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EXPLORING STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF BAAMBOOZLE AS AN INTERACTIVE LEARNING TOOL

Muhammad Arkan Syafiq[1*], Deasy Yunita Siregar[2]
[1, 2] English Education,Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Medan
Email Correspondence: muharkansyaf@gmail.com

Abstract

This study examined students' perceptions of Baamboozle as an interactive tool for English vocabulary learning. A qualitative case study involving interviews with nine eighth-grade students at MTs PN 4 Medan was conducted. Findings showed that Baamboozle increased engagement and motivation through gamification features such as points, teamwork, and instant feedback. Students reported improved vocabulary retention due to repetition and visual support, although it was less helpful for learning completely new words, and they sometimes faced technical issues. Overall, Baamboozle positively supported vocabulary learning but should complement other teaching methods.

Keywords: *Baamboozle, Gamification, Interactive Learning, Students' Perceptions, Vocabulary*

INTRODUCTION

The integration of technology into education has revolutionized the way students learn and teachers deliver instruction. In the context of English language learning, interactive tools and digital platforms have become essential in creating engaging, student-centered environments

(Gomathi et al., 2023). Nonetheless, there were still issues in education, mostly with regard to fair quality, improving teacher competency, and integrating technology into the classroom. There was a great chance to improve learning at all educational levels due to the rapid development of information technology. Thus, it was essential to increase learning effectiveness using creative and flexible methods (Aribuma et al., 2025).

In education, media encompassed various forms, ranging from print media and static projections to digital devices based on information technology (Sahronih et al., 2019).

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Globally, the use of gamification in language learning became increasingly popular, as educators sought to improve student motivation, participation, and retention through game-based elements. Platforms such as Kahoot!, Quizizz, and the latest, Baamboozle, were widely used to complement traditional teaching methods and make language exercises more enjoyable and effective.

The usage of interactive technology in contemporary teaching methods kept growing. It made learning more individualized and comprehensive by enabling two-way communication between the user and the content being delivered (Aribuma et al., 2025). The use of interactive technology in modern teaching grew, making learning more personalized and engaging through two-way interaction between learners and content. Gen Z, in particular, was familiar with this approach, as they had grown up with digital tools, were used to instant feedback, and preferred experiential, hands-on learning supported by dynamic multimedia (Nasyifa & Armin, 2025).

International studies highlighted the positive effects of game-based learning tools on student engagement and vocabulary acquisition in English learning. By incorporating gamification, teachers encouraged reading interest and enhanced students' reading abilities through active participation, immediate feedback, and a supportive environment that normalized mistakes (Qureshi & Khatoon, 2023).

Many gamification platforms, such as Quizizz and Wordwall, were widely used in classrooms to deliver customizable interactive quizzes. Among these, Baamboozle stood out for its user-friendly design and adaptability for teachers. Baamboozle is a web-based (https://www.baamboozle.com)/) educational game that provides a variety of interactive and interesting games. The purpose of this study was to determine students' perceptions of the effectiveness of using the Baamboozle application-based learning media in English learning (Kusyani & Adelina Ray, 2023). The platform provided a variety of engaging game modes that could be tailored to different learning objectives and classroom dynamics. Features like team-based play, collaborative problem-solving, and real-time participation fostered a supportive learning environment while reducing student anxiety (Walidaina et al., 2024). In addition, Baamboozle allowed teachers to easily create, import, and manage questions, giving them flexibility and control over lesson pacing and content organization.



Figure 1 Baamboozle Logo

The process of using Baamboozle is relatively simple, starting from account registration to selecting a game or creating a new one by adding questions, answers, and relevant visual illustrations. Baamboozle can be played in groups without requiring additional devices or accounts for students, as the game is controlled directly by the teacher via a projection screen or screen sharing feature during online learning. Various game modes, such as Classic, Quiz, Study, and Slideshow, provide flexibility in adjusting teaching strategies, whether for warm-up activities, material review, or formative evaluation.

Although existing research showed that learning aided by Baamboozle educational games improved students' cognitive learning outcomes, these studies generally explored specific aspects of students (Anjani et al., 2025). However, there was still a significant lack of research exploring students' perceptions of Baamboozle as an interactive learning tool.

Teachers were active educational agents as well as tool users, thus their reflections were essential. In practice, they dealt with problems including inadequate infrastructure, technical difficulties, and striking a balance between academic rigor and enjoyment. The use of gamified media, such as Blooket, could become superficial or unsustainable if teachers' opinions were not taken into account (Nasyifa & Armin, 2025).

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore students' perceptions of using Baamboozle as an interactive tool for learning English, with a focus on the perceptions benefits and its impact on learning motivation and engagement. This study aimed to provide valuable insights for English educators who wished to effectively integrate technology into their classrooms.

The novelty of this study lay in its focused examination of Baamboozle in the context of English language learning, an area that had received minimal academic attention. By centering student voices, this research contributed original findings to the field of digital language education and supported more informed pedagogical choices.

This study aims to explore students' perceptions of Baamboozle as an interactive English learning tool in junior high schools in relation to the use of the Blooket application. This study focuses on the following aspects: How do students perceive the use of Baamboozle as an interactive learning tool in English classes?

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design with a case study approach to explore students' perceptions of learning English using Baamboozle as a digital interactive learning tool. The study focuses on how students perceive the use of the Baamboozle application as an interactive learning medium in English language learning. A case study approach was considered suitable because it allows researchers to investigate a phenomenon in depth within its real-life context, particularly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly defined (Craswell, 2014). This approach was deemed appropriate to obtain a holistic understanding of how students perceived the use of Baamboozle in English learning.

The participants in this study were eighth-grade students at MTs PN 4 Medan junior high school. There were 28 students in the class, and a sample of nine students was selected using purposive sampling, as these students had prior experience with the Baamboozle application. Purposive sampling was chosen because it enables the researcher to deliberately select participants who have specific knowledge and experience relevant to the research focus (Sugiyono, 2019).

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, which allowed the researcher to follow a set of guiding questions while also providing the flexibility to probe deeper into students' responses. This method was considered effective for obtaining detailed insights into participants' perceptions (Craswell, 2014). The interviews were conducted face-to-face at the school, each lasting approximately 15–20 minutes. To facilitate student expression, the interviews were carried out in Indonesian, and the researcher used both audio recording and note-taking to ensure data accuracy.

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which involved identifying recurring themes such as vocabulary acquisition, learning motivation, usability, and technical challenges (Rahman, 2022). To enhance the credibility of the findings,

triangulation was applied by comparing interview data with classroom observations, and member checking was conducted by asking participants to verify the accuracy of the researcher's summaries of their responses.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This study employed a qualitative case study design to explore eighth-grade students' perceptions of using Baamboozle as a digital interactive tool in English learning at MTs PN 4 Medan. A case study approach was chosen because it allows a detailed investigation of students' real experiences using Baamboozle as an interactive learning medium, providing a holistic understanding of the phenomenon in its actual context (Creswell, 2014). A purposive sample of nine students was selected from a class of 28, as these students had prior experience using Baamboozle, making them relevant sources of data (Sugiyono, 2019).

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, using guiding questions related to relevance, motivation, and vocabulary development. Interviews were conducted face-to-face in Indonesian to help students express their thoughts clearly, lasting approximately 15–20 minutes and recorded through audio and notes for accuracy. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns such as vocabulary acquisition, motivation, usability, and technical issues (Rahman, 2022). Credibility was ensured through triangulation using classroom observations and member checking by confirming summaries with participants.

Table 1. Students' Perceptions of Baamboozle in English Learning

Student Code	Baamboozle Relevance	Student Motivation	Vocabulary Acquisition
S1	Considered relevant because it makes learning more engaging and reduces	Motivation increased due to point system and teamwork	Reported improvement through frequent exposure to vocabulary
S2	Relevant as it aligns with students' familiarity with technology	Increased enthusiasm as learning resembles a game	Improved retention through repetition
S3	Relevant because app-based learning is viewed as more suitable than traditional listening-based methods	Maintained motivation despite technical issues	Enhanced recall of previously learned vocabulary, limited acquisition of new terms
S4	Highly relevant as it supports modern technology-based learning	Demonstrated stronger willingness to participate	Frequent game exposure facilitated recognition of new vocabulary

S5	Relevant since it allows more attractive delivery of lesson material	Motivation improved due to competitive classroom atmosphere	Vocabulary developed through use of interactive flashcards
S6	Relevant and user-friendly for collaborative learning	Active participation increased through group engagement	Gradual progress in vocabulary knowledge
S7	Relevant because it makes lessons more enjoyable	Increased confidence in responding to questions despite errors	Vocabulary retention improved compared to memorization-based learning
S8	Relevant due to flexible implementation in classroom activities	Enthusiasm increased through points and team-based challenges	Marked improvement in vocabulary acquisition
S9	Relevant as it maintains students' alertness and prevents disengagement.	Motivation remained stable although activity was still appreciated	Reinforced existing vocabulary but limited introduction of new words

The Relevance of Using Baamboozle in Learning

All students stated that Baamboozle is relevant for use in English language learning. They consider this application to be in line with the habits of their generation, which is accustomed to digital technology. S3 said, "I think it's relevant because learning now is more suitable using applications than just listening to the teacher." Another student added that Baamboozle makes lessons more interesting, as S9 said, "When we use Baamboozle, we become more excited, so we don't get sleepy in class." (see Figure 2).

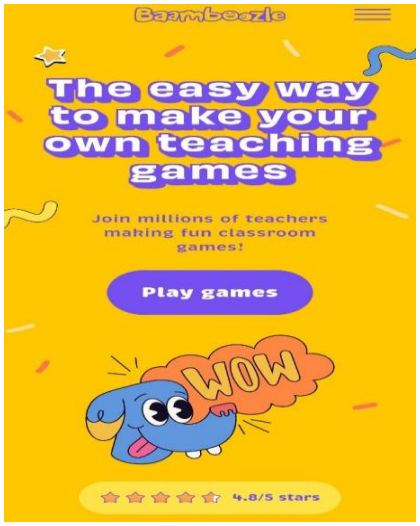


Figure 2 Baamboozle Interface Displaying Vocabulary Task.

Figure 2 shows the Baamboozle interface, which provides vocabulary exercises through its in-game features, quizzes, and collaborative games. These interactive features transform routine exercises into enjoyable activities, keeping students engaged and active

throughout the lesson. Gamification elements—such as points, teamwork, and instant feedback—not only motivate students to participate with greater confidence but also create a supportive and competitive atmosphere. Through repeated exposure to words in various formats, Baamboozle strengthens vocabulary retention and helps learners internalize new terms effectively, demonstrating how the platform combines fun and learning in one space.

The Impact of Baamboozle on Learning Motivation

Eight out of nine students admitted to being more motivated after using Baamboozle. The most frequently mentioned factors were the points system and team games. S8 said, "When there is a points system and team games, I feel more excited to answer questions." S7 also said, "Playing games makes learning feel easier, so I am more confident to answer questions even if I get them wrong." Only one student felt that their motivation did not change much, even though they still enjoyed the learning activities. (see Figure 3).



Figure 3 Gamification Feature Showing Point System And Grammar Task

The singular and plural game element of Baamboozle, which asks students to change nouns into their proper forms, is seen in Figure 3. This element makes the game both interesting and educational by encouraging students to actively apply grammar principles while earning points. Through word transformation exercises, the game promotes a deeper comprehension of English grammar structures in addition to vocabulary growth.

The activity's combination of interactive games and text prompts further demonstrates a multimodal learning method. Long-term retention is strengthened by this method's

repeated exposure to the same linguistic forms in various settings. Throughout the game, players receive instant feedback as they alternate between singular and plural words, which strengthens their understanding. As a result, Baamboozle gives students an engaging and entertaining method to absorb grammar and vocabulary at the same time.

Vocabulary Acquisition

Most students (seven out of nine) stated that their vocabulary improved after using Baamboozle. S4 said, "If you play often, new words will quickly stick in your head." S7 added, "It's easier for me to remember the meanings of words because they often appear in questions." The other two students said that their vocabulary improvement was not very significant, but the app helped them remember words they had learned before. S2 said, "There aren't many new words, but I remember words that I used to forget."



Figure 4 Visual-Aided Vocabulary Activity In Baamboozle.

The interactive functionality shown in Figure 4 is an example of its use. The target word is displayed alongside an image of an automobile in this figure, which demonstrates how Baamboozle provides vocabulary items with visual accompaniment. When paired with instant feedback alternatives like "Oops!" or "Okay!" these visual cues motivate students to actively engage in word recognition and recall. In addition to strengthening word recognition, these interactive components foster a playful environment that boosts student interest and lowers anxiety.

But not every user experience was completely favorable. During the activity, a number of students reported experiencing technical difficulties, especially when utilizing devices with poor performance or when the internet connection was erratic. "Even though I know the word, sometimes the game freezes, so I cannot answer quickly," one player said. "I was confused the first time I used Baamboozle because I didn't know how the game rules worked," said another pupil. These problems show that although Baamboozle works well to improve motivation and vocabulary learning, its effectiveness is dependent on dependable infrastructure and unambiguous user instructions.

Furthermore, several students recommended that the platform be enhanced with additional elements, like group discussions or integrated peer feedback, that promote collaborative learning outside of the quiz format. This suggests that students still see room for Baamboozle to grow into a more complete digital learning tool, even though it now offers an engaging learning environment.

Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the effectiveness of Baamboozle as an interactive learning medium in English language classrooms, particularly in enhancing students' motivation, engagement, and vocabulary acquisition. Students consistently perceived the platform as relevant because it aligns with their digital habits and provides a more dynamic alternative to conventional learning methods. This supports the argument of Qureshi and Khatoon (2023), who emphasized that gamification tools stimulate learner interest and foster active participation through enjoyable learning experiences. The sense of relevance expressed by the participants also reflects broader trends in education, where technology integration is becoming increasingly essential for engaging Generation Z learners who are accustomed to interactive and multimedia-driven environments (Nasyifa & Armin, 2025).

In terms of learning motivation, the majority of students reported increased enthusiasm when using Baamboozle, largely due to its gamification features such as point systems, team competition, and instant feedback. These findings resonate with Walidaina et al. (2024), who found that Baamboozle effectively elevates student motivation through competitive yet collaborative classroom dynamics. Although one participant reported minimal change in motivation, this variation indicates that individual differences and learning preferences play a role in determining the impact of gamification-based media.

Thus, while Baamboozle may not universally enhance motivation, it provides a supportive framework that encourages participation and reduces classroom monotony for most learners.

Vocabulary acquisition was another notable outcome, with students highlighting the role of interactive flashcards, repeated exposure, and visual reinforcement in helping them remember new words. These results align with Gomathi et al. (2023), who concluded that digital platforms strengthen vocabulary retention by combining multimodal input such as images, text, and interactive responses. However, some students noted that the platform served more to reinforce previously learned vocabulary rather than introducing entirely new terms. This suggests that Baamboozle is particularly effective for vocabulary consolidation and incremental growth rather than as a primary source of novel lexical input.

Despite its advantages, the study also identified several challenges, including technical difficulties such as unstable internet connections and initial confusion regarding game rules. These limitations are consistent with the broader obstacles faced in implementing educational technology, where infrastructure and user readiness significantly influence success (Aribuma et al., 2025). Furthermore, some students recommended integrating more collaborative features, such as peer discussion and feedback mechanisms, to enhance the depth of interaction beyond the quiz format. This observation implies that while Baamboozle effectively engages students at the level of participation and recall, further development is needed to promote higher-order thinking skills and deeper learning.

Overall, the discussion indicates that Baamboozle contributes positively to English learning by merging entertainment and pedagogy. Its effectiveness, however, depends on appropriate implementation, adequate technical support, and alignment with pedagogical goals. The results of this study extend the findings of previous research by providing a nuanced understanding of student perceptions, showing that while Baamboozle increases engagement and vocabulary retention, its role is best understood as complementary to other instructional strategies rather than as a stand-alone solution.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that students perceive Baamboozle as a relevant and engaging learning tool, particularly in enhancing motivation and consolidating vocabulary.

Gamification features encourage participation and create a positive classroom atmosphere. However, technical challenges and limited exposure to new vocabulary indicate that Baamboozle should be supplemented with other instructional strategies. Future research is recommended to examine long-term effects and explore teacher perspectives to optimize the integration of Baamboozle in language classrooms.

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