Using Momo English Game To Increase Students' Motivation In English Language Learning

Hapzah [1], Buhari [2], Isumanri [3], Nur Hikmah [4]
[1234] Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidenreng Rappang
Email : hapzahhapzah@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This *study aimed to determine whether the Momo English Game can increase students' motivation in learning English and explore their perceptions of its use. A quantitative method with a pre-experimental design was applied, involving 15 seventh-grade students at SMPN 2 Suli selected purposively. Data were collected using a motivation questionnaire based on a four-point Likert scale and student interviews.*

The results showed an increase in students' motivation, with average scores improving from 2.78 (pre-test) to 3.51 (post-test). Interview findings revealed that students had positive perceptions, stating that the game made learning more enjoyable and helped them understand vocabulary more easily. It is concluded that Momo English Game positively influences both students' motivation and perception in English learning.

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INTRODUCTION

English language learning holds a pivotal role in education, particularly in the globalization era, where proficiency in English is essential for accessing broader opportunities in education, employment, and cross-cultural communication. In Indonesia, English is a compulsory subject in both junior and senior secondary schools. However, many students, especially in rural areas, face challenges in mastering the language due to low motivation, limited exposure, and insufficient access to engaging learning resources. Such conditions often result in students perceiving English as a difficult and irrelevant subject, ultimately affecting their participation and performance in the classroom.Motivation is a critical factor that influences students' engagement, perseverance, and achievement in learning. According to Guilford, motivation acts as an internal drive that energizes and sustains learning behavior. Students with high motivation are generally more active, enthusiastic, and persistent in learning, whereas those with low motivation struggle to grasp the material and tend to participate less. This is particularly true in rural schools, such as SMPN 2 Suli, where traditional teacher-centered methods dominate and fail to fully engage students in the learning process.

The geographic and socio-cultural context of SMPN 2 Suli presents unique challenges. Located in a rural area of Luwu Regency, the school has limited access to modern educational technology and minimal real-life exposure to English. Students' daily interactions are predominantly in local languages, making English feel foreign and difficult to apply. Initial observations revealed that many students showed low enthusiasm and high anxiety toward English tasks, further indicating the need for innovative teaching methods that can stimulate interest and motivation.In response to these challenges, integrating interactive and game-based learning approaches has emerged as a promising solution. Educational games provide an enjoyable, engaging, and interactive environment that can transform learning from a monotonous task into an exciting experience. Among the various educational games available, the Momo English Game stands out as an effective medium for learning vocabulary, grammar, and communication skills in a relaxed and playful context. By combining game elements such as points, levels, and immediate feedback, Momo English Game allows students to learn without the pressure of traditional assessments.

The use of Momo English Game is still relatively uncommon in rural schools like SMPN 2 Suli. Therefore, this study seeks to explore its effectiveness in enhancing students' motivation in learning English. By incorporating interactive features and visual appeal, the game has the potential to increase students' intrinsic motivation—such as enjoyment, personal satisfaction, and curiosity—as well as extrinsic motivation, including recognition, competition, and tangible rewards. This dual impact may create a more engaging and supportive classroom environment for language learning.

This research is conducted with seventh-grade students at SMPN 2 Suli, focusing on their motivation levels before and after the implementation of Momo English Game. The study also investigates students' perceptions of using the game in English learning. Understanding these perceptions is important for determining whether game-based learning can be integrated sustainably into the school's curriculum and teaching practices.Theoretically, the findings of this study are expected to contribute to the growing body of literature on the role of educational games in language learning motivation, particularly in rural contexts with limited access to technological resources. Practically, the results can serve as a reference for teachers, schools, and policymakers in designing more innovative, student-centered teaching strategies. Furthermore, the insights gained may inspire future research on game-based learning in various educational settings. this research does not only aim to determine whether Momo English Game

can improve students' motivation but also aspires to demonstrate that interactive, enjoyable, and contextually relevant learning media can help rural students broaden their horizons, develop essential language skills, and prepare for future opportunities in an increasingly interconnected world.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of motivation in learning has been widely discussed in educational research, as it plays a central role in determining students' engagement and success. According to Ryan and Deci (2000), motivation refers to the internal and external factors that stimulate learners to initiate, sustain, and persist in learning activities. Motivation can be categorized into intrinsic motivation, which comes from within the learner, and extrinsic motivation, which is driven by external rewards or pressures. In the context of English language learning, intrinsic motivation may be sparked by an interest in mastering a foreign language, while extrinsic motivation may be influenced by grades, recognition, or career goals.

Intrinsic motivation is characterized by learners' genuine interest, enjoyment, and satisfaction in the learning process. Students who are intrinsically motivated tend to engage actively, set personal learning goals, and persist through challenges. Lunenburg (2011) emphasizes that intrinsic motivation enhances students' willingness to participate and boosts their confidence in learning. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is influenced by external incentives such as praise, competition, or tangible rewards. Both forms of motivation are essential, and effective teaching should address and integrate them to optimize learning outcomes.

Factors affecting students' motivation in learning English can be both internal and external. Purwanto (2017) classifies internal factors into self-confidence, interest, and prior ability, while external factors include teacher support, teaching methods, parental encouragement, and the learning environment. In rural schools like SMPN 2 Suli, external challenges such as limited access to technology and minimal exposure to English outside the classroom can significantly hinder students' motivation. Therefore, integrating creative and interactive teaching methods becomes crucial in overcoming these barriers.

Game-based learning has emerged as one of the effective strategies to foster motivation in language learning. Prensky (2001) argues that educational games blend entertainment with instruction, creating a positive and engaging learning atmosphere. Games can reduce learning anxiety, encourage active participation, and provide immediate feedback, which helps learners monitor and improve their performance. Furthermore, Gee (2003) points out that games create authentic learning contexts that simulate real-life language use, thereby enhancing comprehension and retention.

The Momo English Game is an educational application designed to support English learning through interactive activities such as vocabulary matching, quizzes, and grammar exercises. Its features—levels, scoring systems, and instant feedback—are intended to sustain learners' motivation by providing both challenges and rewards. Sari and Jannah (2023) found that Momo English Game significantly improved students' vocabulary acquisition and motivation by making learning enjoyable and accessible. The game's structure encourages repetition and practice without the monotony of traditional drills, which is particularly beneficial for students in early stages of language learning.

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Several studies have highlighted the positive effects of educational games on motivation. Widyanti and Sugiyanto (2023) reported that game-based learning enhanced junior high school students' speaking and listening skills while fostering a more relaxed classroom environment. Similarly, Andriani and Pramudito (2022) observed that digital games promoted collaboration, problem-solving, and creativity, while reducing boredom in the classroom. These findings support the idea that educational games are not only effective in language skill development but also in maintaining student motivation over time.

In rural educational contexts, the application of educational games presents both opportunities and challenges. Limited technological resources may restrict the frequency and accessibility of such tools. However, studies in rural South Sulawesi have shown that even with minimal infrastructure, simple application-based games can significantly boost students' interest in learning. This suggests that Momo English Game can serve as a practical and effective alternative for rural schools seeking to innovate their teaching practices without requiring extensive resources. motivation is a critical determinant of students' success in learning English, and game-based learning offers a promising approach to enhancing it. Momo English Game, with its interactive and engaging design, has the potential to address both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational needs. By fostering a more dynamic and enjoyable learning environment, it can help students, particularly in rural areas, overcome barriers to language acquisition and develop a more positive attitude toward English learning.

METHOD

This research employed a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental design to investigate the effect of using Momo English Game on students' motivation in learning English. The pre-experimental method was chosen because it allows the researcher to measure changes in a specific variable before and after treatment without involving a control group. The design implemented was the one-group pre-test and post-test model, in which students' motivation levels were measured prior to and following the intervention. This approach was deemed appropriate to assess the direct impact of game-based learning media on students' motivation within a relatively short time frame.

The study was conducted at SMPN 2 Suli, located in Luwu Regency, South Sulawesi. The population consisted of 156 students, and the sample comprised 15 seventh-grade students selected through purposive sampling. This sampling technique was chosen based on specific considerations, such as students' readiness to participate and their relatively uniform English proficiency level. Seventh-grade students were considered suitable participants because they are in the early stages of adapting to secondary school learning environments and have not yet been burdened by national examination requirements.

Data collection involved three primary instruments: a motivation questionnaire, structured interviews, and a vocabulary test embedded within the Momo English Game. The motivation questionnaire was adapted from established scales and consisted of ten statements rated on a four-point Likert scale, designed to measure both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Structured interviews were conducted with selected students after the treatment to gather in-depth insights into their perceptions and experiences. The vocabulary test, integrated into the Momo English Game, was used as part of the learning activity to engage students and reinforce target language items.

The procedure for data collection consisted of four main stages. First, a pre-test questionnaire was administered to assess the baseline motivation of the students. Second, the treatment phase was conducted in which students participated in learning sessions using the Momo English Game, focusing on vocabulary matching and related exercises. Third, structured interviews were carried out with several participants to explore qualitative aspects of their learning experience. Finally, a post-test questionnaire, identical to the pre-test, was given to evaluate any changes in motivation after the treatment.

Data analysis involved both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative data from the pre-test and post-test questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics to calculate mean scores, percentages, and standard deviations. Comparisons between pre-test and post-test results were made to determine the extent of improvement in students' motivation. The qualitative data from interviews were analyzed through thematic analysis, following the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing as outlined by Miles and Huberman (1984).

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the research process. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the school administration, and students were informed about the research objectives and procedures. Participation was voluntary, and students were assured that their responses would remain confidential. By combining quantitative measurement with qualitative insights, this research aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of Momo English Game on students' motivation in learning English.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study are based on the analysis of students' motivation before and after the implementation of the Momo English Game. Motivation was measured using a ten-item questionnaire covering both intrinsic and extrinsic aspects, rated on a four-point Likert scale. The results indicate a notable increase in students' motivation following the treatment.Before the intervention, the majority of students were categorized in the "High" motivation range, with a mean pre-test score of 2.78. Only a small portion of students reached the "Very High" category. After the use of Momo English Game, the mean post-test score rose to 3.51, with 80% of the participants classified as having "Very High" motivation. This demonstrates that the game-based learning approach positively impacted students' enthusiasm and engagement.

In terms of intrinsic motivation, students reported increased enjoyment and satisfaction when learning English. Post-test responses showed higher agreement with statements such as "I feel happy when learning English" and "I always try to understand English material even though it is difficult." Students also indicated a stronger sense of confidence and achievement when using the game.For extrinsic motivation, there was a significant increase in responses to items such as "I am more excited to learn English when using interesting learning media" and "I feel motivated to keep learning English every day." The scoring system and competitive features of the game appeared to encourage students to participate actively and strive for better results.

The classification of students' motivation levels before and after the intervention is presented in Table 1. The table shows a shift from predominantly "High" motivation levels

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in the pre-test to predominantly "Very High" levels in the post-test. No students were categorized in the "Low" or "Very Low" ranges after the treatment.

Table 1. Classification of Students' Motivation Levels

Category	Pre-Test Frequency (%)	Post-Test Frequency (%)
Very High	5 (33.3%)	12 (80%)
High	8 (53.3%)	3 (20%)
Low	2 (13.4%)	0 (0%)
Very Low	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Total	**15 (100%)**	**15 (100%)**

The histogram comparing pre-test and post-test scores further illustrates the improvement in motivation, with post-test results showing a greater concentration in the higher score ranges. This upward shift confirms that the Momo English Game intervention had a strong positive influence.Interview data supported the quantitative findings. Students described the game as "fun," "engaging," and "easy to understand." Many highlighted the word-matching activity as their favorite feature, stating that it helped them remember vocabulary more effectively. Students also reported feeling less anxious and more confident when answering questions in English.Overall, the combination of questionnaire results and interview feedback confirms that Momo English Game significantly enhanced both intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of motivation among the participating students.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study align with previous research emphasizing the importance of motivation in successful language learning. Ryan and Deci's (2000) Self-Determination Theory explains that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are necessary to sustain learners' engagement. The increase in students' mean scores from pre-test to post-test indicates that Momo English Game effectively addressed both types of motivation.

In terms of intrinsic motivation, the game provided an enjoyable and challenging environment that encouraged students to participate actively. The sense of achievement students experienced when earning high scores reinforced their willingness to continue learning. This finding is consistent with Lunenburg's (2011) claim that intrinsic motivation is strengthened when learners find the activity personally satisfying.

Extrinsic motivation was also enhanced through the game's competitive elements, such as scoring systems and rankings. These features created a sense of competition among students, motivating them to improve their performance. This outcome supports Prensky's (2001) assertion that game-based learning can motivate learners by combining entertainment with achievement-oriented goals.The positive perceptions expressed in interviews highlight the role of engaging media in reducing learning anxiety. Many students reported feeling more relaxed during lessons and less afraid of making mistakes. This reflects Gee's (2003) observation that games provide a safe space for learners to experiment and practice without the fear of failure.

Importantly, this study demonstrates that game-based learning is applicable even in rural school contexts with limited resources. Despite technological constraints, the implementation of Momo English Game was feasible and effective in increasing motivation. This aligns with studies in rural South Sulawesi that found application-based games can be adapted successfully to low-resource environments.Another key point is that Momo English Game addressed students' needs for variety in learning activities. Traditional teacher-centered approaches often fail to maintain long-term engagement, whereas the interactive nature of games helps sustain attention and interest. This is in line with Widyanti and Sugiyanto's (2023) findings that educational games enhance classroom participation and reduce boredom.

While the study achieved its objectives, it also opens opportunities for future research. Further studies could explore the long-term effects of game-based learning on other language skills, such as speaking, listening, and grammar, or compare its effectiveness with other digital learning tools.the findings reinforce the idea that integrating interactive educational games like Momo English Game into English language teaching can significantly improve students' motivation, particularly in rural areas. By addressing both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, such approaches can foster a more dynamic, enjoyable, and effective learning experience.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and analysis, it can be concluded that the use of Momo English Game significantly enhanced the motivation of seventh-grade students at SMPN 2 Suli in learning English. The mean score improvement from 2.78 in the pre-test to 3.51 in the post-test indicates a clear positive shift, with the majority of students moving from the "High" motivation category to the "Very High" category. This increase covered both intrinsic aspects, such as enjoyment, confidence, and personal satisfaction, and extrinsic aspects, such as competition, recognition, and rewards.

Students' perceptions of the Momo English Game were overwhelmingly positive. They described the game as fun, engaging, and easy to understand, with the word-matching activity being the most favored feature. The interactive design and immediate feedback reduced learning anxiety, encouraged active participation, and helped students retain vocabulary more effectively. This shows that Momo English Game is not only an effective learning medium but also a tool that creates a supportive and enjoyable classroom atmosphere.

Overall, this study demonstrates that integrating game-based learning into English language teaching can be an effective strategy to increase students' motivation, especially in rural schools with limited access to modern resources. By addressing both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational needs, Momo English Game provides a dynamic, interactive, and meaningful learning experience that can help students develop essential language skills and prepare them for future academic and professional opportunities.

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