



Voices from the Classroom: Students' Perceptions of Gamified Technology and Paper-Based Methods for Tourism Vocabulary Retention

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ABSTRACT

Gamified technology presents a promising avenue for educators to create dynamic and interactive language learning environments. This qualitative study explores students' perceptions of gamified technology and paper-based methods for tourism vocabulary retention in a private university setting. Through interviews with six students, two overarching themes emerged: engagement and efficacy. Under the theme of engagement, sub-themes included competing students in learning and the level of interactivity among students. Meanwhile, within the theme of efficacy, sub-themes focused on vocabulary retention and student comprehension. The findings underscore the importance of considering students' preferences and perceptions in language learning strategies, particularly in integrating innovative technological tools to enhance engagement and efficacy. Educators are encouraged to leverage gamified technology while also adapting teaching approaches to suit students' needs effectively. Ongoing research and evaluation of gamified technology in language learning contexts can provide valuable insights into its effectiveness and areas for improvement.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly evolving landscape of language education, the integration of technology and innovative teaching methodologies has gained significant traction. Among these approaches, gamification, which incorporates elements of game design into educational contexts, has garnered considerable attention for its potential to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes (Fitria, 2022; Smiderle et al. 2020; Saptiany, Mujiyanto, Hartono, & Rustipa, 2022). Concurrently, traditional paper-based methods, which have been the cornerstone of language instruction for decades, continue to play a crucial role in many classrooms (Novita & Paragae, 2023). As educators strive to strike a

balance between embracing technological advancements and preserving time-honored practices, it becomes imperative to understand students' perceptions and preferences regarding these contrasting approaches.

The field of tourism, with its rich and specialized vocabulary, presents a unique challenge for language learners. Mastering industry-specific terminology is critical for effective communication (Maglalang & Redublo, 2023; Asriyani & Anggayana, 2023) and ensuring a seamless experience for both tourists and service providers. Recognizing the importance of vocabulary acquisition in this domain, educators have explored various strategies (Chung, 2018; BAL, 2018), ranging from gamified technology-enhanced learning to traditional paper-based exercises. However, the relative effectiveness and student perceptions of these approaches remain an area of inquiry.

Amidst this ongoing discourse, it is crucial to amplify the voices of those at the heart of the learning process – the students themselves. Their perspectives, experiences, and preferences regarding gamified technology and paper-based methods offer invaluable insights that can inform pedagogical decisions and shape the future of language education in the tourism sector. By actively engaging with and understanding students' perceptions, educators can devise more effective and student-centered approaches to vocabulary instruction. Furthermore, the exploration of students' perceptions holds significant implications for the broader field of language education. As technology continues to pervade classrooms, it becomes increasingly important to assess its impact on learners (Ge et al., 2021) and its alignment with their diverse needs and learning styles. By giving students a platform to share their perspectives, this study not only contributes to the discourse on gamification and paper-based methods but also provides a framework for future research on technology integration and student-centered pedagogies.

While previous studies have examined the effectiveness of gamified technology and paper-based methods for vocabulary acquisition, there remains a paucity of research that directly captures students' perceptions and experiences with these contrasting approaches within the context of tourism education. The existing literature has primarily focused on quantitative measures of learning outcomes, often overlooking the invaluable insights that can be gained from students' lived experiences and preferences. This study aims to bridge this gap by employing a qualitative approach to amplify the voices of students, allowing for a nuanced and in-depth exploration of their perceptions, motivations, and challenges encountered with gamified technology and paper-based methods for tourism

vocabulary retention. The novelty of this research lies in its unique focus on students' perspectives, which have been largely underrepresented in the discourse surrounding vocabulary instruction in tourism education. By positioning students as active participants and giving them a platform to share their experiences, this study not only contributes to the body of knowledge but also aligns with the principles of learner-centered education and constructivist pedagogy. Furthermore, the study's emphasis on the tourism sector adds a layer of specificity, addressing the unique vocabulary demands and challenges faced by learners in this rapidly growing and dynamic industry.

In this research, the present study aims to uncover the nuances of students' perceptions regarding gamified technology and paper-based methods for tourism vocabulary retention. By employing a qualitative approach, the research seeks to capture the richness and depth of students' experiences, enabling a comprehensive understanding of their preferences, motivations, and challenges encountered with these contrasting approaches. Additionally, this study is situated within the broader theoretical framework of learner-centered education and constructivist principles (Msonde, S. E., 2023). These perspectives emphasize the active role of learners in constructing knowledge and the importance of aligning educational practices with their diverse needs, backgrounds, and learning preferences. By giving voice to students' perceptions, this research aligns with the core tenets of learner-centered education, empowering students as active participants in shaping their learning experiences.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

To gain a deep and nuanced understanding of students' perceptions regarding gamified technology and paper-based methods for tourism vocabulary retention, this study will employ a qualitative research approach grounded in phenomenology. Qualitative research is comprehension of explanations and findings will be conveyed through sentence structures (Intiar, Sirait, Wijaya, Adityaji, & Oktavio, 2023). Phenomenological inquiry aims to capture the essence of lived experiences and uncover the subjective meanings that individuals ascribe to a particular phenomenon (Nigar, 2020; Creswell, 2013). Through in-depth, semi-structured interviews, the researchers will engage with a purposefully selected sample of students who have experienced both gamified technology and paper-based methods for tourism vocabulary instruction. The interviews will serve as a platform for students to articulate their perspectives, motivations, challenges, and preferences regarding these contrasting approaches. Probing

questions will be utilized to elicit rich, descriptive accounts of their experiences, allowing for the exploration of emergent themes and patterns.

Six students were chosen as the sample group for the study. The selection of samples followed purposive sampling, a method that targets specific criteria such as time, location, group, community, and individual. Researchers opted against random sampling to ensure precise selection. To ensure trustworthiness, the researchers will employ strategies such as member checking, triangulation, and peer debriefing (Hamilton, 2020). To investigate the stages of data collection, the researchers initially conducted online individual interviews with the students to delve into their experiences. Additionally, the researchers will engage in reflexive journaling to acknowledge and bracket their own biases and assumptions, ensuring that the findings authentically reflect the participants' voices. The data analysis process will involve thematic analysis, where the researchers will systematically identify, analyze, and report patterns within the qualitative data. This methodological approach aligns with the study's aim of amplifying students' voices and contributing to a deeper understanding of their perceptions, ultimately informing pedagogical practices and curricular decisions in tourism vocabulary instruction.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

To protect the privacy of the participants, this research assigns them labels P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, and P6 instead of using their names. The interview section concentrates on addressing one central question: What are the perceptions of Indonesian Tourism students regarding the use of Gamified Technology and Paper-Based Methods for retaining tourism vocabulary? From this key inquiry, the researchers identified two significant themes that emerged.

No	Themes	Subthemes
1	Engagement	Competing students in learning
		Interactivity students' level
2	Efficacy	Vocabulary Retention
		Student' Comprehension

A. Engagement: Competing students in learning and Interactivity student' level Competing students in learning

Under this theme, the participants delved into their views on how motivating and engaging they found the gamified approach compared to the paper-based approach. Additionally, they examined the degree of active involvement and interactivity they experienced with each of the two methods. Based on the interview, most of the students agreed that Gamified Technology more facilitate, motivate and angaging than paper-based approach.

Learn with game is very exciting, building our motivation, and creating competition among individuals in the class. (P4)

My impression is certainly very pleased because playing a game application in one class can increase competition and train precision or focus. (P5)

The participants' statements highlight the engaging and motivating nature of the gamified approach to learning vocabulary. The element of excitement and enjoyment derived from playing games in the classroom setting seems to have fostered a sense of friendly competition among the students. This competitive dynamic appears to have acted as a driving force, fuelling their motivation and encouraging them to stay focused and precise. This data aligned with the findings of earlier studies (Smiderle et al., 2020; Sailer & Homner, 2020; Cheung & Ng, 2021; Zainuddin, Chu, Shujahat, & Perera, 2020; Huang, Hew, & Lo, 2019; Almeida & Simoes, 2019) which stated that gamified approach successfully created an engaging, motivating, and interactive learning environment that fostered a sense of friendly competition and aided in developing focus and precision. Compared to paper-based method, the students revealed that the method is not efficient.

... paper method easily lost or misplaced. (P3)

...traditional methods can be wasteful of paper. (P6)

While paper-based methods have been traditional for vocabulary learning, the statements from students highlight some drawbacks. This data corresponded with the results of previous research (Madden, Collins, & Lander, 2019; Chavan, Balekundri, Bafna, & Bhatia, 2021; Rahman & Roslan, 2023) which agreed that paper-based

method is easily losing or misplacing paper materials and the wastefulness of paper raise issues of disorganization and lack of environmental sustainability. Such an approach has the potential to enhance the overall learning experience and outcomes, making it a valuable consideration for language educators seeking innovative and effective methods for teaching vocabulary.

Interactivity students' level

From the interviews conducted, the sub-theme of students' level of interactivity emerged as a salient factor in their perceptions of gamified technology and paper-based methods for tourism vocabulary retention. It was revealed that most students had experienced game-based methods more than three times in their English classes, and for many, it was their first exposure to such an approach. Notably, the students expressed that the game-based methods fostered a higher degree of active engagement and interactivity within the classroom setting compared to traditional methods. They highlighted the immersive and participatory nature of the digital games and platforms, which encouraged them to actively partake, make decisions, and receive immediate feedback, potentially enhancing their overall learning experience and vocabulary comprehension.

I felt more confidence to remember the vocabulary in the game version rather than paper test. Maybe because the game has interacting features. (P1)

Seeing me and my friends' scores on each question is a satisfying thing for me. We are so excited for the next question. (P2)

This data matched the findings of earlier studies (Adanır, Akmatbekova, & Muhametjanova, 2020; Sianturi & Hung, 2023; Partovi & Razavi, 2019; Li, 2021; Ahmed et al., 2022; Alfadil, 2020; Patra, Shanmugam, Ismail, & Mandal, 2022) that the self-confidence of students are more higher than paper-based method. Additionally, the students also felt satisfied when they are using the game-based method.

Fortunately, one participant expressed deference from the others. He felt confuse with the game-based. He cannot focus in remembering the vocabulary because the features that available in the game-based.

it's difficult for me to use the game than paper because maybe I don't really know about the technology, so I usually just quiet and slow in answering the quiz. (P3)

although the participant also stated in above that the paper-based is easily lost, but he also lacks in the use of game-based method.

By providing an interactive and engaging environment, the game-based methods seem to foster a sense of confidence among learners, potentially due to the immediate feedback and achievable goals inherent in game mechanics. Furthermore, the element of enjoyment and immersion inherent in games appears to contribute to a higher level of satisfaction compared to traditional paper-based methods. This heightened self-confidence and satisfaction can be powerful motivators for sustained engagement and effective learning outcomes, reinforcing the value of integrating gamified technology in educational contexts.

B. Efficacy: Vocabulary Retention and Student' Comprehension

Vocabulary Retention

A key aspect in evaluating the efficacy of gamified technology and paper-based methods is their ability to facilitate vocabulary retention among students. During the interviews, participants provided insights into how each approach impacted their capacity to retain tourism-related vocabulary over time. While paper-based methods offered a familiar and structured approach, some students found the gamified technology more effective in reinforcing vocabulary through interactive and immersive experiences. The element of fun and engagement inherent in games may have contributed to better memory retention and recall. Almost all participants agreed that the game-based method was successful in making it easier for them to remember vocabulary. However, perceptions on vocabulary retention likely varied among individuals, influenced by factors such as learning styles, preferences, and the specific implementations of each approach.

The game greatly facilitates me in remembering the vocabulary. (P2)

Using the Quizziz or Kahoot! are easier to understand and practice grasping English vocabulary well.

(P5)

The interview data above is correlated with the results of previous research (Alhebshi & Gamlo, 2022; Chen, Liu, & Huang, 2019; Zou, Huang, & Xie, 2021; Jia, Zhang, Pack, Guan, & Zou, 2022; Bahari, 2022; Tang, 2023; Kazu & Kuvvetli, 2023) that investigated vocabulary retention with game-based approach. The previous research conveyed that game-based approach make the students easier to remember the English vocabulary likewise in the field of tourism. These positive sentiments suggest that the engaging and interactive nature of gamification can lead to improved vocabulary acquisition and recall among learners.

Furthermore, besides game-based can make students easier towards tourism vocabulary retention, it also can make the students understand more which vocabulary is correct and incorrect.

besides easy to remember the vocabulary, we can also learn more better about tourism vocabulary.

(P6)

Not only do they find the game-based methods enjoyable and conducive to better vocabulary retention, but they also perceive an enhanced understanding and comprehension of tourism-specific vocabulary. This speaks to the potential of gamification to not only engage learners through fun elements but also facilitate deeper learning and mastery of subject-specific terminology essential for the tourism industry.

Student' Comprehension

Beyond just memorization, the effectiveness of vocabulary instruction methods should be evaluated based on students' ability to truly comprehend the meanings and nuances of the words they learn. This sub-theme delves into the extent to which gamified technology and paper-based approaches facilitate a deeper understanding

and grasp of tourism vocabulary among learners. Insights from students' experiences could shed light on which method better promotes comprehension through contextual usage, practical examples, or interactive reinforcement activities.

The traditional method is indeed comprehended too, but we prefer using game applications because it will be more give us deep understanding and memorizing of vocabulary. (P1)

Personally, I pay more attention to vocabulary words and their meanings in game-based games because maybe I used to stare at a screen so the words can enter in my brain more easily so it's easier to remember the vocabulary. (P4)

Comprehended the meaning of vocabulary in paper-based method is okay but after I know the game-based, it became faster to comprehend the vocabulary through game-based. (P6)

The interview data provided corresponds with the outcomes of earlier studies (Yudha & Mandasari, 2021; Elaish, Ghani, Shuib, & Al-Haiqi, 2019; Shabaneh & Farrah, 2019; Hao, Lee, Chen, & Sim, 2019) which they explained that vocabulary comprehension more easier and faster to remember and grasp with game-based approach than traditional method. While traditional vocabulary instruction methods have their merits, a game-based approach that incorporates elements of fun and interactivity can potentially make vocabulary comprehension easier, faster, and more engaging for learners, especially in today's digital age.

4. CONCLUSION

The research study highlights the significance of considering students' perceptions in language learning strategies. Through students' feedback, it becomes evident that gamified technology is preferred over traditional paper-based methods for tourism vocabulary retention due to its engaging and interactive nature. This underscores the importance of incorporating innovative technological tools into language learning curricula to enhance student engagement and efficacy. However, while gamified technology proves promising, it's essential for educators to adapt these approaches to suit students' needs and preferences effectively.

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