Kahoot!, have proven successful methods of providing engaging and interactive vocabulary practice.

1.6.1. Gamification and Learner Engagement

Gamification, or the application of game design mechanics beyond games, has also been known to enhance learner engagement and motivation. Kahoot!, a game-based student response system, that allows teachers to create quizzes for their students to answer on their devices, which facilitates a competitive and fun learning environment. Studies indicate that these tools not only make learning more enjoyable but also improve the concentration and engagement of students (Pham & Duong, 2022).

1.6.2. Impact on Vocabulary Acquisition

Research has established the positive effect of Kahoot! on vocabulary learning. Talapova and Abdusalamova (2024) carried out a study that found students who utilized Kahoot! to have significant gains in recall and vocabulary retention. Along the same vein, Reynolds, Fuchs, and Johnson (2021) indicated that while both traditional learning and Kahoot!-driven learning increased vocabulary knowledge, the

use of Kahoot! notably increased students' intrinsic motivation for learning knowledge.

1.6.3. Advantages and Disadvantages

Technology use in learning vocabulary offers various benefits, including immediate feedback, increased student interaction, and the ability to customize content to address learners' needs. However, problems such as varying levels of technological competence among students and teachers, and access to stable hardware and internet, can influence the effectiveness of these resources (Truong & Dinh, 2024).

1.6.4. Broader Implications for Language Acquisition

Along with learning vocabulary, the use of online platforms like Kahoot! facilitates the acquisition of broader language skills. In interactive exercises, students acquire listening, reading, and speaking abilities in context, thereby enhancing overall communicative competence. In addition, the competitive and collaborative setting of such platforms can generate a positive classroom environment, facilitating peer learning and support (Katemba, Tobing, & Putri, 2022).

In conclusion, the use of technology, in this case, game-based technology like Kahoot!, is an essential part of modern vocabulary teaching. Through the leveraging of the driving forces of gamification and the pervasiveness of digital media, educators can create engaging and effective learning experiences that support vocabulary acquisition and overall language development.

2. KAHOOT! AS AN ALTERNATIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR VOCABULARY LEARNING

2.1. Understanding Kahoot! and Its Educational Features

Kahoot is an application that facilitates learning with games, enabling instructors to create quizzes, surveys, and discussions, which can be accessed via any device such as smartphones, tablets, or computers. Kahoot utilizes time limits, scores, and leaderboards to add competition and excitement to learning. Such features are meant to make learning more motivating and engaging for learners, which are among the determinants of mastering vocabulary.

The platform itself is centered around simplicity and usability in order for teachers to easily author and adapt to suit their pedagogical needs. Kahoot! also supports various kinds of questions, such as open questions, true or false, and multiple choice, that allow teachers to assess cognitive levels. In addition, multimedia learning objects such as video and images can be used to make vocabulary tangible, and abstract concepts tangible, for learners (Pham & Duong, 2022).

Research highlighted Kahoot!'s positive contribution to learners' motivation and engagement. For instance, Talapova and Abdusalamova's (2024) indicated that usage of Kahoot effectively improved vocabulary recall and motivation of university learners. Similarly, Pham and Duong (2022) showed that application of Kahoot!'s in vocabulary instruction encouraged student's participation and interest in learning.

Besides, the competitive environment of Kahoot!, with leaderboards and immediate feedback, can also raise learners' intrinsic motivation to improve. The gamified experience transforms the traditional vocabulary practice into active tasks requiring active participation from the learners, hence increased cognitive processing and memory for the new vocabulary (Ahmed et al., 2022). On the whole, pedagogical

elements of Kahoot such as interactive quizzes, multimedia support, instant feedback, and game elements serve to create an active and effective vocabulary learning space. Ease of use and flexibility make it an effective tool for instructors attempting to support vocabulary growth with interactive and student-centered learning.

2.2.The Role of Gamification in Vocabulary Acquisition

Gamification, or integrating game elements into non-game contexts, has received a lot of interest in the education field because of its ability to increase student engagement and motivation. Within vocabulary acquisition, gamification transforms traditional memorization into interactive and dynamic processes that engage students meaningfully in their learning.

One of the main benefits of using gamification in learning vocabulary is its ability to increase student motivation. Through incorporating features of point collection, competition, and prompt feedback, platforms based on games like Kahoot! create an interactive learning environment that increases student participation. Active engagement of this sort is pivotal because studies have shown that learner participation in learning exercises is positively related with enhanced retention and richer comprehension of acquired words (Ahmed et al., 2022).

The effectiveness of gamified strategies in teaching vocabulary has been verified through empirical evidence. Talapova and Abdusalamova (2024), for instance, conducted a study proving that using Kahoot! as an instrument for teaching vocabulary significantly enhanced vocabulary retention among college students. Pham and Duong (2022) in a similar study found that using Kahoot! for teaching vocabulary increased student engagement and satisfaction in addition to improved student outcomes.

In addition, the use of gamification can advance learners' self-efficacy in vocabulary learning. Cancino and Viguera (2024) conducted a study involving primary school pupils studying English as a second language in Chile and found that learners who learned vocabulary through gamified instruction in Kahoot! showed stronger vocabulary self-efficacy compared to learners who learned through traditional instruction. The significant increase in self-efficacy is advantageous since it can lead to increased effort and persistence in language-learning tasks.

The in-built competitiveness of gamified education platforms acts as an important stimulus for quickening vocabulary acquisition. Leaderboards and timed quizzes in Kahoot prompt learners to interact with and exercise new vocabulary in actual usage contexts in real time, thus allowing for faster recall and context-based use of words (Rojabi & Setiawan, 2022).

Additionally, gamification can support different learning styles through its combination of multiple multimedia components in form of visual and audio materials that make words context-relevant and enable abstract ideas to become concrete. Using a multi-modal approach can particularly benefit those who have difficulties in text-oriented educational processes (Lestari et al., 2023).

Overall, the combination of vocabulary instruction and gamification is a new and motivating extension of traditional pedagogy. With its ability to reinforce motivation, participation, and self-efficacy, Kahoot! promises tremendous potential in significantly boosting vocabulary acquisition and retention for students.

2.3.Enhancing Engagement and Motivation Through Kahoot!

The application of Kahoot! in language learning situations has been found to significantly enhance student engagement and motivation. As a game learning platform, Kahoot! transforms static vocabulary exercises into interactive experiences

that require some degree of active participation, hence promoting a more dynamic and thrilling learning environment.

One of the unique characteristics that lead to more engagement is the immediate feedback of Kahoot!. The instant response mechanism, as offered by Kahoot!, allows learners to immediately detect and correct mistakes, ensuring correct usage of language and enhancing vocabulary acquisition. According to Ahmed et al. (2022), the immediate feedback of Kahoot! quizzes helps in consolidating learners' knowledge and allows learners to form self-directed learning processes.

The competitive nature inherent within Kahoot also acts to boost motivation. The application of leaderboards and timed exams provides a gamified aspect that induces learners' internal motivation to drive performance. Such a competitive scenario encourages students to put in additional effort and time studying vocabulary as they are encouraged by the need to achieve higher scores and recognition from their peers. As stated by Rojabi and Setiawan (2022), a research found that Kahoot!'s competitive feature increased the enthusiasm and motivation of students to learn vocabulary, which in turn led to improved academic performance.

Furthermore, Kahoot!'s interactive and engaging nature provides the proper learning experience required to retain motivation. According to Pratama and Suastha (2024), the interactive and enjoyable nature of Kahoot! activities helped engage students in enhancing their motivation toward learning a language, and as a result, they became receptive to acquiring new words. That is supported by the premise of the edutainment model wherein learning content would be presented through an enjoyable presentation so that learner engagement would be optimized.

In addition to promoting individual motivation, Kahoot! also promotes collaborative learning and peer interaction. The platform design encourages students

to exchange questions and answers, permitting knowledge sharing and collaborative problem-solving. Such collaboration not only facilitates deeper understanding but also instills a sense of community within the classroom, thus motivating students further to actively participate in vocabulary learning activities. Oktaviani (2023) noted that students enjoyed using Kahoot! as an influential device to enable group collaboration and increase classroom participation, and which contributed towards a more interactive learning environment.

Moreover, the versatility of Kahoot! allows teachers to tailor content to various levels of proficiency and learning objectives, so all students will be challenged and encouraged. By tailoring quizzes in line with specific vocabulary targets, teachers can cater to various learners' requirements and maintain high degrees of motivation across the classroom.

In summary, incorporating Kahoot! into vocabulary instruction presents a multi-pronged approach to enhancing student motivation and participation. With immediate feedback, competitive aspect, entertaining learning experiences, collaborative potential, and adaptable content, Kahoot! effectively transforms vocabulary learning into a motivating and engaging process that enables improved language acquisition outcomes.

2.4. Customization and Accessibility in Vocabulary Instruction

Kahoot!'s user-friendliness and flexibility make it a practical tool for vocabulary instruction in diverse instructional settings. Its customizability enables instructors to tailor content to specific learning objectives, proficiency levels, and learner needs, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of vocabulary learning.

2.4.1. Tailored Content for Diverse Learning Needs

One of the strongest features of Kahoot! is its adaptability to serve different pedagogical purposes. Teachers can design quizzes that target specific groups of vocabulary, theme units, or language levels, allowing for differentiated instruction. Such customization offers support for scaffolded learning in that it enables students to expand on previous knowledge and progress at an appropriate level (Katemba et al., 2022).

Moreover, the platform's support for multiple-choice questioning, true/false items, and open-answer response offers receptive and productive vocabulary testing.

2.4.2. Multimedia Integration Enhancing Learning Modalities

Kahoot! 's support for multimedia content in the form of pictures, videos, and sound files caters to varied learning styles and aids in reinforcing vocabulary. The combination of visual and auditory stimuli is in alignment with Paivio's Dual Coding Theory which hypothesizes that information processed through verbal and non-verbal channels reinforces the retention of memory (Paivio, 1986).

For instance, the association of a new word with a corresponding picture or pronunciation sound can strengthen learners' knowledge and recall of lexical items.

A multimodal presentation like this is particularly beneficial to students who struggle with traditional text-based learning (Papadakis & Kalogiannakis, 2018).

Moreover, the use of audio in Kahoot! questions also enables pronunciation practice and listening comprehension, which are some of the most important components of language competence. This is especially useful for young learners and learners with low reading proficiency, as it provides an additional modality for accessing vocabulary content (Kahoot!, 2021).

2.4.3. User-Friendly Interface and Technological Accessibility

Kahoot!'s intuitive interface and cross-device compatibility with smartphones, tablets, and computers support its ease of access for varied learners. The platform's simplicity reduces the technological barriers of utilizing digital learning platforms, allowing students to focus on content interaction rather than complicated system navigation (Truong & Dinh, 2024). In addition, Kahoot!'s immediate feedback and interactive functions support an active learning environment that encourages participation and immediate reinforcement of vocabulary learning.

However, it is critical to acknowledge potential pitfalls in terms of technological accessibility. Issues with unreliable internet connection and limited access to compatible devices present barriers to the seamless adoption of Kahoot! in some learning settings. Educators must factor in these aspects and come up with strategies to mitigate technological disparities to allow equitable learning opportunities for all students (Hadijah et al., 2020).

2.4.4. Encouraging Engagement through Personalization

The possibility of adapting Kahoot! quizzes to curricular goals not only fosters curricular alignment but also enhances student engagement by using contexts and content that are relevant and familiar. Adaptation of quizzes to students' interests or real-life scenarios has the potential to foster motivation and make vocabulary learning more meaningful. Contextualization of this kind encourages intellectual processing at a deeper level and the transfer of vocabulary knowledge to communicative language use (Llerena Medina & Rodríguez Hurtado, 2017). In conclusion, Kahoot!'s flexibility features, multimedia support, and user-friendliness are aspects that render it an effective tool for teaching vocabulary. Through its potential to address various

learning needs and promote active learning, Kahoot! is a versatile platform that supports the learning of vocabulary skills in various learning settings.

2.5. Addressing Limitations and Challenges

While Kahoot! has several advantages for teaching vocabulary, it is important to find and overcome its disadvantages so that it is made an integral part of learning environments.

2.5.1. Technical Constraints

The use of technological tools with Kahoot! requires a stable internet connection and appropriate devices. In regions with poor infrastructure, including parts of Algeria, this requirement could pose significant challenges. A poor internet connection could cause gameplay disruptions, which would lead to dissatisfaction among students and adversely impact learning (Sianturi & Hung, 2022). Moreover, expecting students to provide individual devices could be unrealistic within some classroom environments, consequently restricting student interaction (Polat, 2019).

2.5.2. Impact on Learner Anxiety

The inherent competitive nature of Kahoot, with elements of time constraints and scoring, possesses the potential to cause stress among some students. Although this aspect is a desirable feature for some, it has a co-existing ability to increase others' anxiety, which would further decrease their performance and overall learning outcome (Wang & Tahir, 2020). Several students, for instance, reported that the inflicted time limits and fast pace of Kahoot! quizzes increased their level of tension, further interfering with their focus and accuracy when responding (Aibar-Almazán et al., 2024).

2.5.3. Limitations in Assessing Productive Skills

Kahoot! is designed essentially to assess receptive language capacities, such as vocabulary identification and comprehension. The features of the platform, based on multiple-choice and brief-response questions, do not provide an effective assessment of productive language capacity, specifically for speaking and writing. Therefore, sole reliance on Kahoot! in teaching vocabulary would potentially contribute to a partial assessment of a student's language ability (Truong & Dinh, 2024).

2.5.4. Integration into a Comprehensive Instructional Framework

Taking into consideration those constraints, it is advisable that Kahoot! is used as a supplementary tool within an all-encompassing vocabulary teaching paradigm. Instructors should combine Kahoot! with multiple pedagogy techniques that focus on language skill development and provide adequate chances for language practice. Only by adopting this integrated approach is a deeper improvement of vocabulary cognition and language capabilities achievable (Katemba et al., 2022).

2.6. Empirical Evidence Supporting Kahoot!'s Effectiveness

Mounting empirical evidence indicates the efficacy of Kahoot! as an instrument to foster vocabulary learning and retention in language learners. Empirical research within different educational environments has established that the integration of Kahoot! into vocabulary teaching leads to enhanced learning outcomes, student motivation, and engagement.

2.6.1. Vocabulary Acquisition and Retention

Ahmed et al. (2022) conducted a quasi-experimental study involving 50 Iranian intermediate EFL learners to examine the impact of Kahoot! on vocabulary recall and retention. The experimental group learning vocabulary through Kahoot!

outperformed the control group learning through conventional means on both immediate and delayed post-tests. The results show that Kahoot! can have a meaningful effect on short- as well as long-term vocabulary retention.

Similarly, Pham and Duong's (2022) investigation of a Vietnamese tertiary learning environment concluded that students found Kahoot! to be a motivating and fun vocabulary learning tool. The interactive nature of Kahoot! facilitated the achievement of greater focus and motivation, which are crucial factors in effective vocabulary acquisition.

2.7.2. Learner Engagement and Motivation

The gamification features of Kahoot!, such as immediate feedback and competitive tests, have been shown to boost learner motivation and engagement. Reynolds et al. (2021) examined the effects of Kahoot! on vocabulary learning and motivation in South Korean university students. While no significant vocabulary learning difference was noticed between the control and experimental groups, the Kahoot! group experienced a significant increase in motivation levels, reflecting the platform's potential to elevate learner engagement.

In another study, Katemba et al. (2022) analyzed the use of Kahoot! among seventh-grade students and reported that the tool improved vocabulary learning outcomes significantly. The study also indicated gender variations, where the female students reported more improvement, suggesting that Kahoot! can particularly be utilized in addressing diverse learner needs.

2.7.3. Positive Learner Perceptions

Student attitude is crucial to learning tool uptake and achievement. Dang (2023) conducted a case study in Vietnam to assess high school students' experience

using Kahoot! to learn vocabulary. The majority of students reported higher interest and enjoyment, attributing the good experiences to the platform's interactive environment and competitiveness.

These results confirm those of Hadijah et al. (2020), who reported that students viewed Kahoot! as a useful and fun vocabulary test tool, boosting their learning experience.

2.7.4. Comparative Effectiveness

Comparative studies also confirmed Kahoot!'s effectiveness for vocabulary learning. Ahmed et al. (2022), for instance, showed that students taught vocabulary using Kahoot! did not only score higher on tests but also retained longer what they learned to teach compared to more traditional teaching methods. It appears Kahoot!'s engaging, interactive learning dynamics might be leading to longer-term effects.

2.7.5. Limitations and Considerations

While the empirical evidence attests to the efficiency of Kahoot! in vocabulary instruction, there are certain limitations to be considered. Reynolds et al. (2021) discovered that the impact of the platform on vocabulary learning may not be significantly different from traditional methods in all cases. In addition, factors such as internet connectivity and availability of devices may influence the effectiveness of Kahoot!, particularly in regions with weak technological infrastructure.

Conclusion

This chapter explored the theoretical and pedagogical dimensions of vocabulary learning in second language education. It began by highlighting the central importance of vocabulary in EFL contexts and explaining its connection to broader language proficiency. The chapter examined the characteristics of vocabulary

knowledge, the limitations of traditional teaching methods such as rote memorization and translation, and the benefits of more communicative and cognitively engaging approaches like task-based learning and contextualized instruction.

With the growing integration of technology in education, the discussion also considered how digital tools and gamified platforms offer new opportunities for vocabulary instruction. Among these, Kahoot! was discussed as a widely used application that supports interactive, competitive, and multimodal learning experiences. Its pedagogical strengths and limitations were reviewed with reference to recent research.

In conclusion, the chapter emphasized the importance of balanced, learner-centered instruction that draws on both theoretical insights and practical innovations. These perspectives set the stage for the following chapter, which presents the methodology used to examine how Algerian EFL learners perceive the integration of Kahoot! into vocabulary learning.

CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

1. Introduction

This chapter meticulously outlines the research methodology employed in the present study. It provides a comprehensive and articulated explanation of the research strategy, the characteristics of the population and sample, the specific data collection tools utilized, the procedures undertaken to ensure validity and reliability, the methods for data analysis, and the ethical considerations that guided the research process. The chosen research methodology was carefully selected and designed with the explicit aim of rigorously addressing and satisfying the core research goals, which revolve around exploring Algerian EFL learners' attitudes and perceptions towards the utilization of Kahoot! as an educational tool for vocabulary acquisition, framed specifically within the theoretical tenets of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). By detailing these elements, this chapter seeks to demonstrate the scientific rigor and systematic approach adopted in conducting this investigation, thereby enhancing the trustworthiness and interpretability of the findings presented in subsequent chapters.

2. Research Approach

2.1. Adoption of a Mixed-Methods Research Approach

This study adopts a mixed-methods research approach. This approach is descriptive in its overall nature, chosen to provide a more holistic and nuanced understanding of the phenomenon under investigation – the perceptions of Master 2 EFL students at the University of Biskra regarding the use of Kahoot! as a vocabulary learning tool. The primary objective is to explore these perceptions by drawing on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) as the overarching theoretical framework, which focuses on key constructs such as perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use.

The rationale for employing a mixed-methods approach is rooted in its inherent capacity to overcome the limitations inherent in using a single method, thereby offering a more comprehensive and robust insight into the research problem. As highlighted by Creswell and Plano Clark (2018), "Mixed methods research provides a more complete understanding of a research problem than either quantitative or qualitative approaches alone" (p. 12). In this study, the quantitative component, derived from closed-ended questionnaire items, provides measurable data on trends and frequencies, offering a broad overview of students' perceptions. Concurrently, the qualitative component, gathered from open-ended questionnaire responses and observations during the Kahoot! activity, yields rich, contextualized narratives and personal meanings, elucidating the "why" behind the quantitative findings. This concurrent triangulation design allows for cross-validation of results, deepening the overall understanding of participants' experiences with Kahoot!. For instance, while quantitative data might indicate a high perceived usefulness of Kahoot!, qualitative data can explain *specific reasons* for this perception, such as "it makes learning fun" or "it helps with active recall."

2.2. Descriptive Nature of the Study

The study is inherently descriptive in nature, primarily concerned with exploring and documenting phenomena as they naturally manifest themselves, without any deliberate manipulation of variables. This design is appropriate because the research lacks any intent of testing cause-and-effect relationships. Instead, its focus is on interpreting and detailing how learners respond to and interact with Kahoot! in the context of vocabulary learning. This approach is particularly suitable for educational studies that aim to capture existing behaviors, attitudes, or conditions as they naturally exist within a specific educational environment (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2019).

By adopting a descriptive stance, the study aims to provide a detailed snapshot of current perceptions and practices, which can serve as a foundation for future, more interventional research.

3. Research Design: Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) Framework

The current study employs a descriptive research design, informed by the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), originally proposed by Davis (1989). The overall aspiration is to identify the attitudes of learners towards Kahoot! as a vocabulary learning tool, specifically examining how they perceive its usefulness and ease of use, and whether these perceptions influence their intentions to utilize it in future learning contexts. The justification for the employment of this descriptive design lies in the critical need to gain an extensive and multifaceted insight into both the quantitative trends (prevalence of attitudes) and the qualitative experiences (underlying reasons and specific interactions) of learners utilizing Kahoot! as a learning tool within their academic environment. The mixed-methods *approach* described in the previous section is implemented within this descriptive design to achieve a comprehensive understanding.

3.1. Theoretical Framework: The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) serves as the foundational theoretical framework for this research, providing a robust lens through which to systematically analyze the students' use and acceptance of Kahoot!. TAM posits that an individual's intention to use a new technology is primarily influenced by two key constructs:

- Perceived Usefulness (PU): Defined as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance" (Davis, 1989, p. 320). In the context of this study, PU refers to the extent to

which EFL learners believe that using Kahoot! will improve their vocabulary learning outcomes, efficiency, or overall language proficiency.

- Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU): Defined as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort" (Davis, 1989, p. 320). For this research, PEOU signifies the extent to which EFL learners perceive Kahoot! as easy to learn, easy to navigate, and generally effortless to use for vocabulary practice.

TAM further postulates that Perceived Ease of Use can directly influence Perceived Usefulness, and both constructs, in turn, influence an individual's Behavioral Intention (BI) to use the technology. Behavioral Intention (BI) is the degree to which a person intends to use Kahoot! in future learning contexts. As Venkatesh and Davis (2000) emphasized, "Perceived ease of use can directly influence perceived usefulness and behavioral intention to use a technology" (p. 187). This relationship is particularly pertinent to the current research, which seeks to explore how learners' perceptions of a gamified software like Kahoot! influence their utilization in second/foreign language learning. By applying this mixed-methods approach within the proposed theoretical framework, the current study aims to provide an extensive picture of how Algerian EFL learners perceive the usage of Kahoot! as both a pedagogical learning tool and an interactive, game-based motivational tool.

3.2. Operationalization of TAM Constructs in the Questionnaire

To effectively measure the constructs of TAM, the questionnaire was meticulously designed with specific types of questions. Perceived Usefulness was assessed through items asking about Kahoot!'s ability to enhance vocabulary retention, make learning more effective, or improve overall understanding. Perceived Ease of Use was gauged by questions related to the simplicity of the interface, ease of navigation, and the

effort required to use the platform. Behavioral Intention was measured by items exploring participants' willingness to use Kahoot! in future language learning activities. These items were presented using a 5-point Likert scale (e.g., Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree), which is ideal for capturing the varying degrees of agreement or disagreement with statements and quantifying attitudes effectively.

4. Population and Sample

4.1. Target Population and Rationale for Selection

The target population for this research comprised Master 2 students of the Department of English, Mohamed Khider University of Biskra, specifically those majoring in Science of the Language. These students were purposefully selected due to several key characteristics that make them highly suitable participants for an investigation into the incorporation of educational technology tools like Kahoot! into vocabulary learning. Being at an advanced level of study, they are presumed to possess a strong foundation in learning vocabulary strategies and are likely to have a more developed meta-cognitive awareness of their learning processes. Furthermore, their academic stage often involves a greater degree of autonomy and exposure to various learning methodologies, making their perceptions of a tool like Kahoot! particularly insightful. This specific group's experience with language learning and technology provides a valuable context for understanding the nuances of their attitudes.

4.2. Sampling Procedure: Convenience Sampling

Convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling method, was employed in this study. In this method, participants are selected based on their willingness and accessibility to the researcher. For the current study, the sample consisted of 41 participants who voluntarily responded to an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The participants' age ranged from 21 to 38, and they self-identified as

intermediate or upper-intermediate English learners. A significant majority reported confidence in using digital tools for academic purposes, providing crucial background context for interpreting their perceptions of Kahoot!. The final sample size was ultimately determined by the number of responses received within the designated data collection period.

4.3. Limitations of Convenience Sampling

Despite its practical advantages, such as cost-effectiveness and ease of administration, convenience sampling inherently carries certain limitations that must be acknowledged. The primary concern is the potential for sampling bias, meaning the selected sample may not accurately reflect the characteristics of the entire target population. Consequently, the findings of this study may not be generalizable to other groups of EFL learners beyond the specific cohort of participants. However, given the exploratory nature of this study and the practical constraints of time and resources, convenience sampling presented a viable and pragmatic alternative for collecting preliminary data on students' attitudes towards using Kahoot! as a vocabulary learning tool. While the findings may not be broadly generalizable, they offer valuable insights specific to the context of Master 2 EFL students at the University of Biskra.

5. Data Collection Tools

To comprehensively gather the necessary data, the study utilized a combination of instruments: a structured online questionnaire and supplementary observations from a Kahoot! activity. This multi-tool approach facilitated the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, ensuring a richer and more triangulated understanding of the research problem.

5.1. Students' Questionnaire

A structured questionnaire, titled "Students' Perceptions of Kahoot! for Vocabulary Practice," was the primary data collection instrument. This questionnaire was developed based on the core constructs of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), as previously discussed: Perceived Usefulness (PU), Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), and Behavioral Intention (BI). The questionnaire was designed and disseminated online using Google Forms to ensure accessibility and ease of response for the participants.

The questionnaire was meticulously structured into two main sections:

- **Demographic Information:** This initial section gathered general background details about participants, including their age, gender, and prior familiarity with Kahoot!. This information was crucial for contextualizing their responses and identifying any potential demographic influences on their perceptions.
- **TAM-Based Perceptions of Kahoot!:** This core section specifically focused on eliciting students' views regarding the usefulness of Kahoot! for vocabulary learning, the perceived ease of using the platform, and their willingness to continue incorporating Kahoot! into their future language learning endeavors.

To capture diverse perspectives, the questionnaire integrated both closed-ended and open-ended questions. Closed-ended questions predominantly employed a 5-point Likert scale, allowing for quantitative measurement of agreement or disagreement with statements related to the TAM constructs. For instance, participants rated statements like "Using Kahoot! enhances my vocabulary retention" or "Kahoot! is easy to navigate." Conversely, open-ended questions provided students with the opportunity to elaborate on their personal experiences, express nuanced opinions, and offer qualitative insights beyond the structured responses, such as "What aspects of

Kahoot! do you find most helpful for vocabulary learning?" or "What challenges, if any, did you encounter while using Kahoot!?". A comprehensive breakdown of the questionnaire items is presented in Appendix A.

5.2. Supplementary Kahoot! Activity and Observations

As a complementary component to the questionnaire data, a practical Kahoot! activity was conducted at a private language school in Biskra, known as KF School. This session involved a group of learners actively participating in a vocabulary-focused Kahoot! game, which was specifically designed to be directly related to a lesson previously taught by their regular teacher. The primary purpose of this activity was to observe students' authentic engagement with Kahoot! as a tool for vocabulary practice within a real classroom setting.

Observations made during this session served as valuable supplementary data, enriching the insights gained from the questionnaire findings. The researcher focused on qualitative observations related to student engagement, interaction with the platform, collaborative behaviors, and immediate reactions to the game elements. While no formal observation checklist was used, detailed field notes were taken to capture spontaneous interactions, expressions of enjoyment or frustration, and patterns of participation. These observations provided a firsthand qualitative perspective on learners' interaction with the platform, offering context and deeper understanding to the self-reported perceptions from the questionnaire. Details regarding the design and execution of this Kahoot! activity are elaborated in Appendix B.

6. Validity and Reliability

Ensuring the validity and reliability of the research instruments and findings is paramount for the credibility of any study. This section outlines the measures taken to uphold these principles, while also transparently addressing the limitations encountered.

6.1. Content Validity

To ensure the content validity of the questionnaire, a rigorous review process was undertaken. The questionnaire was thoroughly reviewed by the research supervisor, an experienced expert researcher in applied linguistics. The supervisor provided invaluable feedback concerning the clarity, relevance, and completeness of each item within the questionnaire, ensuring that all questions appropriately covered the constructs of Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, and Behavioral Intention within the context of Kahoot! for vocabulary learning. Furthermore, the questionnaire was meticulously crafted using plain and unambiguous English to minimize any potential misinterpretations by participants, thereby ensuring that the intended meaning of each item was clearly conveyed and understood. This expert review process aimed to ascertain that the questionnaire adequately and representatively sampled the content area it was intended to measure.

6.2. Limitations in Reliability and Pilot Testing

It is important to acknowledge certain limitations regarding the reliability and pilot testing of the instrument. Due to time constraints, a formal pilot study was not conducted prior to the main data collection process. The absence of a pilot study means that potential ambiguities in questions or unforeseen practical issues in administration were not identified and rectified beforehand, which could potentially affect the overall validity and reliability of the outcomes.

Additionally, concerning internal consistency, a critical aspect of reliability, no formal statistical tests such as Cronbach's alpha were formally conducted. Internal consistency refers to how consistently different items within a single test measure the same underlying concept or construct, ensuring the stability and coherence of a test across its components (Simply Psychology, 2023). While the questionnaire items were theoretically grounded in the well-established TAM framework, the lack of statistical testing for internal consistency means that the empirical reliability of the questionnaire cannot be formally established.

In summary, while content validity was addressed through expert review, the absence of a pilot study and formal statistical reliability testing (e.g., Cronbach's alpha) represents weaknesses in the current study's methodological rigor. It is strongly recommended that pilot testing and comprehensive reliability testing be conducted in subsequent studies to enhance the validity of the outcomes and the statistical reliability of the research tools, thereby allowing for greater confidence in the generalizability of findings.

7. Data Analysis Procedures

The study employed a rigorous mixed-methods approach for analyzing both the quantitative and qualitative data collected from the questionnaire responses and Kahoot! activity observations. This dual approach was crucial for gaining a thorough and nuanced insight into the perceptions of Kahoot! from the learners' perspective in the context of vocabulary learning.

7.1. Quantitative Analysis

The closed-ended responses from the questionnaire were subjected to quantitative analysis using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics are fundamental for

summarizing and organizing information in a meaningful way, providing insights into the central tendencies, spread, and overall patterns within a dataset (Mann, 2017). For this study, descriptive statistics such as means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions (percentages) were calculated for responses related to the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) constructs: perceived ease of using Kahoot!, perceived usefulness of Kahoot!, and the behavioral intention of using Kahoot!. This analysis provided a clear statistical overview of general trends and prevalent attitudes among the learners, allowing for systematic identification of the extent to which students agreed or disagreed with statements related to each TAM construct. The quantitative data was processed using basic spreadsheet software (e.g., Microsoft Excel) for ease of computation and graphical representation.

7.2. Qualitative Analysis

The open-ended responses from the questionnaire, along with the qualitative observations gathered during the Kahoot! activity, underwent thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a systematic method for identifying, analyzing, organizing, describing, and reporting patterns (themes) within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This process is highly effective for revealing participants' underlying experiences, views, and opinions, thereby providing a more profound and penetrating insight into the data beyond what quantitative measures alone can offer.

The process of thematic analysis involved several key phases:

1. Familiarization with the data: Repeated reading of the open-ended responses and observation notes to gain a deep understanding of the content.
2. Generating initial codes: Identifying interesting features across the entire dataset and coding them.

3. Searching for themes: Collating codes into potential themes and gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes: Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire dataset, generating a coherent map of the data.
5. Defining and naming themes: Refining the specifics of each theme and the overall story the analysis tells, creating clear and concise names.
6. Producing the report: The final step, involving the write-up of the analysis.

This systematic approach ensured that the qualitative data was analyzed rigorously, leading to the emergence of key themes that represented the shared and distinct experiences of the participants.

7.3. Triangulation of Findings

The integration of both quantitative and qualitative analyses represented a robust paradigm for interpreting the data. This "twin approach" allowed for the triangulation of findings, providing a comprehensive understanding of the learners' perceptions. Quantitative data provided a snapshot of the prevalence of specific perceptions (e.g., how many students found Kahoot! useful), while the thematic analysis offered rich, qualitative explanations for *why* these perceptions existed and the specific nuances of participants' experiences. For instance, a high mean score for perceived usefulness from the quantitative analysis could be further elucidated by qualitative themes highlighting Kahoot!'s motivational aspects, its immediate feedback, or its role in collaborative learning. The additional qualitative and quantitative analysis derived from the baseline Kahoot! session (observations on engagement, specific challenges encountered, etc.) provided further context and served as another layer of triangulation, cross-validating the primary findings from the questionnaire and

offering a more complete and holistic understanding of the students' attitudes towards Kahoot!.

8. Ethical Considerations

The ethical integrity of this research was upheld throughout all stages of the study, ensuring the protection and well-being of all participants. The following principles guided the research process:

8.1. Voluntary Participation and Informed Consent

All participants in the study took part on a completely voluntary basis and with full awareness of the study's purpose and procedures. Prior to their involvement, participants received comprehensive notice regarding the educational objective of the study, which entailed exploring Algerian EFL learners' attitudes and perceptions towards using Kahoot! as a tool for vocabulary learning. This information was communicated clearly, outlining what participation would entail, approximately how long it would take, and the overall aim of the research.

For the online questionnaire, implied consent was obtained when participants chose to complete and submit the Google Form after reading the introductory information about the study. For the initial Kahoot! activity, all participants provided explicit verbal consent. They were informed of the rationale for the collection of the data, the promise of anonymity and confidentiality of responses, and their right to withdraw. The choice of verbal consent for the activity was deemed appropriate given the classroom setting and the non-sensitive nature of the interaction.

8.2. Confidentiality and Anonymity

Participants were explicitly assured that their responses would be treated with the utmost confidentiality and anonymity. Personal identifying information, such as

names or specific student IDs, was not gathered during any part of the data collection process. The data collected was securely stored in password-protected digital files, accessible only to the primary researcher, and utilized solely for educational and research purposes. The results were subsequently published only in aggregate form, ensuring that individual responses could not be linked back to a particular participant, thus safeguarding their privacy.

8.3. Right to Withdrawal and Data Control

Participants were further apprised of their absolute freedom of withdrawal from the research at any time, without incurring any penalty or negative consequences. While some basic questions within the questionnaire were designated as compulsory (e.g., demographic information or core TAM statements) with the aim of ensuring a baseline level of data completeness necessary for the reliability of the findings, participants retained full autonomy. They were explicitly informed that they were free to disregard any voluntary and open-ended questions whenever they chose, without impacting their participation or any academic standing. This ethical approach successfully managed to uphold the freedom of choice of the participants, fostering an environment where they felt comfortable providing honest and thoughtful responses, thereby enhancing the authenticity and quality of the collected data.

9. Conclusion

This chapter has provided a detailed and comprehensive exposition of the research methodology employed in this study. It has articulated the rationale behind adopting a descriptive mixed-methods approach, underscored by the theoretical framework of the Technology Acceptance Model, to thoroughly investigate Algerian EFL learners' perceptions of Kahoot! for vocabulary acquisition. The discussion encompassed the characteristics and selection process of the target population and sample, the design

and application of the data collection tools—namely, the structured questionnaire and supplementary Kahoot! activity observations—and the rigorous procedures for ensuring content validity. While acknowledging certain limitations regarding pilot testing and statistical reliability, the chapter has also elucidated the robust data analysis procedures, including both descriptive statistics for quantitative data and thematic analysis for qualitative insights, alongside the powerful mechanism of triangulation. Finally, the ethical considerations that strictly governed every stage of the research, from informed consent to data confidentiality, were thoroughly outlined. This meticulously planned and executed methodology forms the bedrock upon which the findings presented in the subsequent chapters are based, providing a clear and credible pathway for understanding the complex attitudes and perceptions of learners towards the integration of educational technology.

CHAPTER THREE: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Introduction

The following chapter presents the findings of the questionnaire administered to Master 2 EFL students at the University of Biskra. The survey was designed to explore their perceptions of Kahoot! as a tool for vocabulary practice, focusing on its ease of use and usefulness. Additionally, this chapter details the results of a Kahoot! activity conducted with participants to assess their vocabulary learning and engagement with the platform. Both quantitative data (Likert-scale questions) and qualitative data (open-ended responses) from the questionnaire, along with performance data from the Kahoot! activity, were analyzed and are presented below.

2. Questionnaire results

2.1. Section One: Familiarity with Kahoot!

Item 1: Have you used Kahoot! Before? If yes, mention the device used.

Figure 1

Prior Use of Kahoot!

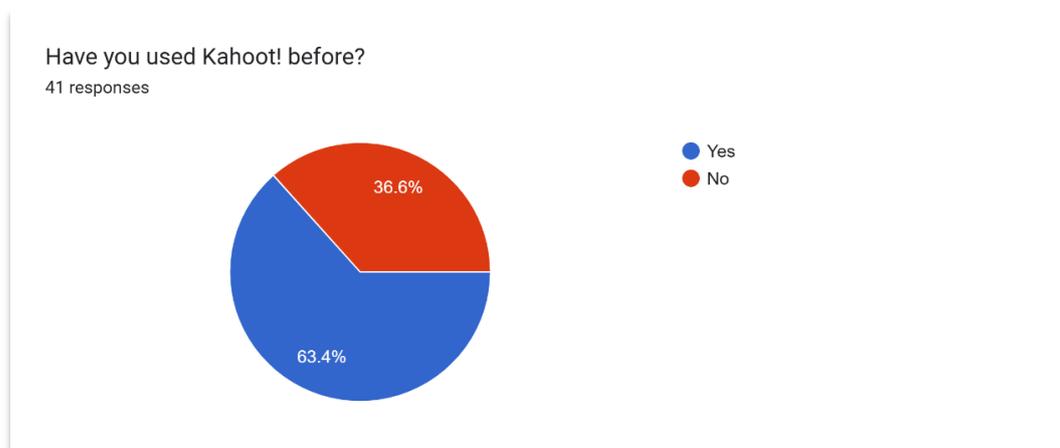
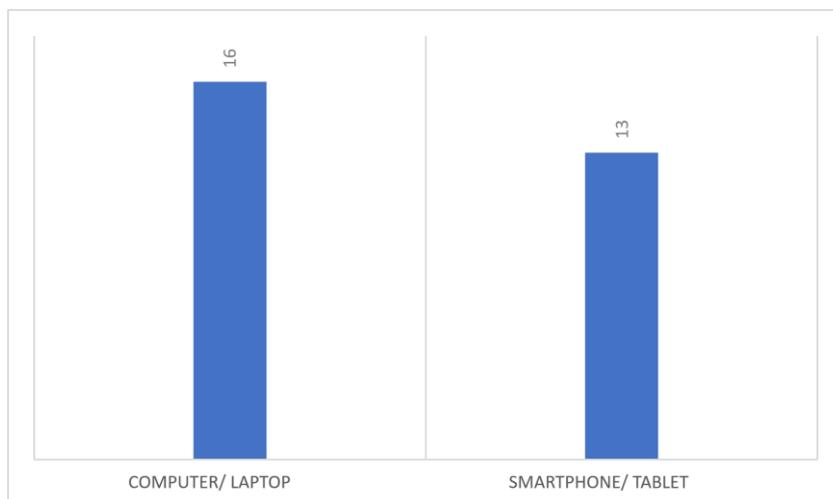


Figure 2

Prior use Devices

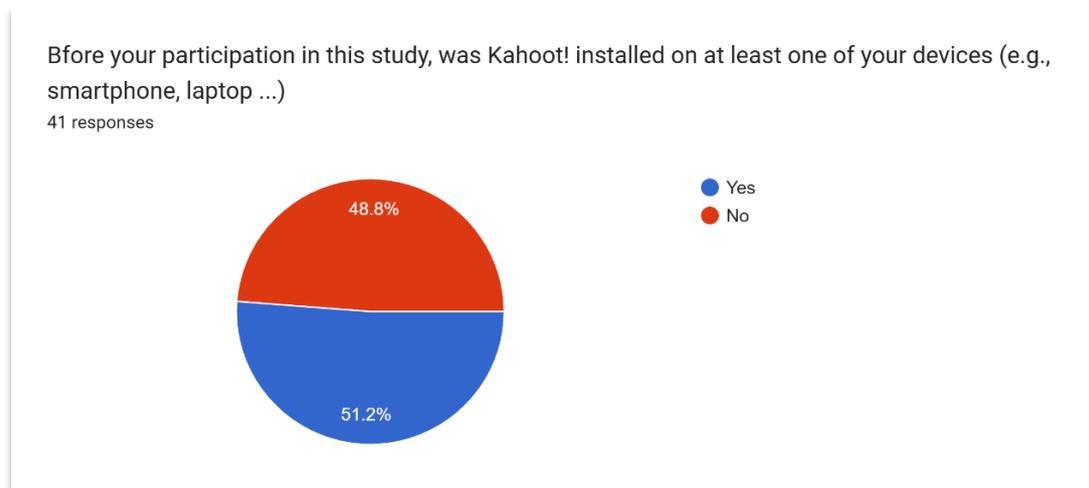


More than half of the participants (63.4%) reported having used Kahoot before, while 36.6% indicated they had not. This suggests that most respondents are already familiar with the platform. This suggests that a significant portion of Algerian EFL learners are already familiar with digital learning tools, despite the relatively recent integration of such technologies into the national education system. This challenges common assumptions that Algerian higher education lacks exposure to gamified platforms. While the literature reveals a gap in empirical studies on Kahoot! Within the Algerian context, this study provides evidence that learners in this region are not entirely new to educational technologies. In fact, the reported prior use of Kahoot! may reflect a gradual shift toward more innovative teaching practices in Algerian universities. This growing familiarity could also explain the generally positive perceptions regarding Kahoot!’s ease of use.

Item 2: Before your participation in this study, was Kahoot! installed on at least one of your devices (e.g., smartphone, laptop ...)?

Figure 3

Prior Installation of Kahoot!

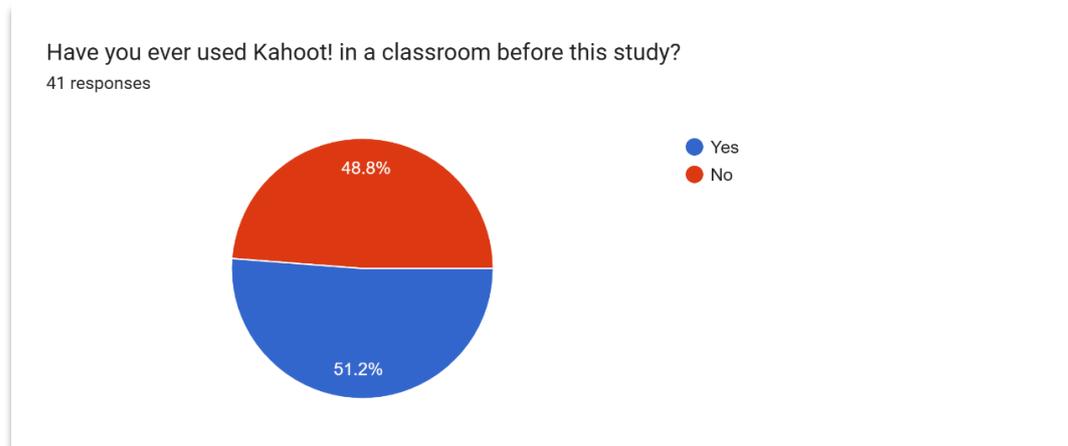


The results show that 51.2% of participants had Kahoot! installed on at least one of their devices prior to the study, while 48.8% did not. This near-even split suggests a moderate level of prior access to the Kahoot! application among Algerian EFL learners. It indicates that while just over half had already taken steps to engage with the tool, a substantial portion had not yet adopted it. This could reflect unequal levels of exposure to educational technology across different learning environments. Additionally, the results may highlight variability in digital literacy or access to reliable internet and devices, factors that continue to influence the integration of technology into Algerian classrooms. Despite the increasing availability of educational apps, these findings suggest that accessibility and familiarity with tools like Kahoot! are still developing among learners, and should be taken into account when designing or implementing tech-based instruction.

Item 3: Have you ever used Kahoot! in a classroom before this study?

Figure 4

Prior Use of Kahoot! in a Classroom



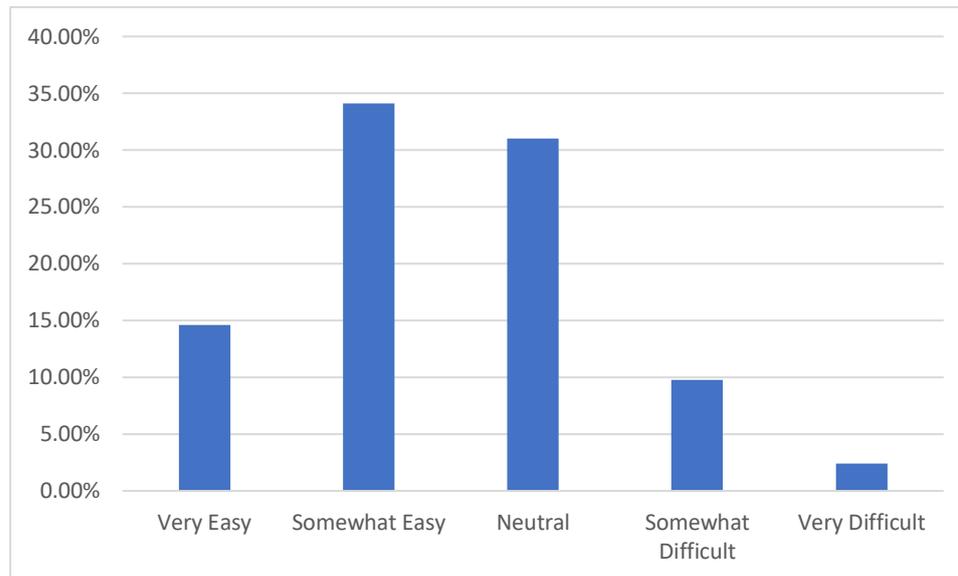
The responses indicate that 51.2% of participants had used Kahoot! in a classroom setting before the study, while 48.8% had not. This relatively balanced exposure suggests that while gamified tools like Kahoot! are beginning to find their way into Algerian classrooms, their integration is not yet consistent or widespread. The near equal split highlights a transitional stage in Algerian education, where some instructors are adopting interactive technologies, while others may still rely on traditional teaching methods. For those who had classroom experience with Kahoot!, familiarity with the platform may have positively influenced their perceptions of its ease of use and usefulness. These findings suggest a need for broader teacher training and institutional support to ensure effective integration of digital tools across classrooms in Algeria.

2.2.Section Two: Perceptions (TAM)

Item 1: How easy is it for you to use Kahoot! for vocabulary learning?

Figure 5

Perceived Ease of Use



As shown in Figure 5, 48.7% of the participants reported that they found Kahoot! either "very easy" (14.6%) or "somewhat easy" (34.1%) to use. A notable 39% of students selected "neutral," indicating neither ease nor difficulty, which may reflect limited experience with the tool or a lack of strong opinion. Meanwhile, only a small portion of respondents reported negative perceptions: 9.8% found it "somewhat difficult" and just 2.4% found it "very difficult." These findings suggest that while nearly half of the students perceived Kahoot! as user-friendly, a considerable number were undecided, and very few faced challenges using the platform.

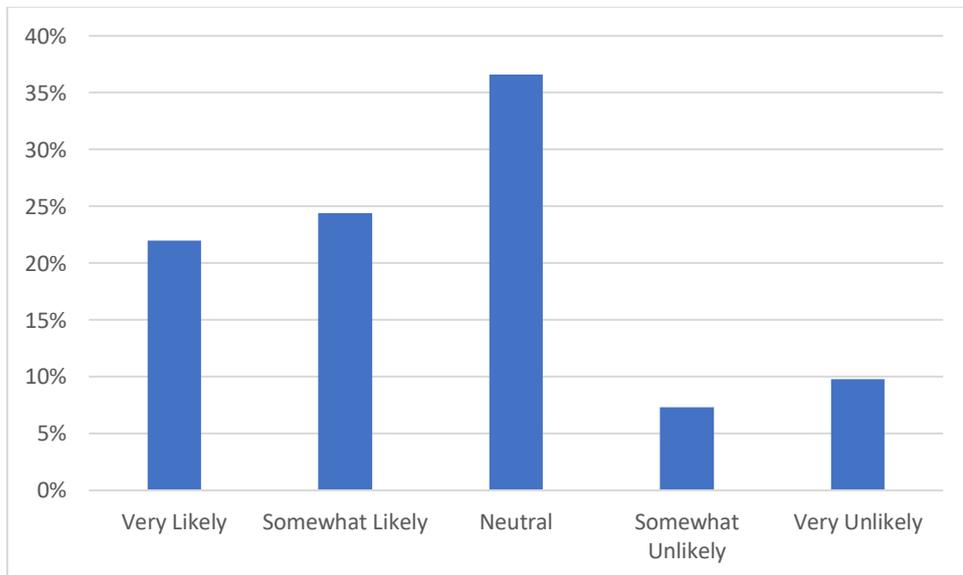
Participants who found Kahoot! easy to use often pointed to its intuitive interface and engaging format. One respondent remarked that "it does not need much time to get acquainted with its different features," while another noted that the platform is "easy... because the interface is straightforward and it makes study feel more like a challenge rather than a task." The interactive, game-based structure was also highlighted as a motivating factor, with learners stating that "the quizzes keep me

motivated” and that Kahoot! makes vocabulary learning “fun and efficient.” Additionally, students appreciated the collaborative aspects, mentioning that “interaction with classmates makes you acquire new words automatically.” Some responses also emphasized the importance of instructional design: one participant suggested that using Kahoot! with gap-fill vocabulary quizzes and clear learning objectives (e.g., focusing on academic or literary vocabulary) could make the tool even more effective. These results align with Deterding et al. (2013), who argue that gamified educational tools tend to be more user-friendly and engaging because they incorporate game design features like instant feedback, clear visuals, and straightforward navigation.

Item 5: How likely are you to continue using Kahoot for vocabulary learning in the future?

Figure 6

Likelihood of Future Use of Kahoot!



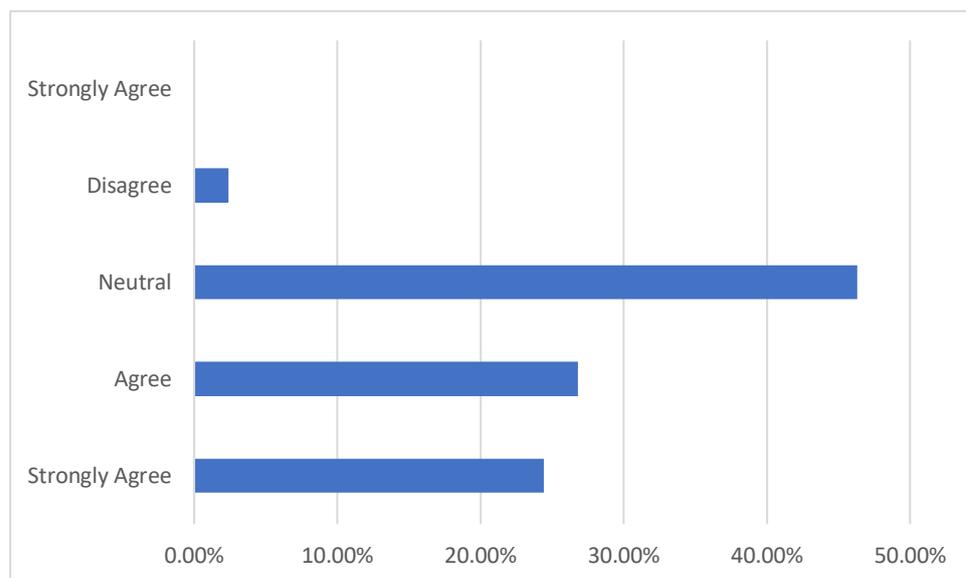
As shown in Figure 6, when asked about their likelihood of continuing to use Kahoot! for vocabulary learning in the future, 22% of participants responded “very likely” and 24.4% chose “somewhat likely,” indicating that a total of 46.4% expressed

a positive intention to continue using the platform. However, a significant portion of respondents (36.6%) remained neutral, suggesting uncertainty or lack of strong motivation to use Kahoot! beyond the current context. Meanwhile, 7.3% were “somewhat unlikely” and 9.8% were “very unlikely” to continue using it, totaling 17.1% with negative intentions. These findings suggest that while nearly half of the learners showed a willingness to reuse Kahoot!, a considerable number either remained undecided or expressed reluctance. The high percentage of neutral responses may be influenced by factors such as limited exposure, preference for traditional learning method, or the lack of integration of Kahoot! into their regular learning routines. These results emphasize the importance of not only introducing gamified tools like Kahoot! but also embedding them meaningfully into instructional design to ensure continued engagement and long-term use.

Item 6: To what extent do you agree that using Kahoot improves your vocabulary learning?

Figure 7

Participants' Agreement on Kahoot!'s Effectiveness in Improving Vocabulary Learning

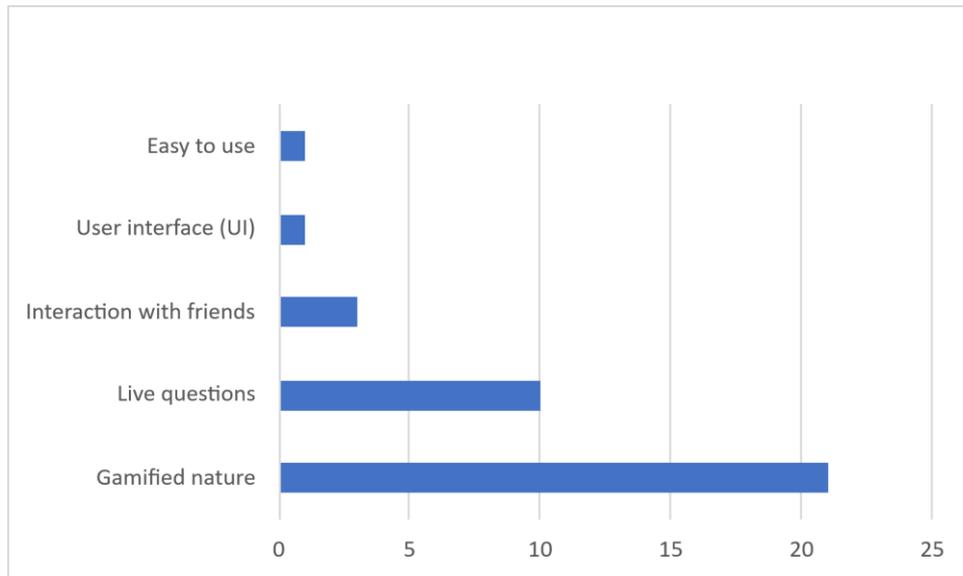


As shown in Figure 7, 46.4% of participants agreed that using Kahoot! improves vocabulary learning (22% “very likely” and 24.4% “somewhat likely”), while 36.6% remained neutral and 17.1% expressed disagreement. This indicates that nearly half of the learners perceived the platform as beneficial for vocabulary development, though a significant portion were unsure. The high percentage of neutral responses may be attributed to limited experience with the tool, inconsistent classroom integration, or uncertainty about its long-term effectiveness. These findings are consistent with studies by Ahmed et al. (2022) and Rojabi & Setiawan (2022), which reported that students using Kahoot! showed improved vocabulary retention and greater motivation compared to traditional methods. However, as noted by Reynolds and Taylor (2020), the effectiveness of Kahoot! may vary depending on how it is implemented; while it tends to enhance engagement, it does not always lead to significant vocabulary gains. In the context of this study, learners’ open-ended responses confirmed that Kahoot!’s visual appeal, interactive format, and immediate feedback contributed to their learning experience. Nonetheless, some participants also mentioned that the fast pace of quizzes could hinder deeper processing, especially for beginners. Overall, these results suggest that Kahoot! holds promise as a vocabulary learning tool when supported by thoughtful instructional design and regular use.

Item 7: What did you find particularly useful about Kahoot!?

Figure 8

Participants' Views on the Most Useful Features of Kahoot!



As illustrated in Figure 8, the most commonly mentioned useful feature of Kahoot! was its gamified nature, reported by 21 participants. This suggests that the game-like elements of the platform (such as competition, points, and rewards) play a major role in making vocabulary learning more engaging and enjoyable. Additionally, live questions were highlighted by 10 participants, indicating that real-time interaction and instant feedback are also key contributors to the platform's perceived usefulness. A smaller number of participants pointed to interaction with friends (3 responses), the user interface (1), and the platform's overall ease of use (1). These findings reflect a broader trend in the literature, where features like gamification, interactivity, and immediacy are often cited as central to Kahoot!'s appeal in educational contexts. For example, Pham and Duong (2022) emphasize that the competitive elements of Kahoot! help maintain student attention and increase motivation, while Deterding et al. (2013) note that its game design principles (including live feedback and clear visuals) enhance usability and learner engagement. Overall, the responses indicate

that students value both the entertaining and interactive aspects of Kahoot!, which may contribute to increased vocabulary retention when used effectively.

3. Kahoot! Activity Results

3.1. Section One: Overview

Figure 9

Activity Summary

How annoying!: Vocabulary in Context – Work Irritations	
Played on	15 Apr 2025
Hosted by	Anis Bouzid
Played with	8 players
Played	8 of 8

Table 1

Overall Performance

Total correct answers (%)	84.38%
Total incorrect answers (%)	15.63%
Average score (points)	6524.00 points

This section presents the results of the Kahoot! activity titled "How annoying!: Vocabulary in Context – Work Irritations," which was conducted on April 15, 2025. The activity, hosted by Anis Bouzid, engaged 8 players in a vocabulary-focused quiz designed to assess their understanding of terms related to workplace annoyances. The Kahoot! session comprised 8 questions, with a strong overall performance reflected in

an average correct answer rate of 84.375%. This data offers insights into participant engagement and comprehension of the targeted vocabulary.

3.2. Section Two: Final Scores

Table 2

Final Leaderboard

Rank	Player	Total Score (points)	Correct Answers	Incorrect Answers
1	Mohamed	7867	8	0
2	Soudjoud	7752	8	0
3	Wissem	7654	8	0
4	Afaf	6743	7	1
5	Bassem	6728	7	1
6	Meriem	6722	7	1
7	Abir	5866	6	2
8	Sarah	2860	3	5

The final Kahoot! scores presented in Table 2 indicate a generally strong grasp of the target vocabulary among participants. Mohamed, Soudjoud, and Wissem achieved perfect scores (8/8 correct), demonstrating excellent comprehension. This aligns with studies by Ahmed et al. (2022) and Surayya et al. (2022), which reported significant improvements in vocabulary recall and achievement among EFL learners using Kahoot!, supporting its effectiveness.

Similarly, Afaf, Bassem, and Meriem's strong performance with 7 correct answers further supports Kahoot!'s ability to reinforce vocabulary, consistent with Pham and Duong's (2022) finding that Kahoot! fosters motivation and focus in vocabulary learning.

However, Abir (6 correct answers) and especially Sarah (3 correct answers) scored lower, suggesting areas for further vocabulary reinforcement. This variation is echoed in some literature, where Reynolds et al. (2021) found that while Kahoot!

boosted motivation, learning outcomes weren't always statistically significant for all participants compared to traditional methods. Challenges like time pressure and competitiveness, as noted by Hadijah et al. (2020), may also contribute to lower scores for some individuals.

In summary, while the Kahoot! activity largely confirmed its potential to enhance vocabulary learning for most participants, the varied results underscore the importance of individual differences and the need for potentially tailored support in gamified learning environments.

4. Conclusion

This chapter presented a comprehensive analysis of Master 2 EFL students' perceptions of Kahoot! as a vocabulary learning tool at the University of Biskra, alongside the results of a practical Kahoot! activity. The questionnaire findings revealed that a majority of participants were already familiar with Kahoot!, with over half having it installed on their devices and having used it in a classroom setting prior to the study. This suggests a growing, albeit inconsistent, integration of digital learning tools in Algerian higher education.

Regarding perceptions, nearly half of the students found Kahoot! easy to use for vocabulary learning, attributing this to its intuitive interface and engaging format. The gamified nature of Kahoot! was overwhelmingly identified as its most useful feature, followed by live questions, interaction with friends, and the user interface. While a significant portion expressed willingness to continue using Kahoot! for vocabulary learning, a notable number remained neutral or expressed reluctance, highlighting the need for sustained engagement and meaningful integration into instructional design. Similarly, about half of the participants agreed that Kahoot!

improves vocabulary learning, consistent with existing literature on its effectiveness in boosting retention and motivation.

The Kahoot! activity results further supported the platform's potential, with a high overall correct answer rate and several participants achieving perfect scores. These practical outcomes align with the perceived benefits, demonstrating that Kahoot! can indeed reinforce vocabulary. However, the varied individual scores also underscore the importance of considering individual differences and potentially offering tailored support within gamified learning environments.

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the adoption and perceived utility of Kahoot! among Algerian EFL learners. While Kahoot! is largely seen as an accessible, engaging, and effective tool for vocabulary acquisition, its full potential in the Algerian educational context necessitates broader implementation, consistent integration into curriculum, and continuous support for both educators and students.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

1. Introduction

This thesis, "Exploring the Integration of KAHOOT! in Practicing Vocabulary in Use: The Case of Master Two Students at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra," investigates the perceptions of Algerian Master 2 EFL students regarding the use and usefulness of Kahoot! as a tool for vocabulary practice. Vocabulary acquisition is a cornerstone of language proficiency, yet traditional methods often fall short in promoting long-term retention and contextual application. In response, contemporary approaches emphasize authentic communication, meaningful interaction, and the integration of technology to create more engaging and effective learning environments. This study aims to contribute to the growing body of literature on gamified learning by focusing on learners' perceptions of Kahoot!'s role in vocabulary practice and contextual engagement, particularly within the underexplored Algerian higher education context.

2. Answer to Research Question 1 (To what extent do Algerian EFL learners find Kahoot! easy to use to practice vocabulary?)

The findings of this study indicate that Algerian EFL learners largely perceive Kahoot! as an exceptionally easy-to-use tool for vocabulary practice. A significant majority of participants reported finding the platform either "easy" or "very easy" to navigate, with this perception extending to many who were new to the tool. This ease of use is largely attributable to Kahoot!'s intuitive user interface, clear visual design, and interactive features, which collectively contribute to a highly accessible and user-friendly experience. The successful interaction with the tool, even among first-time users, underscores that Kahoot!'s design aligns effectively with the digital literacy and expectations of contemporary learners. These results corroborate the assertions of Deterding et al. (2013), who highlight that gamified learning platforms, by

incorporating principles of game design such as immediate feedback and simplified navigation, inherently enhance user accessibility and engagement. This finding holds particular significance for the Algerian higher education landscape, where the integration of educational technology is still evolving. Despite potential challenges related to infrastructure, internet access, and varying levels of digital proficiency, students in this study demonstrated minimal technical difficulties, reinforcing Kahoot!'s practical utility and its potential for broader adoption in similar educational contexts.

3. Answer to Research Question 2 (To what extent do Algerian EFL learners find Kahoot! useful to practice vocabulary?)

The study's results strongly indicate that the majority of participants consider Kahoot! a highly useful tool for vocabulary practice. Students consistently reported that the platform not only made the learning process more engaging but also significantly aided in reinforcing and recalling vocabulary items introduced during lessons. Several respondents specifically highlighted how the game-based format fostered quick thinking, enhanced their focus, and maintained their active involvement throughout the learning sessions. This suggests that the strategic integration of game elements can effectively transform passive vocabulary exposure into a dynamic and interactive learning experience, thereby boosting both retention and motivation. These findings resonate with Schmitt (2010), who emphasizes the critical role of active engagement in effective vocabulary acquisition. By requiring immediate responses and decision-making, Kahoot! cultivates a dynamic learning environment where vocabulary is not merely reviewed but actively processed. This process facilitates a form of cognitive rehearsal, enabling learners to internalize new vocabulary through repeated exposure and instant feedback. Furthermore, the current

findings align with previous research by Quiroz et al. (2021) and Rojabi & Setiawan (2022), both of whom observed significant improvements in vocabulary recall and heightened motivation among EFL learners utilizing Kahoot!. While this study did not directly measure productive vocabulary use (e.g., application in speaking or writing), the nature of Kahoot!'s quiz-based questions inherently supported contextual vocabulary practice. These questions often necessitated meaning-based choices, sentence completion, or the selection of synonyms and antonyms, effectively simulating contextual usage. This perception is crucial as it signifies a shift from mere memorization to practical vocabulary engagement, an aspect often overlooked in traditional teaching methods. Consequently, Kahoot! appears to not only bolster retention but also provide valuable opportunities for students to interact with vocabulary in ways that mirror authentic use, thereby bridging the gap between passive knowledge and active practice.

4. Implications

This study offers several significant implications for various stakeholders in the educational landscape, particularly for teachers and policymakers.

For teachers, the findings underscore the potential of Kahoot! as a valuable supplementary tool in EFL vocabulary instruction. The overwhelmingly positive perceptions of ease of use and usefulness among students suggest that Kahoot! can effectively address common challenges in vocabulary learning, such as low engagement and poor retention. Teachers can leverage Kahoot!'s gamified nature to create dynamic, interactive, and motivating learning experiences that move beyond traditional rote memorization. The study highlights that Kahoot! can facilitate active processing and contextual application of vocabulary, which are crucial for deeper learning. Furthermore, the observed high rates of familiarity with Kahoot! among

students in Algeria suggest that teachers may find less resistance to adopting such digital tools, potentially easing the transition into more technology-integrated classrooms. This research provides empirical backing for incorporating gamified platforms to enhance student motivation, focus, and perceived learning outcomes.

For policymakers, the study's results highlight the broader potential of integrating educational technology into national curricula, especially in contexts like Algeria where digital transformation in education is still evolving. The demonstrated ease of use and perceived usefulness of Kahoot! among students suggest that investing in digital learning infrastructure and teacher training for technology integration can yield significant pedagogical benefits. Policymakers can use these findings to advocate for policies that support the widespread adoption of gamified learning tools, recognizing their capacity to make education more engaging, effective, and aligned with the learning styles of the 21st-century student. The study also implicitly points to the need for policies that address potential disparities in access to devices and reliable internet, ensuring equitable opportunities for all learners to benefit from such innovations. By promoting the thoughtful integration of tools like Kahoot!, policymakers can contribute to a more modern, interactive, and impactful educational system that better prepares students for a digitally-driven world.

5. Limitations of the Study

While this study provides valuable insights, it is important to acknowledge its limitations to ensure a balanced interpretation of the findings and to guide future research.

The study primarily relied on self-reported data collected through a questionnaire. While this method is effective for capturing learners' perceptions and attitudes, it does not provide objective measures of actual vocabulary acquisition or

learning gains. Without performance-based assessments, such as pre- and post-tests, it is challenging to definitively quantify whether the perceived benefits of Kahoot! directly translated into measurable improvements in vocabulary knowledge.

While this research focused on vocabulary in use through Kahoot!'s interactive and contextualized questions (e.g., meaning-based choices, sentence completion, synonym/antonym identification), the study's direct assessment was primarily limited to the platform's recognition and recall formats. Consequently, it did not delve into the productive application of vocabulary in spontaneous communicative contexts like free speaking or extended writing. This limits understanding how gains translate into active vocabulary deployment in broader scenarios.

The sample population was specific, consisting solely of Master 2 students from a single university in Biskra, Algeria. This narrow demographic and geographical scope limits the generalizability of the findings to broader student populations, such as learners at different academic levels, in diverse educational institutions, or from other cultural contexts. Future research with more varied and representative samples would provide a more comprehensive understanding.

Furthermore, the Kahoot! activity was conducted only once, following a single vocabulary lesson. This cross-sectional approach does not offer insights into the long-term effects of sustained Kahoot! integration. A longitudinal study, involving regular and consistent use of Kahoot! over an extended period (e.g., an academic semester or year), would provide richer data on its cumulative impact on vocabulary retention, learner motivation, and engagement over time.

These limitations suggest that while the study's findings are encouraging regarding the perceived benefits of Kahoot!, they should be interpreted with caution and serve as a foundation for more extensive and varied future investigations.

6. Recommendations for Future Research

Building upon the insights and acknowledging the limitations of this study, several directions for future research are proposed to further enrich the understanding of gamified learning in EFL contexts:

Future studies should incorporate objective performance measures, such as pre- and post-tests or other standardized vocabulary assessments, to quantify actual vocabulary gains and retention. This would provide empirical evidence to complement self-reported perceptions, offering a more robust understanding of Kahoot!'s effectiveness in improving language proficiency.

To assess the sustained impact of Kahoot!, future research should conduct longitudinal studies. Observing the effects of its consistent integration into vocabulary instruction over an entire academic term or year would provide valuable data on long-term retention, evolving learner motivation, and the cumulative influence of gamified learning.

Research should also investigate productive vocabulary use more directly. Designing specific tasks that assess learners' ability to use vocabulary productively in speaking and writing, such as open-ended questions, sentence construction exercises, collaborative writing tasks, or oral presentations, could provide valuable data on how Kahoot! influences active vocabulary deployment in communicative contexts.

To enhance the generalizability of findings, future studies should expand the sample diversity. Including learners from different academic levels (e.g., undergraduate, secondary school), various institutions, and broader geographical regions within Algeria and beyond would help identify how cultural, technological, and pedagogical contexts influence the effectiveness of gamified tools.

Comparative studies are also encouraged to examine Kahoot! alongside other gamified learning platforms, such as Quizizz, Socrative, or Wordwall. Such comparisons could reveal differences in user experience, vocabulary acquisition outcomes, and learner preferences, helping educators select the most effective tool for their instructional goals.

Finally, future research could explore teacher perspectives and implementation strategies. Delving deeper into how teachers perceive and implement Kahoot! in their classrooms, examining factors such as training needs, pedagogical challenges, and successful integration strategies, would provide practical insights for educators and professional development programs.

By addressing these areas, future research can contribute to a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of how gamification shapes vocabulary learning and inform best practices for technology integration in EFL classrooms.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Students' Questionnaire

Students' Perceptions of Kahoot! for Vocabulary Practice

Participant information sheet

Please read this sheet before completing the questionnaire.

Aim of the study

This study aims to explore the perceptions and attitudes of Algerian learners of English towards the use of the gamification application in vocabulary learning.

Your role in the study

In this study you are expected to complete a brief questionnaire.

Anonymity and confidentiality

Participants are ensured that the data are collected for research purposes and not to evaluate them personally. All of the information provided by participants of this study will be encoded and anonymized. The personal details of participants, including personal information, will not be disclosed in any dissemination of the study results.

For further details about the study, participants can get in touch with the main researcher through the following contact details:

Researcher: Anis Bouzid

Affiliation: Department of English, University of Biskra

Email: anisbzd68@gmail.com

* Indicates required question

1. Email *
-

Profile information

2. Gender *

Mark only one oval.

- Male
 Female

3. Age *

4. Educational background *

Mark only one oval.

- BA in English
 BA in Another field
 MA in English
 MA in another field
 PhD in
 English
 Phd in

another field

Other:

5. English proficiency level * *Mark only one oval.*

- Beginner
 Lower Intermediate
 Intermediate
 Upper Intermediate
 Advanced

6. Number of years learning English *

Familiarity with technology

7. How often do you use each of the following devices? *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Daily	A few times a week	Rarely	Never
Computer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Laptop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Smartphone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tablet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. How often do you use the internet for ... *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Daily	A few times a week	Rarely	Never
Social media & communication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entertainment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shopping and other services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. How confident are you with technology in general? * *Mark only one oval.*

- Not confident at all
- Not confident
- Somewhat
- confident Very
- confident

Familiarity with Kahoot!

10. Have you used Kahoot! before? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

11. If yes, was it on *

Mark only one oval.

- A
 - computer/
 - laptop A
 - smatphone/
 - tablet Other:
-

12. Bfore your participation in this study, was Kahoot! installed on at least one of * your devices (e.g., smartphone, laptop ...) *Mark only one oval.*

- Yes
- No

13. Have you ever used Kahoot! in a classroom before this study? *

Mark only one oval.

Yes

No

Perceptions (TAM model)

14. How easy is it for you to use Kahoot! for vocabulary learning? *

Mark only one oval.

Very easy

Somewhat easy

Neutral

Somewhat difficult

Very difficult

15. Justify your answer *

16. How likely are you to continue using Kahoot for vocabulary learning in the
* future?

Mark only one oval.

- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Neutral
- Somewhat unlikely
- Very unlikely

17. To what extent do you agree that using Kahoot improves your vocabulary
* learning?

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

18. What did you find particularly useful about KAHOOT!? *

Mark only one oval.

- User interface (UI)
 - Live questions
 - Gamified nature
 - Interaction with
 - friends Other:
-

Appendix B

Kahoot! Activity

25/05/2025, 15:07

How annoying!: Vocabulary in Context – Work Irritations - Details - Kahoot!



Kahoot

How annoying!: Vocabulary in Context – Work Irritations

This fun and interactive quiz is based on Lesson 1C "How annoying!" and focuses on vocabulary related to annoying situations at work or school. Students will complete fill-in-the-blank sentences using multiple-choice options inspired by the survey in the lesson. The activity helps reinforce vocabulary in context and encourages critical thinking about common irritations and how to express them in English.

Questions (8)

<p>I think we need a new printer. It's incredibly slow and the paper always seems to _____. I'm so sick of it.</p>  <p>▲ Jam ✓ ◆ Crash ● Blame ■ Distract</p>	<p>A customer had a real _____ at me today because his credit card didn't work. It was hardly my fault!</p>  <p>▲ Shout ◆ Go ✓ ● Smash ■ Point</p>
<p>What I find annoying is that when things go wrong, politicians are very quick to point the _____ of blame at other people.</p>  <p>▲ Gadget ◆ Finger ✓ ● Credit ■ Solution</p>	<p>I get sent about 150 emails a day and even though most of them are fairly _____, I still have to check them.</p>  <p>▲ Fellow ◆ Pointless ✓ ● Distracting ■ Fault</p>
<p>The guy I sit next to is constantly _____. Most of the time, he's just going on about football or celebrity gossip.</p>  <p>▲ Irritating ◆ Smashing ● Gossiping ✓ ■ Undermining</p>	<p>I came up with the idea originally, but in the meeting, in front of all my _____ workers, my boss took all the credit</p>  <p>▲ Fellow ✓ ◆ Noisy ● Gossiping ■ Fault</p>
<p>I keep suggesting things, but my colleagues always _____ my ideas. It's starting to affect my confidence.</p>  <p>▲ Distract ◆ Undermine ✓ ● Go ■ Rank</p>	<p>I get so annoyed by other students playing with their _____ in class. I just want to grab them and throw them into pieces.</p>  <p>▲ Gadgets ✓ ◆ Faults ● Jams ■ Fingers</p>

Details

<https://create.kahoot.it/details/how-annoying-vocabulary-in-context-work-irritations/6ca44741-eb75-43dd-ac72-49f59ce96f87>

1/2