

## **The Use English Kahoot Platform in Improving Student's Reading Ability at SMPN 21 OKU**

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### **Abstract**

This study aimed to determine whether the use of Kahoot significantly improved students' reading ability at SMP Negeri 21 OKU. Reading is a crucial language skill that enables students to understand information, gain knowledge, and achieve better academic performance; however, many students struggle with comprehending narrative texts, particularly in identifying main ideas, locating specific information, and understanding vocabulary in context. This study employed a pre-experimental method with a one-group pretest-posttest design. The population consisted of all seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri 21 OKU in the 2025/2026 academic year, with class VII.C (32 students) selected as the sample through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a multiple-choice reading ability test and analyzed using a Paired-Sample t-test via SPSS. The results showed a significant improvement in students' reading competence, particularly in determining main ideas, locating information, and understanding vocabulary, with a significance level below 0.05. These findings indicate that Kahoot is an effective and engaging interactive media for enhancing students' reading competence and classroom involvement.

**Keywords:** Kahoot Platform, Reading Ability, Narrative Text, English Learning,

### **INTRODUCTION**

This study addresses the topic of reading comprehension since this skill is considered as one of the most fundamental ones among all language skills (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Reading can enable learners to gain knowledge and develop critical thinking abilities while being beneficial for both personal and professional purposes (Richards & Rogers, 2003). Moreover, reading plays a crucial role when learning languages and helps students comprehend various academic contents as well as obtain different types of information from different kinds of written resources (Kroll & Dower, 2018). For instance, having good reading competence allows pupils to successfully expand their vocabulary and attain high academic success levels. On the contrary, poor reading competence causes learners' inability to grasp different concepts and results in lower grades attainment and restricted progress in mastering language (Nespor et al., 2019).

As a result, increasing student's reading capability becomes a primary goal within English Language Education especially for those studying at junior high schools who get familiarized with rather complicated reading stuff. Thus, teachers should focus on creating adequate conditions for students to effectively achieve this aim. While working with narratives, readers should be able to distinguish between basic plot elements such as orientation, complication, resolution, evaluation, and coda (Dahlgren et al., 2016), find out major points, locate required details, explain difficult terms taking into account their usage

context, infer things which are not explicitly mentioned but could be implied, and combine what they already know about given subject matters with what they learn after analyzing provided pieces of text. All these processes contribute significantly to building up higher-level cognition skills and making pupils independent in the twenty-first-century world.

There are several advantages of reading skills acquisition which might help overcome mentioned difficulties, but, still, it turns out that many Indonesian students find this activity quite challenging and confront various issues related to text comprehension such as “insufficient quantity of known vocabulary units”, “wrong application techniques” or “lack of motivation” (Suryani, 2005). In particular, the last one appears to be crucial because most traditional approaches focus on learners’ weaknesses rather than their strengths thus leading to an unpleasant feeling and loss of interest towards a certain skill gaining. During my preliminary teaching practice held at SMP Negeri 21 OKU I also noticed that there were plenty of difficulties among Indonesian pupils when it came to the skill of identification of main ideas, location of specific information, interpretation of vocabulary in context, drawing of conclusions and understanding of general meaning of narrative texts. There existed some problems with recognition of the generic structures of narrative texts which made the process of comprehending event sequence and relations between different parts very problematic.

All the aforementioned indicates a large gap between desired achievements and the real level of reading ability displayed by students within class activities. Thus, further investigation may provide additional opportunities to resolve existing obstacles regarding students’ progress while mastering English reading competences. Currently, integrating educational technology tools into classroom instructions provides another direction worth exploring due to its potential impact upon learning effectiveness. Increasingly digital learning platforms are applied for creating more interactive and student-centered education settings. As one of such applications Kahoot gains great popularity among educators since it presents game-based learning strategy involving implementation of special elements of gamification namely quizzes, points, leaderboards, time limits, instant feedback etc. All those functions tend to ensure more active involvement from side of students helping them develop higher motivation for studying processes promoting deeper meaningful experience. From the point of view of constructing learning theories it should be highlighted that Kahoot gives students a chance to actively construct new pieces of knowledge based on interactions they conduct throughout the whole period of lessons.

The implementation of Kahoot in reading instruction provides an opportunity for teachers to create more interactive and engaging comprehension activities. Through this platform, students are required to understand reading materials before responding to questions related to different aspects of comprehension, including finding the main idea, identifying detailed information, understanding vocabulary based on context, recognizing text structures, and drawing conclusions from the information provided. The instant feedback feature allows students to identify their errors directly and develop better understanding, while the game-based atmosphere encourages active participation during the learning process.

Several previous studies have indicated that the use of Kahoot can positively influence students’ motivation, involvement, and learning achievement. The application of game-based learning has been found to create a more enjoyable classroom environment and support better learning outcomes, particularly in English language learning. In addition, Kahoot has been reported to assist students in improving reading comprehension skills by providing interactive exercises and increasing their interest in learning activities. However, research that specifically examines the effectiveness of Kahoot in enhancing English reading ability among junior high school students, especially at SMP Negeri 21 OKU, is still limited. This condition indicates the need for further research to explore the impact of Kahoot in this educational context.

## METHOD

The research was conducted at SMP Negeri 21 OKU, South Sumatra, Indonesia, during the 2024/2025 academic year. The population consisted of 126 seventh-grade students from four classes. Using purposive sampling, Class VII.C, comprising 32 students, was selected as the research sample.

The research involved two variables, where Kahoot implementation served as the independent variable and students' reading skills acted as the dependent variable. Reading performance was evaluated based on students' ability to identify ideas, obtain detailed information, interpret vocabulary, make conclusions, and understand narrative text organization. Data collection was conducted using multiple-choice ability tests in the form of pretest and posttest. The instrument was modified from previous studies and examined through validity and reliability tests, resulting in a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.975. Documentation was also used as supporting data.

The treatment consisted of English reading lessons using Kahoot to deliver interactive quizzes based on narrative texts. Students received immediate feedback and actively participated in game-based learning activities designed to enhance reading comprehension. The obtained data were processed through quantitative analysis with the assistance of IBM SPSS Statistics. Descriptive analysis was applied to describe the students' score results, while the paired-samples *t*-test was performed to examine the difference between pretest and posttest scores. The significance level used in this study was set at 0.05.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to examine the effectiveness of the Kahoot platform in improving the reading ability of seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri 21 OKU. Students' reading achievement was measured using a pretest administered before the implementation of Kahoot and a posttest administered after the treatment. The results were analyzed descriptively and inferentially using a paired-samples *t*-test in IBM SPSS Statistics.

A pre-test was administered to gauge students' initial reading skills before Kahoot was introduced. The findings indicated that overall reading ability was low, with an average score of 44.04. Most students struggled with locating the main idea, locating specific information, understanding vocabulary in context, making inferences, and identifying the general structure of narrative texts. Based on the result of the pre-test and post-test, it can be seen that there was an improvement in students' reading ability after the implementation of Kahoot as a learning media. The pre-test was conducted before the treatment to measure the students' initial ability in reading ability, while the post-test was conducted after the students received the treatment using Kahoot in the learning process. The result of the pre-test showed that most students were still in the poor category. Several students obtained low scores because they had difficulties in understanding the meaning of the text, identifying the main idea, and answering questions correctly. Many students only answered a small number of questions correctly, which indicates that their reading ability before the treatment was still low.

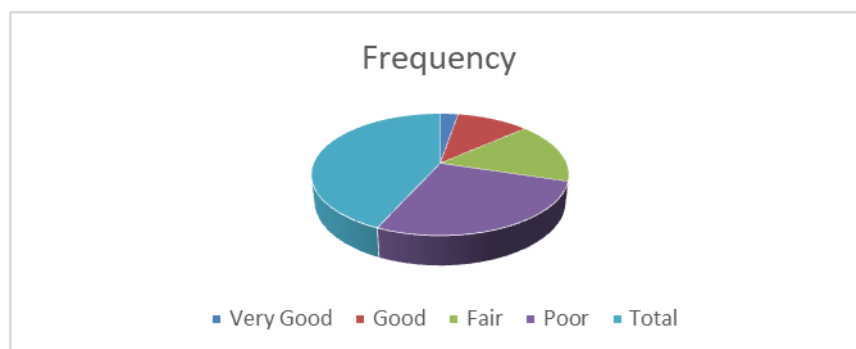


Figure 1 The Students' Score of Pre Test Experimental Class

Almost all students (96.7%) were classified in the poor category, while only one student (3.3%) achieved the fair category. None of the students reached the good or very good categories. These findings indicate that the students had limited reading comprehension skills before the treatment and required a more engaging instructional strategy to improve their performance.

After the implementation of Kahoot in reading instruction, students completed the posttest using an instrument with the same level of difficulty as the pretest. The posttest results demonstrated a noticeable enhancement in pupils' reading performance. The average score increased to 68.17, suggesting that students performed better after participating in Kahoot-based learning activities.

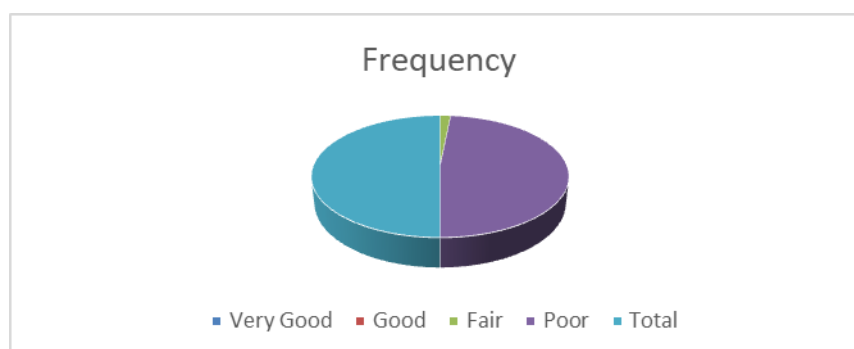


Figure 2 The Students' Score of Pre Test Experimental Class

The substantial improvement in students' reading performance. The proportion students classified as poor decreased from 96.7% to 31.3%, while students in the good and very good categories increased to 25.0% and 6.3%, respectively. This finding indicates that Kahoot helped students improve their comprehension of narrative texts and enhanced their ability to answer reading ability questions correctly.

The results of this research indicate that incorporating Kahoot considerably boosted students' reading proficiency. This enhancement is demonstrated by the increase in average scores, rising from 44.04 on the pre-test to 68.17 on the post-test, as well as from the shift in the distribution of achievement categories. Before the treatment, almost all students were classified as having poor reading ability. After participating in Kahoot-based learning activities, a considerable number of students progressed to the fair, good, and very good categories. These findings indicate that Kahoot contributed positively to students' reading ability.

**Table 1**  
**Test Specifications of Reading Ability Test Based on Narrative Generic Structure**

| NO. | Generic Structure Component | Reading Ability Domain / Sub-Skill                      | Indicator of the Test Items (Multiple Choice)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Item Number                      | Total Items | Percentage (%) |
|-----|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1.  | Orientation                 | Vocabulary & Grammatical Reference (Micro-skills)       | 1. Identifying past adverbs of time (adverbs of time) that introduce the story's setting.<br><br>2. Identifying pronoun references (pronoun reference) related to the main characters.                                                                                                | 1,2,4,7<br>8,12,17<br>18,        | 8           | 29%            |
| 2.  | Complication                | Text Connectors & Lexical Cohesion (Macro/Micro-skills) | 1. Identifying temporal conjunctions (temporal conjunctions) that signal transitions into a crisis.<br><br>2. Identifying the grammatical function of past action verbs (action verbs) that trigger or escalate the conflict.                                                         | 3,5,6,9<br>13,14,19<br>20        | 8           | 29%            |
| 3.  | Resolution                  | Textual Coherence & Pragmatic Meaning (Macro-skills)    | 1. Identifying past mental verbs (mental verbs/feeling) that express the emotional outcome/psychological state of characters at the end of the story.<br><br>2. Identifying the structural function of adverbs/verbs that signal the definitive closing/final resolution of the plot. | 10,11,15<br>16,21,22<br>23,24,25 | 9           | 36%            |
| -   | TOTAL                       | -                                                       | -                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 1-25                             | 25          | 100            |

Several factors may explain this improvement. First, Kahoot transformed the classroom into an increasingly interactive, student-focused learning setting. Unlike conventional reading instruction, which often relies on passive reading and textbook exercises, Kahoot encouraged students to participate actively through game-based quizzes. The incorporation of points, leaderboards, and time-limited questions increased students' motivation and sustained their attention throughout the lesson.

Second, the immediate feedback provided by Kahoot enabled students to recognize and correct their mistakes during the learning process. This feature helped students understand why certain answers were correct or incorrect, thereby strengthening their ability of narrative texts. Repeated exposure to reading questions also provided students with opportunities to practice determining the central concept, finding particular details, interpreting words within their context, drawing conclusions, and identifying the typical framework of story texts. These results corroborate the tenets of constructivist learning theory, which asserts that knowledge is built actively through interaction and experience. Kahoot facilitates this process by encouraging students to engage directly with learning materials, discuss answers, and reflect on immediate feedback. Furthermore, the results It aligns with Interactive Reading Theory, which holds that reading ability progresses through the interaction of lower-level processes like word recognition and higher-level processes such as tapping prior knowledge and constructing meaning from the text.

The findings are also consistent with previous studies reporting that Kahoot improves students' motivation, classroom engagement, participation, and academic achievement. Similar studies have concluded that game-based learning environments increase students' enthusiasm for learning English while promoting better ability outcomes. This research builds on those results by offering empirical proof that Kahoot also enhances English reading skills in seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri 21 OKU.

Overall, the findings suggest that Kahoot is not merely an assessment tool but an effective instructional medium that creates a more engaging learning environment and enhances students' reading comprehension. Therefore, English teachers are encouraged to integrate Kahoot into reading instruction as an innovative strategy to improve students' participation, motivation, and reading achievement. These tables blow show the frequency of students score in pre test and post test,

**Table 2**  
**Frequency and Percentage of Students' Pre-Test Score**

| No | Category     | Score Interval | Frequency | Percentage  |
|----|--------------|----------------|-----------|-------------|
| 1  | Very Good    | 91 – 100       | 0         | 0%          |
| 2  | Good         | 80 – 90        | 0         | 0%          |
| 3  | Fair         | 69 – 79        | 8         | 25%         |
| 4  | Poor         | 0 – 60         | 24        | 75%         |
|    | <b>Total</b> |                | <b>32</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**Table 3**  
**Frequency and Percentage of Students' Post-Test Score**

| No | Category     | Score Interval | Frequency | Percentage  |
|----|--------------|----------------|-----------|-------------|
| 1  | Very Good    | 91–100         | 3         | 9.4%        |
| 2  | Good         | 80–90          | 8         | 25%         |
| 3  | Fair         | 69–79          | 12        | 37.5%       |
| 4  | Poor         | 0–60           | 9         | 28.1%       |
|    | <b>Total</b> |                | <b>32</b> | <b>100%</b> |

Based on the results of the paired-sample t-test, the t-value was -9.393 with  $df = 31$  and a significance level (two-tailed) of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. The mean difference between the pretest and posttest scores was -24.125, indicating that the posttest scores were higher than the pretest scores. Thus, there is a significant difference between the pretest and posttest results. This indicates that the intervention or instruction provided was effective in improving the participants' learning outcomes. This research was conducted to find out whether the use of Kahoot could improve students' reading ability achievement at SMP Negeri 21 OKU. Based on the findings of the research, it was found that the students' reading ability achievement improved after the implementation of Kahoot in the teaching and learning process. The improvement could be seen from the comparison between the pre-test and post-test results. In the pre-test, most students obtained low scores and were categorized into the poor category. These purposes supported the development of students' reading ability by helping them understand the content, structure, and meaning of the text. However, after the treatment using Kahoot, the students showed better achievement in the post-test. Most students achieved good and very good categories, which indicated that their reading ability had improved significantly.

The researcher found that Kahoot created an enjoyable and interactive learning atmosphere. During the learning process, the students became more active, enthusiastic, and motivated in answering questions and participating in classroom activities. Kahoot also helped students focus more on the learning materials because it provided quizzes, instant feedback, and a competitive learning environment. As a result, students were more interested in reading activities and could understand the text more effectively. In addition, the use of Kahoot encouraged students to participate actively in the classroom. The students were not afraid to answer questions because the learning process was conducted in a fun way. They were also more confident in expressing their answers and discussing the material with their classmates. Therefore, Kahoot not only improved students' reading ability achievement but also increased their motivation and participation during the learning process. Furthermore, the statistical analysis using Paired Sample t-Test showed that the significance value (Sig.) was lower than 0.05. It means that the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) was accepted and the null hypothesis ( $H_o$ ) was rejected. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was a significant effect of using Kahoot on students' reading ability achievement at SMP Negeri 21 OKU. The findings of this research are supported by previous studies which stated that Kahoot is an effective learning media to improve students' understanding, motivation, and participation in learning English. Thus, Kahoot can be used as an alternative learning media for teaching reading ability, Narrative text in junior high school.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study examined how the Kahoot platform impacted seventh-grade students' reading skills at SMP Negeri 21 OKU. Results showed that using Kahoot produced a markedly positive influence on reading ability. After the intervention, students' reading scores rose considerably, from a mean of 44.04 on the pre-test to 68.17 on the post-test. A paired-samples t-test supported this gain, with a significance level of 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ), confirming that Kahoot markedly improved reading competence. Beyond boosting academic outcomes, Kahoot also fostered a more interactive and engaging classroom atmosphere. The platform encouraged students to participate actively in classroom activities, increased their motivation and confidence, and helped them better understand narrative texts through immediate feedback and game-based learning features. Students also demonstrated improved abilities in recognizing key concepts, finding specific details, interpreting vocabulary in context, drawing inferences, and recognizing the generic structure of narrative texts.

Overall, the findings suggest that Kahoot is an effective digital learning medium for teaching English reading comprehension. Its integration into classroom instruction not only enhances students' reading achievement but also promotes active participation and positive learning experiences. Therefore, Kahoot can be recommended as an innovative instructional tool to support English language teaching, particularly for reading ability at the junior high school level.

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