INTRODUCTION

The game-based student response system Kahoot! has been found to positively influence classroom dynamics, engagement, motivation, and overall learning experience (Guasqueta & Castro-Garnes, 2018; Licorish et al., 2018; Zarazuela-Prakur, 2014). At the same time, recent MALL research indicates that vocabulary is the most common area to integrate into digital mobile learning (Harrold, 2018). While Kahoot! is a popular tool for vocabulary review, learners’ involvement is typically limited to taking teacher-created quizzes. This preliminary study explores whether the more complex task of creating Kahoot! quizzes could lead to better vocabulary learning outcomes.

Research questions: 1. What are the effects of learner-created Kahoot! quizzes on receptive vocabulary learning in an EFL reading course? 2. What are learners’ perceptions of using Kahoot! for learning vocabulary?

METHODS

Participants

Participants were 33 Japanese university EFL learners (10 male, 23 female, ages 18-19). A quiz-creating group (Group A) and a quiz-taking group (Group B) were formed from two classes of similar proficiency. A vocabulary pre-test showed no significant difference between the groups.

Procedure

This study employed a pre-test and post-test quasi-experimental design and was conducted in a 15-week reading course. Each Group A member was asked to create five multiple-choice Kahoot! quizzes covering 50 items from the Academic Word List (AWL) that learners were expected to learn in the course. Group B took one of each of the learner-created quizzes in their regular classes. Identical pre- and post-tests on the items were done by both groups. An end-of-course survey was also administered to examine learners’ perceptions of using Kahoot! to learn vocabulary.

Example question from a learner-created Kahoot! quiz showing screen and player’s view:

In Kahoots: Learning Vocabulary with Learner-created Quizzes

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RESULTS

The pre- and post-test results for both groups were analysed (t-test) and effect size was calculated (Cohen’s d). While both groups improved, only the quiz-creating group (Group A) made a significant improvement (p < .05) with a large effect size (d = 1.373). All Group A learners also increased their individual scores, except one who scored the same in both tests.

Pre-test and post-test results by group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>32.06</td>
<td>7.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Mean scores out of 50.

LEARNER PERCEPTIONS

Positives

➢ Learners, especially quiz-makers, felt the tasks helped them remember words: “Because it’s a little tough, I remember words” and “I think to make a sentence is a little difficult, but remember soon.”

➢ 73% of learners felt Kahoot! is useful for learning English: “I can learn the meaning and usage of many words by using it.”

➢ 85% of learners enjoyed making or taking Kahoot! quizzes: “I am not good at memorizing, so it is more fun and easy to memorize vocabulary” and “We have to use our brain quickly, so it was very fun.”

Issues

➢ The most common difficulties were writing questions (69%) and thinking of distractors (56%)

➢ A few quiz-creators had minor problems using the Kahoot! site such as creating a user ID

➢ Quality of quiz-taking experience is dependent on a reliable Internet connection

IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Retention Despite the promising results, as there was no full delayed post-test it is not known how much of the vocabulary knowledge was retained over time.

Involvement load or time on task? It is possible that any effects were due to differences in the quantity of time on task rather than the quality of the processing involved in the tasks.

Training in writing questions: A common difficulty for quiz-creators was writing questions and choosing distractors. Pre-task training in writing quiz questions will help prepare learners for this type of task.

Training in using digital platforms: Providing pre-task, hands-on training and ongoing support is crucial when implementing learner-centred technology-mediated tasks.

REFERENCES


