

ENHANCING GRAMMAR COMPETENCE FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS VIA THE KAHOOT PLATFORM

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated how high school students responded when using the Kahoot platform in English grammar learning and how this platform worked in enhancing high school students' grammatical competence. A total of 40 students from Ngo Quyen High School took part in the study, including 20 students in an experimental group who were given the Kahoot platform to learn grammar for seven weeks. To gather information for analysis, pre- and post-tests and pre- and post-questionnaires were implemented. After using the Kahoot platform, the students' grammatical skills improved dramatically, according to the pre-test and post-test findings. Participants' positive assessments of this platform were also demonstrated by the post-questionnaire. Through the findings of the study, suggestions for teachers, students, and institutions were proposed by the researchers. Additionally, recommendations for further study were also given.

Keywords: Grammar Competence; The Kahoot Platform; High School Students.

1. INTRODUCTION

English is the official language of about 58 countries and is the most widely spoken language in the world when counting both native and non-native speakers. It ranks third in terms of native speakers, behind Mandarin Chinese and Spanish. As a result, learning English is crucial in our lives and brings many benefits. It is a totally fair desire to chase our objectives higher and further; otherwise, we will find ourselves grasped by our own future hands. Learning English is also necessary for us to access and update knowledge sources from around the world. Additionally, studying English can help us become more socially active, communicatively confident, and eager to learn about the cultures of various countries throughout the world.

English language learning requires students to master grammar in order to develop linguistic competence. According to Larsen-Freeman (2003), grammar serves an essential role in making meaningful accurate sentences which makes it a fundamental part of language proficiency. The teaching methods that use rote memorization and direct instruction for grammar education fail to provide effective student engagement according to Ellis (2006). Teaching professionals now focus on exploring new educational methods which combine digital learning tools to improve student grammar abilities (Fotos & Ellis, 1991). The development of educational technology brought forward multiple digital platforms for interactive learning and Kahoot emerged as a highly popular choice among these platforms. As an educational tool, Kahoot provides teachers with tools to design quizzes and interactive content that helps students stay involved (Wang, 2015). Several studies have showcased how using Kahoot platform benefits language education by enhancing motivational levels while maximizing active student engagement and better retaining studied

material (Plump & LaRosa, 2017; Wang & Tahir, 2020). Research indicates that Kahoot's game design may transform learning through engaging and enjoyable grammar practices.

The analysis of Kahoot's effectiveness for high school students' grammatical competence development lacks sufficient research evidence. The research on Kahoot's effects on grammar learning remains limited although studies exist about its use for vocabulary acquisition (Medina & Hurtado, 2017) and general language learning motivation (Barr, 2018). The research lacks comprehensive investigation of how students perceive Kahoot for grammar education within the Vietnamese educational system. Given this gap in research, this study explored how the Kahoot platform affected high school students' grammar competence in Viet Nam. This research investigated grammar proficiency levels of students while assessing Kahoot platform benefits and student perceptions about the platform to expand knowledge in digital grammar instruction. The study of Kahoot's effectiveness in grammar teaching delivers important knowledge to educators and researchers who want to use technological approaches in English language instruction.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

2.1. Participants

Forty grade 10 students from Ngo Quyen High School were chosen to take part in the study. Each of them is fifteen years old. Twenty students participated in the experiment for 7 weeks, and the Kahoot platform was employed as a therapy to enhance the students' grammar learning process outside the classroom. The remaining 20 pupils served as the control group and were taught grammar using conventional techniques. According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, their skill level is A2. According to the most recent Ministry of Education and Training circular, by grade 12, they should have achieved level 3 of the Foreign Language Proficiency Framework for Vietnam, which is equivalent to level B1 in the Common European Framework. Additionally, since English has become widely used in many facets of job these days, they will continue to utilise it in the future; being skilled in the language will provide them an advantage over others.

2.2. Research design

This study aimed to design online activities to improve grammar competence for students in grade 10 at Ngo Quyen High School. Following a quasi-experimental design, the research investigated the effectiveness of the Kahoot platform on students' grammar competence.

The study took place over the course of seven weeks. To analyse the initial grammatical level, the pre-test was administered during the first week. The researcher conducted the experiment from week two to week six by creating exercises to help students get better at grammar using the Kahoot platform. Grammar exercises were generated by the researcher and posted on the Kahoot website. Students were required to do tasks on this platform, including writing short answers, rearranging expressions, and selecting the right option. Evaluations and remarks were given after each performance. After the treatment, the students were given a post-test to compare their mastery of grammar with the pre-test in the last week. Additionally, questionnaires were also used to assess the students' attitudes regarding their experience with learning grammar before and after using Kahoot.

2.3. Data collection instruments

2.3.1. Tests

Tests were employed as tools to examine students' starting proficiency levels and the effect of using the Kahoot platform in learning grammar in this study. To assess the students' starting level, the pre-test was administered to them before the experimental learning process. After the experimental period was completed, a post-test was given to evaluate the effectiveness of using the Kahoot platform for grammar acquisition.

To get data regarding the participants' initial grammar proficiency, the researcher gave them the pre-test during the first week. Each of the thirty multiple-choice questions on the test earned 0.33 points for a correct response. It was created using the Global Success curriculum and the subjects covered in the textbook. According to the English textbook for grade 10, the pre-test assessed the students' prior understanding of grammar, which corresponded to Units 1 through 6. The Kahoot platform's ability to help students improve their grammar was then assessed using the post-test that was given the final week. In addition to revising their prior grammar knowledge, the students learnt new grammatical structures during the experimental period up to the equivalent lesson in the normal curriculum. Thus, in accordance with the grade 10 English textbook, the post-test assessed the students' understanding of grammar from Units 1 through 8. The format of the post-test was comparable to that of the pre-test. Because the curriculum for the control and experimental groups was the same, the pre-test and post-test were able to reliably evaluate the grammatical competency of the students in both groups before and after the experimental period.

2.3.2. Questionnaires

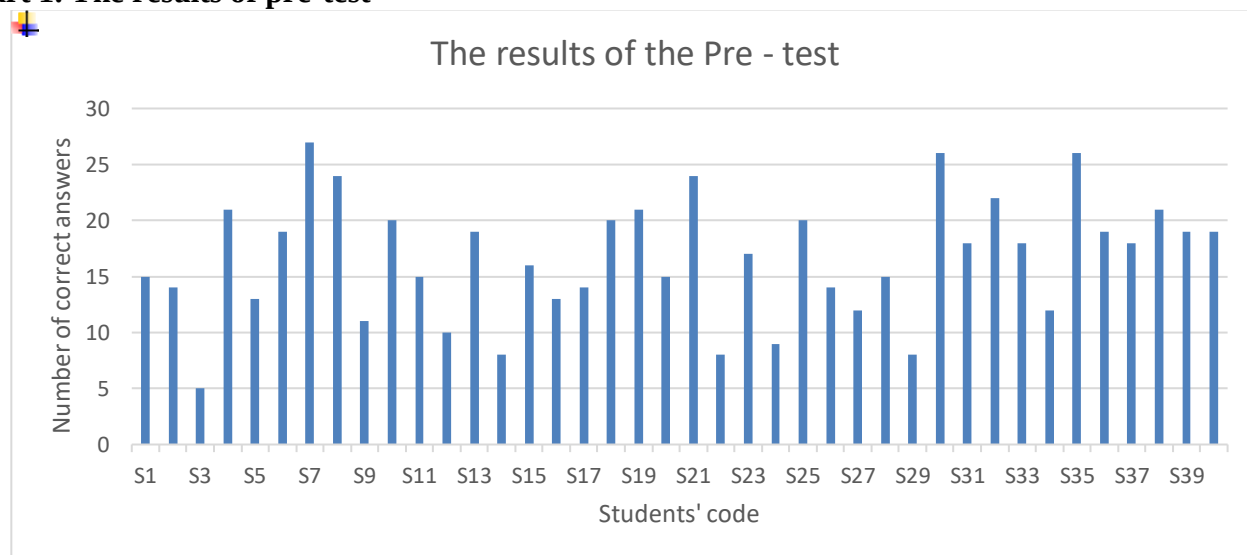
The pre-questionnaire was utilised prior to the experimental learning procedure, and the post-questionnaire was utilised following the experimental learning process. Five questions were included in the pre-questionnaire. The first question was designed to find out how students felt about grammar's role in language learning. The purpose of the second item was to determine learners' excitement for grammar study. Two following questions were designed to gather information about time as well as tool students use to practice grammar. The last one was made to identify difficulties students have in learning grammar. Four questions were included in the post-questionnaire. Finding out the students' level of interest in learning grammar through the Kahoot platform was the aim of the first question. It was then determined whether attitudes had changed over the study period by comparing the answers to the first question with the answers to the same question in the pre-questionnaire. How students perceived the value of this platform in aiding their grammar learning was examined in the second and third questions. The last question was designed to find out if students wanted to keep using this app to study grammar.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To demonstrate improvement after 7 weeks of experimentation, the researcher collected quantitative data through the results of the pre-test and the post-test, as well as the findings of pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire. Overall, the average score of students in the experimental group improved significantly after using Kahoot và their attitudes towards learning grammar through this platform were also positive.

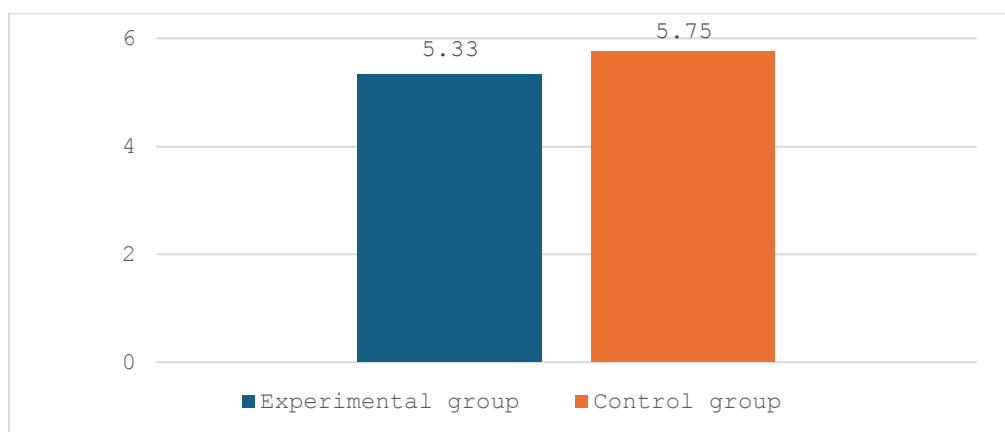
3.1. The results of pre-test and post-test

Chart 1. The results of pre-test

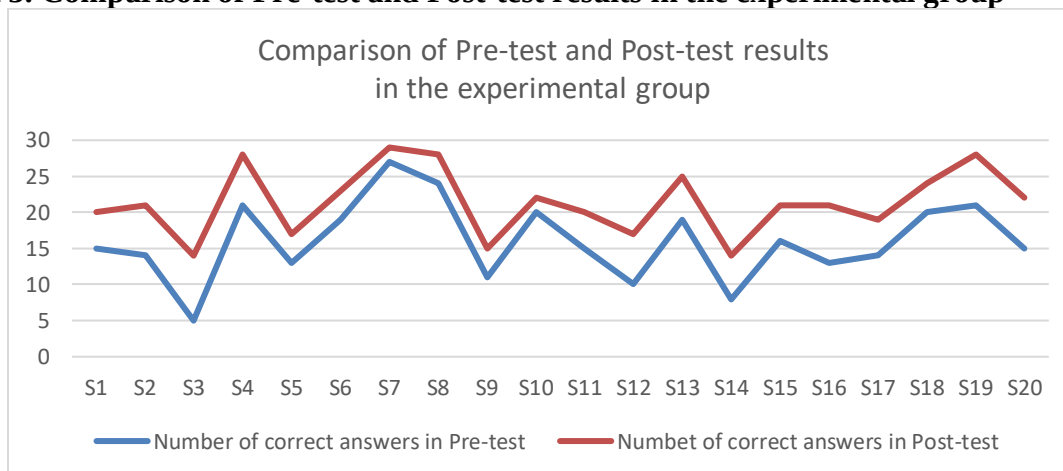


Before using the Kahoot platform in learning grammar, only five of forty students received from 24 to 27 correct answers, as seen in the bar chart above. The correct answers of the other thirty five students witnessed fluctuation from 5 to 22. The result of this test implied that the majority of students struggled with grammar and the research needed to be given an effective solution to improve this situation.

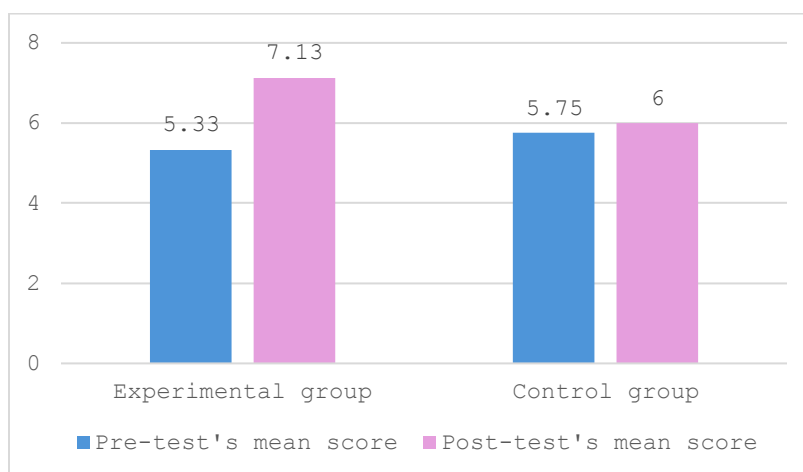
Chart 2. Participants' initial average scores in both groups



Both groups are classified as "Qualified" for mean scores of 5,33 and 5,75, respectively, which correspond to the experimental and control groups, indicating a similarity in the mean score classification between the two groups. It is also evident that there is a slight difference between the experimental group's and the control group's averages, with the former being just 0,42 lower than the latter.

Chart 3. Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test results in the experimental group

The above graph gives information about the experimental group's grammar proficiency before and after the 7-week intervention. After completing the program, students' results on grammar tests changed significantly overall. The students' average of 16 right answers out of 30 questions before the experiment showed that their grammar proficiency level was categorized as "Qualified". To provide further detail, only 5 students were classified "Excellent" and "Good" in the pre-test, whereas the remaining (15 students) was classified "Unqualified" and "Qualified". However, after 7 weeks of intervention by using the Kahoot platform, the grammatical proficiency of students in the experimental group was labeled as "Good", demonstrated by an average of 21 correct answers. It is noteworthy that one student received 29 right answers.

Chart 4. Participants' average score before and after the research period

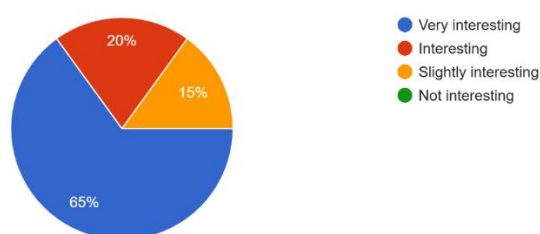
The scores before and after the therapy period clearly differ from one another, as seen in the above chart. Students were greatly impacted by using the Kahoot platform to study grammar. The experimental group's average scores on the pre-test and post-test differed by 1.8 points, indicating this change. This demonstrates that the average score rose by almost 1.34 times following intervention. In the experimental group, the lowest score was 1,67 and the highest was 9 in the pre-test, which was respectively 4,67 and 9,67 in the post-test. Students' average grammar score

improved from "Qualified" to "Good". Despite not taking part in the experiment, the control group also demonstrated improvement. The post-test average score was 0.25 points higher than the pre-test average. Following the experiment, the students' average grammar level stayed constant, earning them the label of "Qualified". This indicates that although students continued to improve their grammar under traditional instruction, their growth was not as substantial as that of the experimental group.

3.2. The attitudes of students toward the Kahoot platform

Chart 5. Students' interest in grammar learning through the Kahoot platform

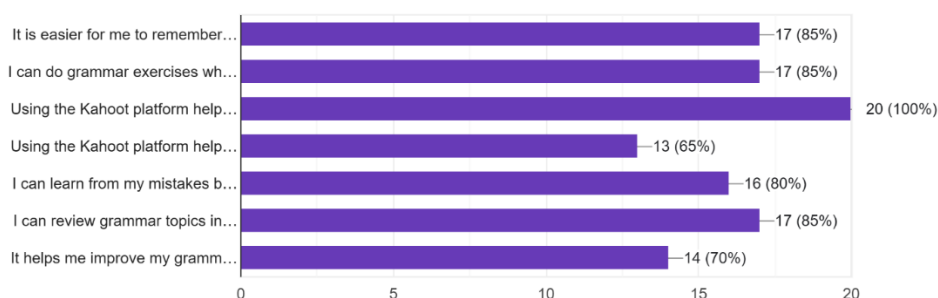
1. How interesting do you think the Kahoot platform is?
20 câu trả lời



It is easy to observe that students' attitudes towards learning grammar have significantly changed after using the Kahoot application. More specifically, 85% of the students said that learning grammar with this online tool was either extremely interesting or interesting. Especially, there were not students who considered learning grammar as uninteresting after the experiment.

Chart 6: Students' benefits in learning grammar through the Kahoot platform

3. In your opinion, what are the benefits of learning grammar via the Kahoot platform?
20 câu trả lời



It can be clearly seen that 100% of the students considered that using the Kahoot platform helps them become more interested in doing exercises about grammar. Following this benefit, 85% of the participants stated that it is easier for students to remember grammar rules and structures, they can do grammar exercises whenever they want in an interesting way, and they can review grammar topics in a fun way without feeling bored. Besides, students also found that they can learn from their mistakes by reviewing correct answers after each game (80%), and they can improve their

grammar accuracy by receiving instant feedback on their answers (70%). Using the Kahoot platform also helps students reduce stress when learning grammar (65%).

Students' opinions about the effectiveness of the Kahoot platform in enhancing their grammatical competence

This study also collected data that all the participants who took part in the experiment agree that the Kahoot platform improved their grammar learning and 100% of the students participating in the study expressed their desire to continue using Kahoot to practice grammar in the future.

3.3. Discussion

The study revealed that students had a negative perception of grammar and its learning process initially, despite the importance of it in language learning. They perceived English grammar as challenging and uninteresting, with many students lacking practice outside the classroom and relying on traditional methods. This resulted in low academic performance due to various challenges faced by students.

The experiment showed that students in both experimental and control groups initially had the same grammar level, "Qualified." However, only the experimental group using the Kahoot platform showed significant progress in their pre-test and post-test mean scores. The experimental group's post-test mean score was greater than the control group's, suggesting that traditional instruction did not significantly improve students' grammatical abilities.

Besides, most students expressed positive attitudes towards the Kahoot platform, citing its numerous advantages and its ability to make learning grammar enjoyable. They found the platform beneficial and expressed a desire to continue learning English grammar using this platform. This suggests that gamified learning environments can enhance student engagement and comprehension in learning English grammar. Another key observation from the results is the increase in students' motivation and participation. The interactive nature of Kahoot fosters a competitive yet enjoyable learning atmosphere, which may explain the significant progress in post-test scores. This aligns with previous studies highlighting the positive impact of game-based learning on student engagement and academic performance. The study also supports research by Zarzycka-Piskorz (2016), which found that gamification like Kahoot can decrease students' fear of making mistakes and increase their willingness to participate actively.

In conclusion, the findings of this study reaffirm that digital tools like Kahoot can serve as effective supplementary resources for grammar instruction. However, educators should consider balancing game-based learning with traditional teaching methods to cater to different learning styles. Future research could explore strategies to integrate game-based learning more seamlessly into formal curriculum.

4. CONCLUSION

This study focused on using Kahoot to help 10th graders enhance their grammar competence. After the 7-week intervention, the findings revealed that there was a noticeable change in students' grammar competence, indicating the effectiveness of this platform on students' grammar proficiency. The participants' positive attitudes towards the benefits of employing Kahoot indicated that the integration of this online learning application as a useful tool should be taken into consideration for the improvement of students' grammar competence and their enjoyment of the learning experience.

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