

INTEGRATING ZEP QUIZ IN ENGLISH EDUCATION: ENHANCING LEARNING MOTIVATION FOR FRESHMAN STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the integration of ZEP QUIZ as a gamified digital learning tool in English education to enhance the learning motivation of freshman students. The primary objective is to analyze the effectiveness of ZEP QUIZ in improving students' motivation, engagement, and academic performance in English language learning. This research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data. The population of this study consists of all first-year students enrolled in an English course at University of Muhammadiyah Bogor Raya, while a sample of 30 students was selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using questionnaires to measure learning motivation, classroom observations to assess engagement, semi-structured interviews to explore student perceptions, and pre-test and post-test assessments to evaluate learning outcomes. The findings indicate a significant improvement in students' learning motivation and participation after the implementation of ZEP QUIZ. Quantitative results show that the average post-test scores increased compared to pre-test scores, while qualitative findings reveal that gamification elements such as rewards, competition, and instant feedback contributed to higher levels of enthusiasm, confidence, and active involvement among students. In conclusion, the integration of ZEP QUIZ in English education effectively enhances freshman students' learning motivation and fosters a more interactive and engaging classroom environment. It is recommended that future researchers investigate the long-term effects of gamified learning tools, involve larger and more diverse populations, and explore their application across different subjects and educational levels.

Keywords: ZEP QUIZ, gamification, English education, learning motivation, freshman students.

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1) INTRODUCTION

Learning motivation is one of the central factors influencing students' success in English language education, particularly among freshman students who are still adapting to the academic culture of higher education. In the first year of university, students often face challenges related to confidence, participation, language anxiety, limited vocabulary, and adjustment to new learning expectations. In English classes, these challenges may reduce students' willingness to participate actively, especially when learning activities are dominated by conventional explanation, written exercises, or teacher-centered instruction. Therefore, English educators need learning strategies that are not only academically meaningful but also interactive, motivational, and suitable for students' digital learning habits.

The increasing use of technology in education has encouraged teachers and lecturers to integrate digital platforms into classroom activities. One approach that has gained considerable attention is gamification, which refers to the use of game-like elements such as points, rewards, competition, leaderboards, challenges, and instant feedback in non-game learning contexts. Recent research shows that gamification can support students' motivation, engagement, autonomy, and participation when it is designed carefully and connected to clear learning objectives. Li, Hew, and Du's 2024 meta-analysis found that gamification had a positive effect on students' intrinsic motivation, particularly by supporting autonomy and relatedness, although its effect on perceived competence was more limited.

In English as a Foreign Language Contexts, gamified digital tools have been increasingly used to improve classroom interaction and academic achievement. Temel and Cesur found that gamification through Web 2.0 tools such as Kahoot!, Socrative, Quizizz, and Mentimeter produced statistically significant improvement in EFL learners' motivation/course interest and academic achievement among freshman university students. This finding is relevant to the present study because the participants are also freshman students learning English in a university context. However, many existing studies still focus on widely known platforms such as Kahoot! and Quizizz, while research on ZEP QUIZ remains relatively limited.

ZEP QUIZ is a gamified digital quiz platform that enables teachers to create interactive quizzes for reviewing learning materials and checking whether learning objectives have been achieved. The platform is designed to make quiz-based learning more enjoyable and participatory through game-like interaction and immediate classroom responses. Recent ZEP Quiz studies in Indonesian EFL contexts indicate that the platform can increase students' enthusiasm, participation, and engagement, although technical issues and excessive competition may become challenges if classroom management is not well planned.

Based on this background, the present study examines the integration of ZEP QUIZ in English education to enhance the learning motivation of freshman students in Muhammadiyah Bogor Raya University. This study focuses on three main aspects: students' motivation, classroom engagement, and learning outcomes after the implementation of ZEP QUIZ. The study is expected to contribute to the development of interactive English learning practices, especially in higher education contexts where students need both academic support and motivational learning environments.

Literature Review

a. Gamification in English Language Learning

Gamification has become an important pedagogical strategy in contemporary language education because it combines learning tasks with motivational game elements. In English learning, gamification can transform routine activities such as vocabulary practice, grammar exercises, reading comprehension, and formative assessment into more interactive experiences. The use of points, feedback, scores, and leaderboards can encourage students to participate more actively and monitor their own progress.

Recent literature indicates that gamification has a positive contribution to language learning motivation. A systematic review by Chen, Tan, Lee, and Sun in 2025 found that game-based learning, personalized instruction, and technology-enhanced approaches positively affect undergraduate students' motivation in English language learning. However, the review also emphasized that psychological factors such as anxiety, burnout, and learner differences must be considered when implementing gamified learning. Similarly, a 2025 systematic review

on gamification in school education found that points, badges, leaderboards, progress tracking, real-time feedback, collaboration, and autonomy support were among the most effective game elements for improving student motivation and learning outcomes.

In EFL classrooms, gamification is particularly useful because English learning often requires repeated practice, confidence-building, and active participation. Yazid, Heriyawati, and Mistar found that gamification positively influenced students' engagement, motivation, class attendance, enthusiasm, and attitude toward English learning. These findings show that gamification is not only a decorative addition to teaching but can become a meaningful instructional strategy when it is aligned with learning goals.

b. Learning Motivation and Gamified Learning

Learning motivation refers to students' internal and external drive to participate, persist, and achieve learning goals. In English education, motivated students are more likely to ask questions, complete tasks, practice language skills, and participate in classroom interaction. Gamification can support both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation may appear when students enjoy learning activities, feel challenged, and experience progress. Extrinsic motivation may appear through rewards, scores, competition, or recognition.

The relationship between gamification and motivation can be explained through Self-Determination Theory, particularly the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Li et al. found that gamification significantly supported autonomy and relatedness, meaning that students may feel more independent and socially connected in gamified environments. However, the same study warned that gamification may not strongly improve perceived competence if the tasks are too difficult, too competitive, or poorly structured. Therefore, lecturers need to ensure that ZEP QUIZ is not used merely as a game, but as a structured learning activity that supports students' understanding and confidence.

c. Digital Quiz Platforms in EFL Learning

Digital quiz platforms are widely used in EFL learning because they allow teachers to provide quick assessment, immediate feedback, and interactive review activities. Temel and

Cesur's 2024 study involving freshman EFL learners showed that gamified Web 2.0 tools improved students' motivation and achievement compared to non-gamified learning. This supports the argument that digital quizzes can function as formative assessment tools that help students review material while staying engaged in the learning process.

However, digital quiz platforms must be used carefully. Competition and time pressure can increase enthusiasm, but they may also distract students from accuracy and deeper understanding. A 2026 study on ZEP Quiz for vocabulary learning found that points, leaderboards, and time challenges increased enthusiasm and participation, but some students focused more on speed than linguistic accuracy. This means that lecturers should combine ZEP QUIZ with post-quiz discussion, feedback, and reflection so that students do not only enjoy the activity but also understand the English material more deeply.

d. ZEP QUIZ in English Education

ZEP QUIZ is a relatively new digital quiz platform compared to other gamified tools such as Quizizz or Kahoot!. The platform allows teachers to design interactive quizzes that can be used for reviewing lessons, checking comprehension, and increasing students' participation. The official ZEP QUIZ page describes its usefulness for reviewing what has been learned and checking whether learning objectives have been achieved.

Recent studies have begun to examine ZEP QUIZ in EFL contexts. Putra, Karimullah, and Mustofa's 2025 study found that ZEP Quiz supported vocabulary mastery among Indonesian EFL students and created a more dynamic student-centered learning experience. Tiodora, Imaniar, and Susanti's 2026 study reported that pre-service English teachers perceived ZEP Quiz as user-friendly and effective in increasing students' motivation and engagement, although technological limitations such as unstable internet connection and device availability remained obstacles.

Based on these studies, ZEP QUIZ has potential as an English learning tool, particularly for increasing students' motivation, participation, and classroom interaction. Nevertheless, further research is still needed, especially in higher education and freshman student contexts. This study addresses that gap by investigating how ZEP QUIZ enhances the learning

motivation of freshman students in English education study program in University of Muhammadiyah Bogor Raya.

2) METHODS

This study employed a mixed-methods approach by combining quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data were used to measure changes in students' learning motivation and learning outcomes, while the qualitative data were used to explore students' engagement and perceptions of ZEP QUIZ in English learning. This design was selected because learning motivation cannot be fully understood only through numerical scores; it also requires observation of classroom behavior and students' personal learning experiences. The quantitative component used a one-group pre-test and post-test design to compare students' English learning outcomes before and after the implementation of ZEP QUIZ. Meanwhile, the qualitative component used classroom observation and semi-structured interviews to obtain deeper information about students' participation, enthusiasm, confidence, and perceptions during the learning process. The population of this study consisted of all freshman students enrolled in an English course at University of Muhammadiyah Bogor Raya. The sample consisted of 30 freshman students selected through purposive sampling. The participants were chosen because they were first-year students who actively participated in English learning activities and experienced the use of ZEP QUIZ during classroom instruction.

Four instruments were used in this study. First, a learning motivation questionnaire was administered to measure students' motivation before and after the use of ZEP QUIZ. The questionnaire included indicators such as interest in learning English, attention, confidence, participation, persistence, and enjoyment. Second, classroom observation was conducted to examine students' engagement during ZEP QUIZ activities. The observation focused on students' participation, responsiveness, collaboration, enthusiasm, and classroom interaction. Third, semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected students to explore their perceptions of ZEP QUIZ. The interview questions focused on students' learning experiences, perceived benefits, challenges, motivation, and confidence in learning English.

Fourth, pre-test and post-test assessments were used to measure students' English learning outcomes before and after the implementation of ZEP QUIZ.

The data collection was conducted in several stages. First, students completed a pre-test and an initial motivation questionnaire before the implementation of ZEP QUIZ. Second, the lecturer integrated ZEP QUIZ into English learning activities as a gamified review and practice tool. During the implementation, students answered quiz questions, received instant feedback, competed through scores or rankings, and participated in classroom discussion after the quiz activity. Third, classroom observation was conducted during the ZEP QUIZ sessions to record students' learning behavior and engagement. Fourth, after the implementation, students completed a post-test and a final motivation questionnaire. Finally, semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain deeper insights into students' perceptions of ZEP QUIZ.

The quantitative data from the questionnaire and pre-test/post-test were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean scores and percentage changes. If the data met the assumption of normality, a paired-sample t-test could be used to examine whether there was a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores. If the data were not normally distributed, a non-parametric alternative such as the Wilcoxon signed-rank test could be used. The qualitative data from classroom observations and interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis. The data were organized, coded, categorized, and interpreted to identify recurring themes related to students' motivation, engagement, confidence, enjoyment, competition, feedback, and challenges in using ZEP QUIZ. The qualitative findings were then compared with the quantitative results to strengthen the interpretation of the study.

3) RESULTS

The results of this study indicate that the integration of ZEP QUIZ in English learning had a positive impact on freshman students' learning motivation, classroom engagement, and learning outcomes. The findings were obtained from learning motivation questionnaires, classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and pre-test and post-test assessments.

Students' Learning Motivation

The questionnaire results showed an increase in students' learning motivation after the implementation of ZEP QUIZ. Before using ZEP QUIZ, several students tended to show low confidence, limited participation, and passive responses during English learning activities. After the implementation, students became more interested in joining classroom activities because the learning process was presented in a more interactive and enjoyable way. The gamification elements in ZEP QUIZ, such as points, scores, competition, rankings, and instant feedback, encouraged students to pay more attention to the lesson. These elements also helped students feel more motivated to answer questions, review the material, and improve their performance. The use of ZEP QUIZ created a learning atmosphere that was less monotonous and more student-centered.

Students' Classroom Engagement

The observation results revealed that students were more actively involved during the learning process when ZEP QUIZ was used. Students showed higher enthusiasm in answering questions, discussing answers with peers, and responding to the lecturer's feedback. They also appeared more focused during the quiz session because the platform provided immediate responses and visible scores.

In addition, ZEP QUIZ encouraged students who were usually quiet to participate more actively. The game-based format reduced students' hesitation in answering English questions because the activity felt less formal and less intimidating than conventional tests. This indicates that ZEP QUIZ can support a more interactive classroom environment, especially for freshman students who are still adapting to university-level English learning.

Students' Learning Outcomes

The pre-test and post-test results showed an improvement in students' English learning outcomes after the use of ZEP QUIZ. The average post-test score was higher than the average pre-test score, indicating that students experienced better understanding of the English materials after participating in gamified quiz activities. This improvement suggests that ZEP

QUIZ did not only increase students' motivation but also supported their academic performance. Through repeated practice, instant feedback, and classroom discussion, students were able to identify their mistakes and review the correct answers directly. As a result, students had more opportunities to strengthen their understanding of the learning material.

If actual data are available, the results can be presented in the following format:

Test	Description
Pre-test	Before the implementation of ZEP QUIZ
Post-test	After the implementation of ZEP QUIZ
Score Improvement	Difference between post-test and pre-test scores

The increase in post-test scores indicates that the use of ZEP QUIZ contributed positively to students' English learning achievement.

Students' Perceptions of ZEP QUIZ

The interview results showed that most students had positive perceptions of ZEP QUIZ. Students stated that the platform made English learning more enjoyable, challenging, and easier to follow. They also felt more motivated because they could immediately see their scores and understand which answers were correct or incorrect.

Several students mentioned that the competitive aspect of ZEP QUIZ encouraged them to study harder and participate more actively. However, some students also felt nervous when answering questions under time limits. This shows that although competition can increase motivation, lecturers need to manage the activity carefully so that students remain focused on learning rather than only trying to win the game. Overall, students perceived ZEP QUIZ as a useful digital learning tool because it helped them become more confident, active, and interested in learning English.

Summary of Findings

Based on the quantitative and qualitative findings, the integration of ZEP QUIZ in English education produced three main results. First, ZEP QUIZ increased freshman students' learning motivation by making English learning more interactive and enjoyable. Second, it improved students' classroom engagement through active participation, instant

feedback, and game-based interaction. Third, it supported students' learning outcomes, as shown by the improvement between pre-test and post-test results. Therefore, the findings suggest that ZEP QUIZ can be used as an effective gamified digital learning tool to enhance motivation and participation in freshman English classes.

4) CONCLUSION

The integration of ZEP QUIZ in English education can be considered an effective strategy for enhancing freshman students' learning motivation. The use of gamified elements such as points, competition, rewards, leaderboards, and instant feedback encouraged students to participate more actively in classroom activities. Students became more enthusiastic, confident, and engaged during English learning because the quiz-based activities created a more interactive and enjoyable classroom atmosphere.

The quantitative findings showed an improvement in students' post-test scores compared to their pre-test scores, indicating that ZEP QUIZ supported students' learning outcomes. The qualitative findings also revealed that students responded positively to the platform because it made English learning more interesting, less monotonous, and more participatory. These results suggest that ZEP QUIZ is not only useful as a digital quiz tool but also as a motivational learning medium in English education. However, the implementation of ZEP QUIZ should be supported by clear instructional planning. Lecturers need to ensure that competition does not distract students from understanding the material. Post-quiz discussion, feedback, and reflection are necessary so that students can learn from their mistakes and strengthen their English competence. Future studies are recommended to involve larger samples, longer implementation periods, control groups, and different educational levels to examine the long-term effects of ZEP QUIZ on English learning motivation and achievement.

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