

## **BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF USING KAHOOT IN EFL**

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### **Abstract**

This paper examines the use of Kahoot in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, highlighting its potential to boost student motivation, participation, and language retention through gamified learning. While Kahoot offers real-time feedback and fosters inclusive engagement, it also presents challenges such as time pressure, superficial learning, and technological barriers. The study emphasizes the importance of balanced and purposeful implementation to maximize its educational impact.

**Keywords:** Kahoot, game-based learning, formative assessment, classroom engagement, educational technology, ESL teaching strategies.

### **Introduction**

In recent years, the integration of educational technology into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms has significantly transformed the ways teachers engage learners. Among the tools that have gained widespread popularity is Kahoot, a game-based learning platform that offers interactive quizzes, surveys, and discussions. Originally designed for general education, Kahoot has proven to be particularly effective in language learning environments, where motivation, engagement, and immediate feedback are crucial. However, while the advantages of Kahoot are well-recognized, educators also face challenges related to its pedagogical depth, sustainability, and alignment with curriculum goals. A growing area of innovation is the integration of corpus linguistics—the use of large



collections of authentic language data (corpora) to enhance the content and linguistic accuracy of Kahoot activities. This article explores the benefits and challenges of using Kahoot in EFL, while also reflecting on how corpus-based resources can improve the quality and relevance of Kahoot-based instruction (Giyosiddinovna, R. G., 2024).

The integration of Kahoot into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) pedagogy has gained significant traction as educators strive to enhance learner engagement, motivation, and classroom interaction through game-based educational platforms. Its dynamic structure, blending real-time feedback, engaging visuals, and competitive elements, renders it particularly effective for captivating language learners. Nonetheless, despite its notable educational advantages, the application of Kahoot also introduces several instructional and logistical complexities that warrant careful attention.

Kahoot introduces a gamified approach to learning that reimagines conventional teaching practices into lively, participatory experiences. Incorporating music, animations, and a point system, the tool captures learners' attention and maintains their focus. Empirical studies consistently indicate that students perceive Kahoot-based activities as enjoyable, stimulating, and refreshingly distinct from monotonous lessons, fostering voluntary involvement and diminishing resistance to academic tasks. For example, a vocabulary quiz via Kahoot can feel like a recreational activity rather than an evaluative task, increasing willingness to study and remember new terms. Multiple studies have confirmed Kahoot's role in improving classroom dynamics. For example, Wang and Tahir (2020) conducted a meta-analysis of Kahoot's effectiveness and found that over 80% of students reported increased motivation and attention during language learning sessions (Wang, A. I., Tahir, R., 2020).

Unlike traditional formats where only a few students respond, Kahoot requires input from all participants simultaneously, ensuring a more democratic learning environment. This inclusivity supports participation from reserved or less confident students who may otherwise avoid contributing. Learners with limited spoken English proficiency, for instance, can still engage through their devices, enhancing their classroom presence and self-assurance. Advanced learners can design their own Kahoot quizzes based on findings from corpora. For example, students researching the use of "make" vs. "do" can create questions reflecting real



collocations (“make a decision,” “do homework”) found in COCA or the BNC. This promotes autonomous, data-driven learning (Giyosiddinovna, R. G., 2022) Kahoot delivers prompt feedback after each response, allowing both instructors and students to gauge comprehension instantly. Teachers can analyze class-wide performance data to detect misconceptions, adjust teaching strategies, and intervene as needed. If a majority of students struggle with a grammar item, the teacher can immediately clarify the concept. Teachers can create Kahoot games focused on common learner errors, especially those revealed by learner corpora such as the International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE). Quizzes may include common L1-influenced mistakes and ask learners to identify or correct them. Learners choose the correct form, and the teacher may refer to corpus-based usage evidence to reinforce the explanation (Раджабова, Г., 2025)

The fast-paced and repetitive nature of Kahoot reinforces key language components such as vocabulary and grammar. The enjoyable context promotes repeated exposure, facilitating better recall and automaticity. Recurring Kahoot sessions on phrasal verbs can deepen students’ retention and application of the expressions.

Kahoot’s team mode supports communicative methodologies by fostering dialogue, peer explanation, and cooperative problem-solving. This aligns well with communicative language teaching (CLT) principles. Stronger students in mixed-ability groups can help clarify answers, promoting peer-assisted learning. When designing vocabulary-focused Kahoot games, teachers can use corpora to identify high-frequency words and collocations relevant to their learners’ level. For example, instead of testing isolated or rare vocabulary, instructors can consult COCA to choose words that occur frequently in spoken or academic contexts. Using COCA, teachers would see that “take responsibility” is a high-frequency collocation and thus the most appropriate correct answer (Radjabova G.G., 2023). Incorporating Kahoot encourages learners to develop essential digital literacy skills, such as navigating online tools, managing time under pressure, and functioning in virtual environments, competencies vital for global communication. Despite its appeal, using Kahoot also presents several pedagogical challenges that must be navigated to ensure it contributes meaningfully to learning.

Kahoot’s multiple-choice format may inadvertently emphasize guessing and speed over thoughtful engagement and deep understanding. Supplement gameplay with

follow-up reflective tasks or written justifications of answers. The countdown timer and competitive nature may induce stress, particularly for learners with lower language proficiency or slower processing speeds. Solution: Offer more generous time limits, disable timers when necessary, or use collaborative modes. Although competition can be energizing, it may discourage students who frequently score poorly, potentially affecting their emotional well-being and motivation. Solution: Emphasize team-based play, hide rankings, or prioritize individual improvement metrics. Effective use of Kahoot necessitates reliable internet access and digital devices. In under-resourced settings, this requirement may be difficult to meet. Solution: Facilitate group responses with shared devices or adapt Kahoot content for low-tech delivery. Designing pedagogically sound quizzes requires both time and expertise. Ineffective questions — those that are unclear or misaligned with learning goals — can reduce instructional quality. Solution: Align quiz content with course objectives, incorporate supportive visuals, and pilot test questions. If poorly integrated, Kahoot can consume valuable class time and detract from more substantive language practice activities like speaking and writing. Solution: Use Kahoot strategically as a warm-up, formative assessment, or brief review tool. Ultimately, Kahoot's educational value hinges on the intentionality behind its use. When thoughtfully integrated, it can:

- Foster learner autonomy
- Reduce communicative anxiety
- Enhance long-term retention
- Generate informative assessment data

However, if overused or misapplied, it risks:

- Encouraging rote memorization
- Marginalizing learners with access or ability challenges
- Prioritizing entertainment over substantive progress

Kahoot stands as a versatile and engaging resource for EFL educators. Its gamified design aligns well with contemporary learners' preferences, contributing to more dynamic and emotionally positive classrooms. To maximize its benefits, instructors must implement it in conjunction with reflective and traditional strategies, ensuring that engagement translates into deep, enduring language acquisition. Tailoring

Kahoot to meet specific learner needs, curricular objectives, and contextual constraints is essential for transforming enthusiasm into genuine language mastery.

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