

## STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON UTILIZING KAHOOT! AS A GAME-BASED STUDENT RESPONSE SYSTEM FOR EFL STUDENTS

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Article Info	Abstract
<b>Article History</b> Received: December 2023 Revised: February 2024 Published: April 2024	<i>The utilization of mobile devices has significantly enhanced the EFL learning process. To accomplish so, student response systems (SRS) are often utilized in large classroom to gather students' responses immediately through wireless networking and facilitate the management and monitoring of learner engagement and comprehension. The objective of the current study is to investigate the perceptions of junior school EFL students regarding the utilization of Kahoot! as a Game-Based Student Response System (SRS). Sixty seven high school students attended an English lesson accompanied by Kahoot, an online game-based Student Response System. The researchers conducted interviews to investigate students' perceptions of the expectation, advantages, and disadvantages of utilizing Kahoot!. Furthermore, classroom observations were conducted to get more comprehensive information. The result showed that the participants experienced advantages of utilizing Kahoot, such as the materials are easier to understand, the activities are engaging to do, and the students' motivation get increased. However, lack of device support, unstable internet connectivity, and focus distraction have become major challenges. It is implied that Kahoot! is recommended as a gamification to teach EFL students.</i>
<b>Keywords</b> Kahoot; Students response system; English language teaching; Gamification;	
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### INTRODUCTION

Technology has been a crucial part in language learning. It is claimed that by using technology, students can increase their language learning experiences and achieve better results (Galla, 2016). A language learning process can even more be assisted with the rising use of mobile devices in a decade, particularly in the field of EFL study (Dashtestani, 2015). The utilization of mobile devices has significantly enhanced the language learning process, particularly in the area of EFL. Expectations regarding the potential of smartphone and mobile web/apps for language learning indicate that a lot of individuals now regard apps as a genuine trustworthy source of language learning (Rosell-Aguilar, 2018). The observed improvement in students' language skills was found to align with certain language elements they learned through mobile technology (Peng et al., 2022).

The Student Response System (SRS), commonly known as class response system, or learner response system, is often utilized in large classroom environments to gather learners' responses immediately through wireless networking. Its purpose is to facilitate the management and monitoring of learner engagement and comprehension (Baumann et al., 2015; Yoon, 2017). Cárdenas et al. (2020) conducted research to Chilean vocational undergraduate students. The findings showed SRS has been consistently recognized in multiple studies for its important impact on enhancing learners' motivation, interest, understanding, and achievement across many aspects of the process of learning. Additionally,

it is widely acknowledged for its undeniable role in encouraging an engaging classroom environment. Liu et al. (2018) also indicated that the utilization of the SRS had a positive impact on students' willingness to learn, enhancing their involvement and active participation. The students also expressed acceptance of the Student Response System (SRS) as an effective learning strategy within the context of an EFL classroom. In addition, a study from Baumann et al. (2015) to the university students explained that the utilization of SRS as a means of encouraging peer collaboration enables teachers to effectively evaluate the immediate levels of comprehension. Benson et al. (2016) also stated that the ability to assess comprehension during a class session, modify and review the material, and provide quick feedback were the main advantages mentioned by students. The students expressed their support for the ongoing utilization of the Student Response System (SRS) within educational settings, as it facilitates the integration of subject matter and assists in test preparation. Furthermore, Balta & Tzafilkou (2019) also stated that the utilization of Student Response Systems (SRS) enables students to immediately receive feedback on the accuracy of their responses. Additionally, providing feedback by the teacher regarding the questions answered is crucial in ensuring the achievement of effective learning outcomes.

Kahoot! is a sample of a gamified student response system that gained significant acceptance, having a user base over 70 million individuals globally. Kahoot! is also utilized for the creation of quizzes, evaluation of students' comprehension, and support of educational topics. Kahoot! involves game design features, including graphics, music, noises, points, and competitive leaderboards, to enhance student motivation and build a lively and competitive learning environment (Alawadhi & Abu-Ayyash, 2021). Since Kahoot! as a gamified SRS required collective learning including submission and feedback of information, this game design did contain interaction for sustainability of classes (Pertegal-Felices et al., 2020).

Several studies have been conducted in order to understand the effectiveness of the utilization of Kahoot!. The findings of Alawadhi & Abu-Ayyash (2021) on EFL undergraduate students in UAE align with existing studies, showing an advantageous overall response of Kahoot!. The biggest effect was observed in terms of enhanced motivation, higher classroom participation, and better academic results. The research of Chiang (2020) showed positive perceptions for the implementation of Kahoot! in the EFL reading class. In addition, Wichadee & Pattanapichet (2018) stated that the students felt a better learning performance, motivation, and showed positive perspectives and attitudes about the learning tool Kahoot!. The utilization of Kahoot! as an instructional instrument was observed to be advantageous due to its ability to enhance the enjoyment of the course, establish a competitive environment, and stimulate students' engagement with the subject matter. Youhasan & Raheem (2019) also added that Kahoot enhances subject focused attention, promotes enjoyable learning experiences, encourages motivation to study, and serves as an efficient approach for interactive learning and feedback provision.

In contrast, the other study on university students by Ebadi et al. (2021) stated that despite the beneficial aspects of the game-based application, a majority of the students showed a lack of willingness to engage with it. The primary factors were a series of internet connectivity issues, the fast pace of the game, its highly competitive nature, and the absence of comprehensive post-game explanations. These factors resulted in a decreasing motivation and increased distraction among the majority of participants. Coleman & Money (2020) stated that the participation of learners in playing games does not ensure their active involvement or expected educational results. In addition, students might show less focus on multiplayer involvement and social interactions. Plump & LaRosa (2017) stated that certain students reported challenges in maintaining their motivation when they were unable to achieve success in the game. The issue of time appeared as a significant concern, as individuals expressed a perceived lack of time for thinking. Moreover, the study of Cadet (2023) explained that

certain students might need additional time to properly prepare themselves for studying in this particular environment due to their distinct and diverse learning needs. Additionally, Wang & Tahir (2020) showed when faced with the pressure of time constraints and the need to provide answers, students experience fear about the possibility of not succeeding in quizzes. After providing an inaccurate answer, it becomes exceedingly difficult for them to catch up.

The various studies above explain the advantages and disadvantages of the utilization of Kahoot! and focused on the undergraduate students' level. Not many similar studies are conducted at the high school level. Therefore, the research questions are as follows.

1. What are the students' expectations regarding the utilization of Kahoot?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of utilizing Kahoot?

This study aims to explore students' perceptions on Kahoot! as a game-based Student Response System in High School level students to get more in-depth information about the implementation of Kahoot! in the classroom and become a consideration whether Kahoot! is recommended to use. More detailed, the study was done to determine the students' expectation, advantages, and disadvantages of the utilization of Kahoot! in the classroom.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

### **Research Design**

A case study design targeted to the situations where describing the social phenomenon is the principal objective (Yin, 2009) and finding comprehensive and detailed information from people's views and opinions can be facilitated by qualitative research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). In this context, a case study was conducted because the EFL classrooms in the research setting mostly implemented gamification such as Quizizz, but the utilization of Kahoot in EFL classrooms was still few. That is why this research design was considered appropriate to find out the uniqueness of the phenomena.

### **Research Setting and Subject**

The research setting was one of Public High Schools in East Java which specifically employed the Student Response System in the classroom. The population of this study was 299 eighth-grade students consisting of 143 male and 156 female students with age range 12-14 years old. Two classes with a total of 67 students were chosen purposely to be the samples of the research because the participants have experienced in utilizing Kahoot! As gamification in EFL classroom. Then, 3 students of each class were selected to be interviewed based on their level of English achievement, categorized into high, moderate, and low achiever.

### **Instruments**

The data of the current study were collected by using semi-structured interviews to investigate the students' perception on using Kahoot! as a game-based SRS with in-depth information. The interviews were using interview guidelines with 2 parts, pre-course and post-course questions, which were adapted from Ebadi et al. (2021). Before conducting classroom activities, each participant was asked to participate in a pre-course interview consisting of 6 questions about their perceptions focusing their expectation toward the use of smartphones in English learning using Kahoot!.

Following the completion of the course, students were asked to respond to seven-item post-course interview questions to find out their perceptions on advantages and disadvantages of the utilization of Kahoot!. Furthermore, in order to prevent unclear information, the interviews had been conducted in the participants' primary language, Indonesian, and were properly transcribed from audio recordings that were made with permission from the participants. There was also an assurance of participant anonymity and data privacy.

Additionally, during classroom activities, the researchers conducted the observation through the language learning in the classroom activities using Kahoot! as game-based SRS in order to gain more in-depth insights through the objectives of the study by using field notes. It was used to support and cross check the accuracy of the interview results. Nasution (1988) mentioned that through conducting field observations, the researchers can enhance their understanding of the contextual factors around the data within a wider social setting, which allows the researchers to gain a full and holistic perspective.

### Data Analysis

A thematic analysis was employed to examine and report on patterns (themes) that were identified, analyzed, and shown by the recorded interviews. The transcription and subsequent analysis of all interview results followed this method (Braun & Clarke, 2006). By engaging with careful and repeated comprehension, the process of developing themes can lead to a "thematic map" and offer a comprehensive analysis of the collected data. In order to analyze the data using Braun and Clarke's method, multiple procedures had to be taken: coding the data, combining it to determine themes, and repeatedly carefully reviewing the data to find significant elements necessary to the research questions. Additionally, the field-notes observations were used to support and cross check the accuracy of the interview.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Research Findings

A variety of themes occurred following the investigation of recorded interviews using thematic analysis coding systems, as shown in Table 1. The following explanation explores various ideas that include both the beneficial and detrimental elements of the system. The investigation aimed to investigate the expectations of learners regarding the use of Kahoot! for EFL learning, specifically focusing on its implementation as a game-based student response system (SRS).

Table 1  
EFL Students' Perceptions of Utilizing Kahoot! as SRS

Categories	Themes	Example
Student Expectation	Excitement	Kahoot! should be fun, creative, and interesting
	Practicality	Teacher could elaborate the materials through Kahoot!
Advantages	Understandability	The materials elaborated through Kahoot! are easier to understand than through conventional media
	Motivation to learn English	Students felt more enthusiastic to learn English through Kahoot! and easier to play
	More fun	Kahoot! had various of features and interesting visual-audio
Disadvantages	Device problems	Some students did not have smartphones and they were lack in quality to access
	Internet connection issues	Some students could not connect and logged out from the game
	Lack in focus	Some students felt distracted by other apps in their smartphone and distracted by other students

The students expressed a collective perception for the integration of Kahoot! in classrooms to enhance engagement, enjoyment, creativity, and overall interest in the learning

process. The students expect a learning experience that is both informative and interesting. Achievement of this objective requires the key role of teachers. It is essential for teachers to have the ability to successfully elaborate on materials for learning and effectively include them into their pedagogical approach through the utilization of Kahoot!. Learning becomes more than just a mechanism for transmitting knowledge; it works as an interactive process that actively engages students.

After conducting an English course in the classroom, the participants explained the advantages and disadvantages of utilizing Kahoot! as SRS. All participants clearly expressed the utilization of Kahoot! significantly enhances the understanding and comprehension of the learning material. The researchers noted that there are additionally two more factors that contribute to the enhanced comprehensibility of learning English through the use of Kahoot!. These factors include the variety of features offered by Kahoot! and the proficiency of the teacher in providing detailed explanations of the learning content. Kahoot! offers a variety of visually appealing and engaging elements that effectively prevent student disinterest and make students receive new and fresh things for language learning. In addition to this, it is important that the teacher's involvement remains significant in the process of explaining content through the utilization of Kahoot!. The integration of tools for learning such as Kahoot! helps enhance students' comprehension of the provided material.

The implementation of Kahoot! as a teaching tool for English language learning has shown a positive effect on students' motivation. One of the key factors is the level of accessibility in gameplay, which contributes to an enjoyable and unimpeded learning experience. Students feel more motivated and interested to learn the language more extensively in this relaxed atmosphere. In addition to this, the benefits of utilizing Kahoot! extend beyond its easy gameplay, including its exciting audio-visual elements. The combination of visual and auditory components facilitates a multi-modal educational experience, allowing learners to understand the content in a comprehensive manner. The following is the example of the students' opinion regarding the advantages of the utilization of Kahoot! in the classroom.

“Features on Kahoot! very diverse and interesting. We become more motivated to learn. With these advantages, coupled with appropriate explanations from teachers, it becomes easier for us to understand the material.”

“Learning English using technology such as Kahoot is much better than just a teacher explaining the material using a whiteboard.”

However, research findings show the accessibility of devices can be a significant barrier. A number of students avoid bringing smartphones to class, and a smaller number of students don't own smartphones at all. In addition to this, certain students expressed dissatisfaction with the limitations of their smartphones in facilitating the utilization of Kahoot!, consequently impeding the learning process. In addition to issues related to electronic devices, an amount of students express dissatisfaction with their internet connectivity. Certain individuals had challenges when trying to access the Kahoot! game. Some students also expressed dissatisfaction with their immediate logging out from the game, referring to issues with their internet connectivity. Due to those problems, the process of preparing all the resources and tools required for learning requires a significant amount of time.

Students frequently also express dissatisfaction with how easy it is to feel distracted from their own smartphones and other students around. According to the participants' statements, a significant number of students utilize smartphones not just for accessing Kahoot!, but also frequently engage with various other applications, including social media

platforms like WhatsApp and Instagram, as well as mobile games such as Mobile Legend or PUBG. In addition, with the implementation of Kahoot! alongside direct instructional guidance from the teacher, a significant number of students showed high levels of excitement, but some of them showed actions that were not conducive to the learning environment, resulting in disruptions for other students. The following is the example of the students' opinion regarding the disadvantages of the utilization of Kahoot! in the classroom.

“We feel disturbed by students who are not conducive during lessons. Some students even opened other applications that they were not told to open, such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Mobile Legend, PUBG, etc. As a result, we become less focused.”

“Learning will be more difficult when there are students who are constrained by quotas and whose devices are inadequate.”

Based on the results of the interview, it is highlighted that all of the students expected Kahoot! to be fun, creative, and interesting. Additionally, they expected the teacher could properly put and elaborate the material into the game. Students also express various advantages and disadvantages during the learning process.

## **Discussion**

The result of this study reveals that the students expect Kahoot! to be fun, creative, and interesting. The students expected the learning process to be both engaging and interesting, as they perceive that the integration of games into the classroom setting enhances the overall enjoyment of the learning environment when compared with conventional instructional methods. This result has the same finding as Bawa (2018) mentioning that student response systems (SRS) require to have distinct characteristics when compared to conventional written examinations. This result demonstrates that because traditional methods for examination are so draining and discouraging, students lack an interest in it anymore. Omar (2017) stated in his study that effectively attracting and motivating students is very difficult without incorporating different kinds of technology utilization inside the learning setting. Ebadi et al. (2021) added that in the present day, students engaged in learning a language face a variety of engaging apps and presenting a challenge for stakeholders to maintain user engagement and interest in the platforms they use. However, maintaining student motivation in utilizing these applications requires continuous updates to ensure they align with student requirements.

In addition, the finding also states that the students expected the teacher to elaborate the materials into the game properly. It is supported by Ebadi et al. (2021) explaining that participants expressed their belief that the quick feedback offered by the SRS program is a highly advantageous aspect, which should be supported by teachers' explanations to maximize its effectiveness. Additionally, Balta & Tzafilkou (2019) reveal that the delivery of immediate feedback to students regarding the accuracy of their responses, as well as the teacher's delivery of feedback on the questions, is crucial for facilitating effective learning.

After the learning process, students express various responses regarding the advantages of Kahoot!'s utilization. The finding shows the learning process by utilizing Kahoot! is easier to understand than conventional media due to the interesting features and the proper elaboration from the teacher. It is similar to the finding of Kent (2019) which showed that Student Response Systems (SRSs) has many features that can make notable improvements across all academic disciplines. These systems engage students in active learning processes, allowing them to assess their own progress. Additionally, certain SRSs contain gamification components, creating an enjoyable learning experience. Coveney et al. (2022) stated that Kahoot showed to be advantageous, enhancing the whole learning experience due to its user-

friendly interface and usefulness for learning. Moreover, Bicen & Kocakoyun (2018) added that one key factor influencing students' engagement is the teacher's capacity to grab their interest. Similar finding to Ebadi et al., (2021) which stated that it is important for the teacher to provide comprehensive explanations and elaborations for each question in order to ensure that students achieve a thorough comprehension of the challenges experienced during the quiz.

The findings also reveal that students feel more motivated and interested to learn the language more extensively in this relaxed atmosphere. This is aligned with the results of Bicen & Kocakoyun (2018) which indicate that including game-based activities inside the learning process has the potential to enhance students' engagement with the course of study and their targets for achievement, thus encouraging more involvement in in-class discussions and activities. Owen & Licorish (2020) also stated that Kahoot! offers various opportunities for engagement and larger accessibility, resulting in enhancing student motivation through the implementation of an enjoyable competitive environment. Tao & Zou (2023) added that the Kahoot game is regarded as significant and has the ability to enhance students' internal and external motivation to study in the classroom by establishing an enjoyable and competitive educational setting for instance. Additionally, Zhang & Yu (2021) stated that Kahoot provides sufficient motivation for students to complete quiz activities and achieve additional learning objectives and supported by the study of Alonso-Fernández et al. (2020) which stated that Kahoot! has the potential to enhance students' participation, motivation, and educational achievements.

In contrast, the findings also show the disadvantages of utilizing Kahoot!. Lack of device support and internet unstable connectivity are the major challenges the students experienced. Additionally, some students felt distracted to the other apps on their smartphones as well as other unconducive students during the learning process. These are aligned with the findings of Bicen & Kocakoyun (2018) which stated the most notable practical challenges of its use included issues related to internet connectivity and device instability. Tao & Zou (2023) stated a deficient online connection could make it hard to learn in class and may result in students totally disconnected from the rest of the learning environment. Janković et al. (2023) also revealed that the negative impacts of implementing gamification learning might involve dissatisfaction with the methodology and efficiency of using the program's features, which is mainly due to the internet connectivity. Additionally, Ebadi et al. (2021) state that one frequently mentioned limitation associated with the utilization of Kahoot was a number of internet connectivity problems. The findings claimed that a significant amount of session time was wasted due to issues related to internet connectivity. The study also revealed one critical problem regarding the implementation of Kahoot! related to the student-to-class number. The participants expressed the belief that the effectiveness of utilizing SRS programs in large courses is comparatively lower than in small classes due to the natural difficulties in managing the class during quizzes, which may potentially result in disturbance. A number of the students participated in playing mobile games, while the rest of them utilized their mobile devices for various functions such as playing social media, chatting, and listening to music, among others. Rajabpour (2021) add that the students take part in the practice of wasting their attention from Kahoot quizzes to other activities, such as WhatsApp and multiple social media platforms, with the purpose of wasting away their time.

Regarding the consideration of advantages and disadvantages, the researchers strongly recommend the utilization of Kahoot! as game-based SRS in EFL learning. The disadvantages can be minimized by upgrading the internet access and devices of the school. In addition, providing more attractive and manageable classroom management by the teacher can be alternative solution.

## CONCLUSION

The current study aims to investigate the perceptions of EFL high school students on the utilization of Kahoot! as a game-based Student Response System. The results of the study reveal the students' perceptions of the expectations, advantages, and disadvantages associated with the use of Kahoot!. The participants expect that Kahoot! should have qualities of enjoyment, creativity, and engagement. Furthermore, they express their expectation that the teacher will effectively integrate the subject matter into the game. Furthermore, the process of English learning becomes easier when the teacher integrates the utilization of Kahoot!. Additionally, students experience enhanced motivation to improve proficiency in the English language due to its enjoyable and user-friendly environment. On the other hand, students face significant challenges associated with device-related matters. Moreover, the presence of internet connectivity problems impedes the educational experience and requires a certain amount of time for preparation. Students can also experience difficulties in maintaining concentration due to their incapacity to exercise self-control in avoiding access to other applications as several participants report that they experienced distractions from other students that were not conducive during the learning process.

In order to encourage future research, it is necessary to do a research investigation into the use of Kahoot! within the context of high school learners. Furthermore, it is important to note that the amount of study conducted in this field has mostly concentrated on the viewpoints of students on the use of gamification. Therefore, it is recommended that future researchers investigate the perceptions of teachers in relation to their utilization of Kahoot or other Student Response Systems (SRS).

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