

**UNA REVISIÓN SISTEMÁTICA DE LA LITERATURA SOBRE LA APLICACIÓN
PEDAGÓGICA DE RECURSOS DIGITALES INTERACTIVOS (KAHOOT, QUIZLET,
WORDWALL) EN EL NIVEL A2 DE INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA (EFL)
A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE PEDAGOGICAL APPLICATION OF
INTERACTIVE DIGITAL RESOURCES: KAHOOT, QUIZLET, WORDWALL IN A2 EFL**

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Resumen

Esta revisión sistemática, desarrollada bajo el protocolo PRISMA 2020 y una pregunta PICO, analizó la aplicación pedagógica de Kahoot, Quizlet y Wordwall en la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) en el nivel A2. A partir de 226 registros identificados en Scopus, Dialnet y Google Scholar, se aplicaron criterios de elegibilidad PICOS y se seleccionaron 29 estudios, cuya calidad metodológica fue evaluada mediante MMAT y, para diseños cuasiexperimentales. Debido a la heterogeneidad del corpus, la evidencia se sintetizó narrativamente. Los resultados evidencian efectos favorables de las tres herramientas en la adquisición y retención de vocabulario, así como beneficios en comprensión lectora, competencia gramatical, comunicación oral, motivación, evaluación formativa y autonomía del aprendizaje. No obstante, se identificaron barreras relacionadas con la brecha digital, infraestructura limitada, insuficiente capacitación docente, presión temporal en Kahoot y riesgos asociados a un uso descontextualizado de estas plataformas. En conjunto, la evidencia sugiere que Kahoot, Quizlet y Wordwall desempeñan funciones complementarias dentro del proceso didáctico: Quizlet favorece la preparación y el estudio autónomo, Kahoot la activación y evaluación formativa, y Wordwall la práctica guiada y consolidación. Por tanto, su efectividad depende de una integración pedagógica secuencial e intencional, más que de su utilización aislada. Se recomienda ampliar la

investigación mediante estudios longitudinales, grupos control y evaluaciones estandarizadas.

Palabras clave: Kahoot, Quizlet, Wordwall, Inglés, Lengua extranjera.

Abstract

This systematic review, conducted following the PRISMA 2020 protocol and a PICO question, analyzed the pedagogical application of Kahoot, Quizlet, and Wordwall in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) at the A2 level. Based on 226 records identified in Scopus, Dialnet, and Google Scholar, PICOS eligibility criteria were applied to select 29 studies; their methodological quality was assessed using the MMAT and, for quasi-experimental designs tool. Due to the heterogeneity of the corpus, the evidence was synthesized narratively. The results demonstrate the favorable effects of all three tools on vocabulary acquisition and retention, as well as benefits regarding reading comprehension, grammatical competence, oral communication, motivation, formative assessment, and learner autonomy. However, barriers were identified regarding the digital divide, limited infrastructure, insufficient teacher training, time pressure in Kahoot, and risks associated with the decontextualized use of these platforms. Overall, the evidence suggests that Kahoot, Quizlet, and Wordwall play complementary roles in the instructional process: Quizlet supports preparation and autonomous study; Kahoot facilitates activation and formative assessment; and Wordwall aids guided practice and consolidation. Therefore,

their effectiveness depends on sequential and intentional pedagogical integration rather than isolated use. Further research is recommended through longitudinal studies, control groups, and standardized assessments.

Keywords: Kahoot, Quizlet, Wordwall, English, Foreign language.

Sumário

Esta revisão sistemática, realizada com base no protocolo PRISMA 2020 e em uma pergunta PICO, analisou a aplicação pedagógica do Kahoot, Quizlet e Wordwall no ensino de inglês como língua estrangeira (EFL) no nível A2. A partir de 226 registros identificados nas bases Scopus, Dialnet e Google Scholar, aplicaram-se critérios de elegibilidade PICOS e selecionaram-se 29 estudos, cuja qualidade metodológica foi avaliada por meio do MMAT. Devido à heterogeneidade do corpus, as evidências foram sintetizadas de forma narrativa. Os resultados demonstram efeitos favoráveis das três ferramentas na aquisição e retenção de vocabulário, bem como benefícios na compreensão leitora, competência gramatical, comunicação oral, motivação, avaliação formativa e autonomia na aprendizagem. No entanto, foram identificadas barreiras relacionadas à exclusão digital, infraestrutura limitada, capacitação docente insuficiente, pressão de tempo no Kahoot e riscos associados ao uso descontextualizado dessas plataformas. Em conjunto, as evidências sugerem que Kahoot, Quizlet e Wordwall desempenham funções complementares no processo didático: o Quizlet favorece a preparação e o estudo autônomo; o Kahoot, a ativação e a avaliação formativa; e o Wordwall, a prática guiada e a consolidação. Portanto, sua eficácia depende de uma integração pedagógica sequencial e intencional, e não apenas de sua utilização isolada. Recomenda-se ampliar a pesquisa por meio de estudos longitudinais, grupos de controle e avaliações padronizadas.

Palavras-chave: Kahoot, Quizlet, Wordwall, Inglês, Língua estrangeira.

Introduction

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) proficiency can be described according to the competence scale established by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). This framework organizes language proficiency into six progressive levels, ranging from A1 representing basic language ability to C2, which corresponds to a highly developed level (Council of Europe, 2020). In Ecuador, the basic level of high school graduation is B1, but there is evidence of a substantial gap between the goal and actual proficiency of students. A study of 300 high school students from 14 public institutions in Milagro found that most had only high school proficiency levels (A1+ and A2), not the high school level B1 (Guevara Peñaranda et al., 2024).

This aligns with the EF English Proficiency Index, which is widely accepted as an accurate measure of English proficiency in Ecuador. De Angelis (2022) argues that this situation should be taken into account in order to question three common ideas about international classifications: whether they represent the actual level of English proficiency in Ecuador; whether they are good for cross-country comparisons; and whether they are also good for education equity (De Angelis, 2022). Despite those concerns, both sources agree that the A2 level is not just a theoretical goal but a common linguistic reality of many Ecuadorian students after high school.

Because language skills rely on repeated exposure to vocabulary and basic structures, learning at the A2 level benefits from engaging activities that provide ample practice opportunities, immediate feedback, and minimal cognitive load. At this stage, interactive digital tools have become popular as

they provide opportunities for practice outside of face-to-face instruction time. Kahoot, Quizlet, and Wordwall are all popular resources in EFL classrooms, each with its own educational purposes.

Kahoot is mostly used for synchronous formative assessment: it features real-time quizzes complete with timers and competitive scoring systems that enable group participation while providing immediate feedback (Aibar-Almazán et al., 2024). This engaging format makes it effective for activating prior knowledge or evaluating collective understanding at the conclusion of thematic units. On the other hand, Quizlet is an asynchronous study platform that uses digital flashcards and spelling tests and matching games for students to learn at their own pace (Nguyen & Le, 2023). It is effective because spaced repetition supports vocabulary retention and self-directed learning outside the classroom (Özdemir & Seçkin, 2024).

Moreover, Wordwall also provides a variety of templates that can be used to create games such as random wheels or concept matching that teacher can tailor to specific grammatical or lexical topics. Those templates can be converted into printable worksheets, which can be used offline (Alfares, 2025). This flexibility makes Wordwall particularly well-suited for basic structures needed in the A2 level like subject-verb agreement. The pedagogical strategy of all three tools is about student engagement through practice rather than memorization methods with vocabulary lists or out-of-context grammar exercises. Digital tools may actually have advantages over traditional learning methods; while Kahoot helped students build their skills in vocabulary without significantly affecting student vocabulary acquisition rates (Cancino & Viguera, 2024), Wordwall performed well on

vocabulary tests (Alfares, 2025). In Ecuadorian contexts, quasi-experimental studies have shown improvements in grammar comprehension, vocabulary usage, listening skills and pronunciation among students who used digital tools in comparison to those who were taught in traditional methods (Acosta-Rivera & Bedón Vaca, 2025). The results indicate that the support linguistic development as well as learner motivation.

There is good evidence that Kahoot, Quizlet and Wordwall should not replace traditional teaching methods, but instead complement them to enhance multiple aspects of English language acquisition at the A2 level including synchronous formative assessment, independent vocabulary learning opportunities, and grammatical support. However, there are still large gaps in the knowledge about how these three strategies interact within one educational process that targets A2-level learners in Ecuador. As such, it is necessary to integrate the existing research on their combined pedagogical use.

In this sense, the present research focuses on analyzing existing academic literature concerning how digital platforms specifically Kahoot, Quizlet, and Wordwall are instructionally implemented within A2-level English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms.

Specific Objectives:

- To gather data from trustworthy academic references regarding the instructional use of digital tools like Wordwall, Quizlet, and Kahoot for A2-level EFL instruction.
- To synthesize information about degree to which these digital tools are integrated into A2-level classrooms and to identify current

lines of research focused on Kahoot, Quizlet, and Wordwall.

- To conclude the systematic literature review, identifying pedagogical contributions, limitations, and implications for future practice.

Research Questions:

To steer the review methodology and guarantee a structured examination of the collected data, the study proposes the following inquiries:

- What insights does existing literature provide regarding the effects of Kahoot, Quizlet, and Wordwall, compared to traditional learning methods, on the development of language skills in A2-level EFL students?
- What pedagogical effects (e.g., vocabulary retention, motivation, engagement, language skill outcomes) have Kahoot, Quizlet, and Wordwall demonstrated relative to traditional instructional approaches in A2 EFL learning contexts?
- What limitations, challenges, or implementation barriers are reported in the literature when comparing the use of Kahoot, Quizlet, and Wordwall to traditional teaching methods in A2 EFL classrooms?

The structure of this work unfolds as follows: first, the state of the art is introduced; second, the methodology for the systematic review is detailed including the design, source identification, search process, selection criteria, data collection, and analytical methods. Subsequently, the results are presented and contrasted with earlier studies, concluding with the main implications. According to the updated supplementary guidelines provided by the

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), defines a Level A2 learner as an individual who understands a wide variety of very common phrases and expressions related to everyday life issues, shopping, or employment. In addition, a learner at this level can do basic tasks that require direct communication and information sharing about everyday and routine processes (Council of Europe, 2020). Knowledge is limited to short, predictable texts that are clear and simple in meaning; it includes only vocabulary and a few well-defined, simple grammatical structures (Zhyhadlo, 2022). That is why, for A2 learners, learning should be based on repetition of high-frequency vocabulary and continuous feedback (a way of correcting errors without overload), and it should be distributed, multisensory, and meaningful in the context of familiar topics.

Paivio's Dual Coding Theory states that learning is enhanced when information is processed simultaneously through both verbal and non-verbal systems, forming connections that support retrieval. In the context of teaching vocabulary in foreign languages, using text, images, and audio stimulates coding and helps beginners retain information more effectively Kanellopoulou et al. (2019).

Moreover, the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML) proposed by Mayer posits that words and images promote deeper understanding. Immanuel and Mohamed Sahul Hameed (2023) demonstrated a significant improvement in vocabulary acquisition by using multimedia resources. These theories support Kahoot, Quizlet, and Wordwall, as visual, textual, and auditory stimuli can provide vocabulary encoding and retention for students at the A2 level. From the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) perspective, foreign language learning occurs when learners engage

in meaningful interactions towards real communicative goals instead of merely repeating those same linguistic forms (Belda-Medina, 2021). Belda-Medina also shows that task-based instruction (TBI) and synchronous technology (e.g., task-based language teaching in real-world contexts) can greatly enhance multimodal communication and communicative skills of students while the teachers and system provide feedback. For A2 students who are familiar with the language and want to practice in relatively simple and frequent interactions about daily topics, interactive digital tools can act as mediators to replicate the conditions described in the communicative approach: Kahoot simulates live competitive interactions and immediate comprehension; Quizlet connects form to meaning with context-responsive flashcards; Wordwall provides matching and categorization exercises that simulate communicative problem-solving activities (Zhyhadlo, 2022). Integrating these theoretical perspectives helps explain why interactive digital tools are particularly effective for A2 EFL learners. Drawing on dual coding theory and CTML principles, platforms like Quizlet and Wordwall use visual and verbal channels to reinforce the high-frequency vocabulary characteristic of this level of knowledge. Combining CLT and TBLT enables Kahoot's interactive formats to create micro-contexts for meaningful engagement that replicate the simple communicative tasks outlined in CEFR descriptors for A2 (Council of Europe, 2020).

Zhyhadlo (2022) demonstrated this as well: digital tools like Kahoot and Wordwall are not only formative assessment tools, but also motivational tools, with game-based features (scoring systems, competition) that allow feedback and shared practice among A2

learners. Najafi Karimi and Kheradmandi Amiri (2025) also found that digital flashcards are more effective for word retention than paper flashcards because of spaced repetition and adaptive feedback on the digital platform. In conclusion, both theoretical insights and quantitative data show that Kahoot, Quizlet, and Wordwall are more than leisure tools; they are teaching tools grounded in cognitive science principles and appropriate for A2 learners.

Materials and Methods

The current systematic review strictly adhered to “Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses” Page et al., 2021 (PRISMA 2020) guidelines, which promote clarity, reproducibility, and procedural consistency across the entire. This covered everything from developing formulating the initial inquiry up to the concluding integration of findings. To build the research question, the PICO model was implemented as detailed below: P (Population): Students studying English as a foreign language; I (Intervention): Digital tools; C (Comparison): Conventional learning methods; O (Outcome): Effects of digital tool use. The research question is: What effects do interactive digital resources such as Kahoot, Quizlet, and Wordwall have on language skill development compared to traditional learning methods for A2-level students learning English as a foreign language (EFL)?

Eligibility Criteria

To establish the inclusion and parameters, the PICOS structure (Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcomes, Study design) was applied and tailored to the academic setting following guidelines established by Methley et al. (2014).

Table 1. *Selection Parameters Based on the PICOS Model.*

PICOS Element	Acceptance Parameters	Rejection Parameters
Población (P)	Learners pursuing English as a foreign language (EFL) corresponding to the A2 tier of the CEFR, or comparable stages (elementary, pre-intermediate), in formal educational settings (elementary, secondary, or higher education).	Research involving English as a Second Language (ESL) learners in immersion settings; levels other than A2 without disaggregated data; exclusively informal settings.
Intervention (I)	Educational use of Kahoot, Quizlet, and/or Wordwall as tools for teaching and learning English.	Studies that use these tools to teach other subjects or languages other than English.
Comparison (C)	Traditional teaching methods (direct instruction, textbooks, paper-based exercises) or other digital tools; pre-post studies without a control group were also included.	Studies that do not measure learning outcomes or perceptions.
Outcomes (O)	At least one of the following outcomes: vocabulary acquisition/retention, grammatical competence, motivation, engagement, student perception, academic performance in EFL.	Studies that report exclusively on technological usability metrics without any connection to language learning.
Study design (S)	Empirical studies (experimental, quasi-experimental, pre-experimental, mixed-methods, and descriptive studies using primary data) published in peer-reviewed, indexed journals between 2018 and 2026.	Literature reviews, book chapters, presentations without empirical data, theses not published in indexed journals, and articles in languages other than English and Spanish.

Source: Own work.

Based on these components, the following inclusion and exclusion criteria were defined:

Inclusion criteria:

- Articles published in English or Spanish.
- Studies published between 2018 and 2026.
- Texts with full-text access available.
- Studies specifically focused on level A2 of the CEFR.
- Research that evaluates the use of Kahoot, Quizlet, Wordwall, or a combination of these tools.

Exclusion criteria:

- Gray literature (non-peer-reviewed technical reports, institutional documents without peer review).
- Theses and dissertations not published in indexed journals.
- Conference proceedings and reports (conference proceedings).

- Opinion pieces, essays, and monographs without an empirical component.
- Studies focused on levels other than A2 or on the teaching of languages other than English.

Information Sources and Search Strategy

The literature review used three electronic databases: Scopus, Dialnet, and Google Scholar. This choice ensures comprehensive coverage of internationally recognized, high-impact research and regional scientific work in Spanish available through open access (Gusenbauer & Haddaway, 2020).

To complete the search, Boolean queries were constructed for those terms that are associated with the target population (EFL, English as a Foreign Language, A2 level, elementary, pre-intermediate), the tools used for intervention (Kahoot, Quizlet, Wordwall), and various educational outcomes (vocabulary acquisition, grammar skills, motivation levels, achievement metrics). The search strategy used Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT), parentheses, and quotation marks for precise matching with each database to match the specific topic.

Table 2. Database Search Equations.

Database	Boolean equation	Date	n
Scopus	TITLE-("Kahoot" OR "Quizlet" OR "Wordwall") AND ("EFL" OR "English as a Foreign Language" OR "English language learning") AND ("A2" OR "elementary" OR "pre-intermediate" OR "beginner") AND ("vocabulary" OR "grammar" OR "motivation" OR "learning outcomes" OR "achievement").	14/08/2026	97
Dialnet	("Kahoot" OR "Quizlet" OR "Wordwall") AND ("EFL" OR "English as a Foreign Language" OR "English language teaching") AND ("vocabulary" OR "grammar" OR "motivation" NOT "gamif*" OR "digital tool*") AND ("A2" OR "elementary" OR "pre-intermediate")) AND DT=(Article) AND PY=(2016-2026)	15/08/2026	40
Google Scholar	(Kahoot OR Quizlet OR Wordwall) AND (EFL OR "English as a Foreign Language") AND (vocabulary OR grammar OR motivation OR "language learning") Time filter: 2016–2026; language: English and Spanish	15/08/2026	89

Source: Own work.

Total records retrieved: 226

Study Selection Process

The study selection procedure was organized into four consecutive stages in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 guidelines (Page et al., 2021).

Phase 1: Identification and Duplicate Checking: A total of 226 records identified across three databases were transferred to Zotero for reference management. Automatic deduplication, supplemented by manual verification of records with similar titles, allowed us to eliminate 64 duplicates, resulting in 162 unique records.

Phase 2: Screening by title and abstract: We independently evaluated the 162 records by reviewing their titles and abstracts and applying the previously defined PICO criteria. In this phase, 98 records were excluded for the following reasons: topic unrelated to EFL (n = 31), proficiency level other than A2 with no disaggregated data (n = 27), digital tool other than Kahoot, Quizlet, or Wordwall (n = 22), and non-empirical design or ineligible document type (n = 18).

Phase 3: Full-text evaluation (eligibility): We retrieved following the full-text review, 35 articles were excluded. After reading them in full, we excluded 35 articles. The reasons for exclusion were systematically recorded in a tracking spreadsheet and were as follows: absence of measurable language learning outcomes (n = 12); a population consisting exclusively of B1 level or higher learners with no disaggregated data reported for A2 (n = 8); ESL rather than EFL context (n = 5); full text not available (n = 4); article published before 2016 (n = 3); article language other than English or Spanish (n = 2); and duplicate data reported in another publication already included (n = 1).

Phase 4: Inclusion: After the eligibility assessment, 29 articles satisfied all inclusion criteria and were retained for the systematic review's qualitative synthesis. Figure 1 presents the PRISMA flow diagram and summarizes the full selection procedure using the revised framework proposed by Page et al. (2021).

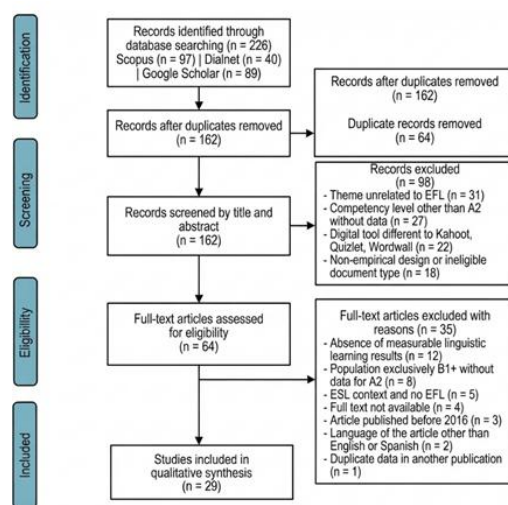


Figure 1. Depicts the complete procedural workflow, adhering to the revised PRISMA guidelines proposed by Page et al. (2021).

To systematically gather information, a uniform extraction tool was developed comprising these

specific variables, which were evaluated across all 29 included studies:

Table 3. Variables in the Data Extraction Form.

Variable	Description
Author(s) and year	Detailed source and publication data.
Country/context	Geographic setting of the research alongside the targeted academic level (elementary school, high school, college).
Sample size (n)	Total number of participants
Study Design	Design type (experimental, quasi-experimental, pre-experimental, mixed, descriptive).
Digital tool(s)	Kahoot, Quizlet, Wordwall, or a combination.
Proficiency Level	Reported CEFR level or equivalent.
Instrumento(s) de medición	Tests, cuestionarios, escalas empleados para evaluar resultados.
Dependent variable(s)	Measured outcome(s): vocabulary, grammar, motivation, etc.
Key Findings	Relevant statistical or qualitative results.
Reported Limitations	The restrictions pointed out by the authors of the initial study.

Source: Own work.

Methodological Quality Analysis

To evaluate the methodological rigor of the 29 selected papers, we applied the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT) (Hong et al., 2018). This instrument was chosen for its capacity to comprehensively review diverse research frameworks—including mixed methods, as well as descriptive and experimental quantitative designs. Therefore, it is highly suitable for educational systematic reviews characterized by methodological diversity

(Hong et al., 2018). Depending on the specific research design, the framework examines five distinct parameters, offering response choices of "Yes," "No," or "Cannot be determined." Studies were not excluded based on their quality score; rather, the score was used to contextualize the strength of the evidence in the narrative synthesis, following the recommendations of Pluye and Hong (2014). In the case of purely quasi-experimental papers, we supplemented our assessment with the quasi-experimental appraisal checklist from the

Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) (Tufanaru et al., 2020). This framework reviews nine crucial aspects, including how clearly the causal

relationship is established, whether a control group is present.

Table 4. *MMAT Evaluation Criteria for Non-Randomized Quantitative Studies*

Criteria	Evaluation Question
4.1	Do the selected participants adequately reflect the target demographic?
4.2	Are the measurement methods suitable for evaluating the intervention and subsequent?
4.3	Is there complete data on the participants?
4.4	We are confounding factors adequately controlled for in the design and analysis?
4.5	Was the intervention administered as planned during the study period?

Source: Own work.

Data Analysis and Synthesis

Given the significant variability in methodological approaches, measurement tools, outcome variables, and geographic settings across the 29 studies included a narrative synthesis was preferred over a statistical meta-analysis. This decision aligns with the guidelines set forth by Popay et al. (2006) and follows with the guidelines provided by the Cochrane Handbook for dealing with significant heterogeneity (Higgins et al., 2022). This narrative synthesis was structured thematically around the three research questions, using a deductive-inductive methodology: initially, results were categorized into predefined themes (pedagogical application, effects on learning, limitations), followed by identifying emerging patterns and overarching trends within each theme.

Results and Discussion

The search and selection procedure presented in the methodology section and illustrated with the PRISMA flowchart (Figure 1) began with 226 records from three databases that we were already familiar with: Scopus, Dialnet, and Google Scholar. After removing 64 duplicate entries, we applied PICO eligibility criteria to exclude 98 records during screening and 35 records during full-text assessment. In total, 29

studies were added to the qualitative synthesis. In the following sections, we describe the general characteristics of these studies, present a data extraction table, provide a narrative synthesis of thematic areas, and summarize methodological quality.

Main Features of the Selected Articles

RQ1: What insights does existing literature provide regarding the effects of Kahoot, Quizlet, and Wordwall, compared to traditional learning methods, on the development of language skills in A2-level EFL students? Diverse methodological studies found in current scholarship indicate that using Kahoot, Quizlet, and Wordwall in teaching practice is very helpful for language skill enhancement in A2-level learners. Traditional approaches that rely on isolated memorization and passive textbook use are far worse than these digital tools.

In terms of vocabulary acquisition, which is a fundamental part of the A2 level, several quasi-experimental and pre-experimental studies have shown significant improvements for groups using interactive digital resources:

Kahoot: Ahamed et al. (2022) utilized paired and independent samples t-tests across three evaluation stages (initial, immediate, and delayed) and discovered that the experimental

cohort outperformed the control setting in both recalling and retaining vocabulary. Likewise, Cuenca et al. (2026) demonstrated that implementing Kahoot as a playful methodology substantially improved the vocabulary learning of high schoolers when contrasted with conventional methods. Aisyah et al. (2023) also tested Kahoot, and the results were more accurate than other methods. This tool also improved lexical proficiency because it is educationally relevant for EFL settings.

Wordwall: Arellano et al. (2026) used a mixed-methods approach on A2-level secondary school students and found that they experienced much better lexical learning and retention rates. Sakkir et al. (2023) and Nur Safitri et al. (2024) used pre-experimental designs. Also, they observed improvements in student vocabulary, with the latter showing that students could assimilate vocabulary relevant to certain texts, such as recount texts. Additionally, Duque and Vega (2025) quantitatively observed increased vocabulary knowledge among seventh graders after using Wordwall.

Quizlet: Villalba et al. (2019) found that using Quizlet's mobile platform throughout a whole academic term resulted in an increase in vocabulary levels for A2 students at the time of the post-test. Furthermore, independent lexical acquisition outside the classroom using Quizlet significantly improved classroom lexical test scores for students initially at lower proficiency levels (A1–A2) (Waluyo & Bucol, 2021).

Combined Use: Carmona et al. (2022) explained their study with an experimental/control setting at a university for A2 students and found that using Kahoot with Wordwall resulted in a remarkable improvement in lexical learning as compared to using traditional instructional methods.

Moreover, the literature shows that these tools are not only for memorizing isolated vocabulary; they also contribute to macro skills and more complex linguistic skills:

Reading comprehension: Korkmaz and Öz (2021) report a significant increase in reading comprehension for EFL learners after a seven-week intervention in interactive questions via Kahoot. In contrast, Ibad (2023) experimentally tested reading outcomes on Kahoot, Quizizz, and Wordwall and found that they had significant differences in effectiveness and concluded that Quizizz was more effective than Kahoot and Wordwall, as the interactive challenges were different.

Grammatical Competence: Dafitri et al. (2026) qualitatively showed how Wordwall templates were able to teach adjectives and grammatical patterns in secondary education by effectively enforcing rule understanding through teaching their use.

Oral communication skills: Duque and Vega (2025) concluded that when Wordwall is used for lexical reinforcement, there is a tangible improvement in the verbal fluency of learners and their ability to use language practically in context.

Integrated competencies in virtual environments: Chicaiza et al. (2024) found that Kahoot helped to enhance linguistic competencies (both comprehension and production) in virtual environments by providing new and dynamic alternatives to the challenging interaction.

Together, these findings suggest that all three digital platforms are multimodal cognitive supports (text, images, sound, and immediate feedback) that optimize working memory processing for A2-level students whose

language repertoire consists of elementary structures and high-frequency vocabulary.

RQ2: What pedagogical effects (e.g., vocabulary retention, motivation, engagement, language skill outcomes) have Kahoot, Quizlet, and Wordwall demonstrated relative to traditional instructional approaches in A2 EFL learning contexts?

The qualitative as well as quantitative analysis presented in tables 5 and 6 categorizes these pedagogical impacts into five dimensions:

Long-term vocabulary retention: Instead of the short-term forgetting curve associated with static word lists in traditional teaching methods, tools are used to retain vocabulary knowledge in the long run. For example, Ahamed et al. (2022) showed experimentally that participants using Kahoot scored higher on delayed assessments than groups trained via conventional pedagogical approaches. (Arellano et al., 2026; Rubykania et al., 2025; Rusdiyani et al., 2025) highlighted how Wordwall provided game-based dynamics that significantly improved lexical retention rates among secondary students. Waluyo & Bucol (2021) also confirmed that spaced repetition and repeated practice helped low-level learners learn vocabulary on Quizlet. However, Menon & Rajesh (2025) note methodological issues that they will explore later in longitudinal research on retention across different instructional settings. **Affective dimension:** **Motivation & engagement** reducing anxiety levels: The most universal finding from studies is better classroom dynamics that increase student engagement: Amal et al. (2023) and Yunisa et al. (2025) had positive findings regarding Kahoot, where timers/scores/leaderboards increased motivation and focused attention on the content

during lessons. Angamarca et al. (2025) and Muhammad Arsyad (2024) found greater intrinsic motivation in participation and more willingness to engage in educational activities in formal/non-formal education frameworks, as did Rusdiyani/Rubykania (2025). For Quizlet, Wiedarti's non-equivalent control group study showed improved motivation and reduced boredom with rote memorization; Aprilani (2021) showed that flashcard formats create interest and positive attitudes toward English comprehension. This motivational surge functionally lowers the 'affective filter' for novice learners, where anxiety over mistakes diminishes, language experimentation can happen in safe environments, and self-confidence-building activities can begin after barriers are removed.

Formative assessment and immediate feedback mechanism: Unlike traditional summative assessments that come and go, digital platforms convert evaluation into opportunities to grow. Yunisa's positive response to Kahoot's formative assessment clearly indicated gaps in current lexicon knowledge. Situmorang offered insight into Kahoot's effectiveness, building on prior awareness of diagnosis and feedback. Teachers also benefited from Kahoot's analytical reports, which supported appropriate responses to individual/group progress, and Situmorang's documents provided feedback based on different templates that directly addressed grammatical correctness in class.

Facilitate autonomy and self-regulation beyond classroom context: Different effects due to Quizlet usage were shown to be able to learn independently than in the classroom where face-to-face lessons are commonly taught, and Waluyo/Bucol found home-studying to be good for classroom performance (especially low-skilled students getting benefit of this method).

Mobile applications allow self-paced revision and can be used to plan schedules more independently, and autonomy improves when used in an ecosystem such as Google Classroom (Tumaco, 2014).

Complementarity and pedagogical difference in the tools used: There are no shared effects among these three tools (Researchers) but different pedagogical and academic benefits.

It is largely based on structured asynchronous study/memorization based on quizzes, and the use of spaced repetition in quizlets makes them stand out (Menon & Rajesh, 2025; Waluyo & Bucol, 2021; Aprilani et al., 2021).

The engagement group formative assessment gamification competition dynamic activations are the kahoot strengths (Licorish et al., 2018; Sianturi et al., 2022; Yunisa et al., 2025).

Many different learning profiles levels were used to construct wordwalls and they are the templates for grammar vocabulary and how to be used in a team/individual way (Angamarca et al., 2025; Dafitri et al., 2026; Muhammad Arsyad, 2024; Duque & Vega, 2025).

RQ3: What limitations, challenges, or implementation barriers are reported in the literature when comparing the use of Kahoot, Quizlet, and Wordwall to traditional teaching methods in A2 EFL classrooms?

While these platforms have many advantages, there are also many critical sets of technical affective instructional methodological constrictions that are used to determine the effectiveness against previous ones:

Digital Divide and Poor Technological Infrastructure: Most of the obstacles to accessibility are caused by infrastructure

problems, which Sianturi has examined and pointed out that high-speed internet connection (technical or otherwise) issues were most problematic for educators/students alike. Plaza's investigations also echo the same sentiments which are important for positive outcomes such as reliable access/provisions devices that otherwise are not as accessible for students leading to disparities (Duque & Vega, 2025; Plaza et al., 2025).

Digital Competence Technological Literacy

Hurdles: Despite having no previous experience interacting digitally, there are clear challenges for smooth execution (SIANTURI). Plaza&Dafitri also highlight the need for ongoing training, helping teachers effectively implement software in order to make their English-based curricula effective. Although competitive forces are motivational catalysts, adverse consequences are also associated with different learner profiles; As mentioned in the introduction, time pressures can cause frustration, anxiety, and cognitive processes that may negatively affect performance (Ahamed et al., 2022).

Implementation risks Pedagogical

adaptation: Dafitri&Situmorang note that people think technology guarantees real learning, and when used simply superficially one is left to entertainment without a deeper understanding; thus planning systematic adaptation was important in order to align curricular objectives to the specific context of students' needs (Duque y Vega 2025).

Methods: There are methodological limitations in the reviewed corpus. In the scientific rigor perspective studies have a number of design flaws that we would consider to interpret the findings of this paper: Short Interventions Menon/Rajesh argue that long-term

sustainability is limited by the majority of short-term data (Aisyah et al., 2023; Sakkir et al., 2023; Nur Safitri et al., 2024). - Non-probabilistic Designs: Control groups. Several studies used single-group populations in order to avoid causal attribution (see examples). - Self-perception measures: The observed tendencies were based on descriptive qualitative methods/cases that were mainly based on subjective experiences of the student or teacher and only questionnaires/interviews were collected to assess the perception towards the situation in which the student or teacher was present (Amal et al., 2023; Aprilani et al., 2021; Yunisa et al., 2025; Situmorang et al., 2023; Licorish et al., 2018).

The evidence analyzed in this review demonstrates that interactive digital tools including platforms like Kahoot, Quizlet, and Wordwall can foster language skills among English as a Foreign language (EFL) learner far more effectively than traditional printed textbooks. For the first question in this review, the literature indicates that this linguistic effect is mainly related to vocabulary acquisition, retention, and lexical mastery, and is a foundation for pre-intermediate communication (Council of Europe, 2020). In different educational settings, quasi-experimental and pre-experimental studies show a statistically significant improvement in lexical performance when digital tools are incorporated into the instructional process (Ahamed et al. 2022; Aisyah et al. 2023; Cuenca et al. 2026; Duque & Vega, 2025; Nur Safitri et al. 2024; Sakkir et al. 2023; Villalba et al. 2019). In addition the vocabulary acquisition, these digital resources also promote macro-skills and integrated competencies: Korkmaz and Öz (2021) showed significant improvements in reading comprehension from gamified question sequences in Kahoot; Dafitri et al. (2026)

showed that Wordwall is qualitatively effective for mastering adjectives and syntactic patterns; Duque & Vega (2025) observed the transfer of digitally reinforced vocabulary to oral communication; and Chicaiza et al. (2024) confirmed general linguistic gains in virtual environments. However, this positive impact does not seem to be uniform across platforms. In fact, there is a big difference in the work of Ibad (2023) where a difference in interactivity between the platforms led to different results, and Quizizz was found to be more effective than Kahoot and Wordwall. Moreover, Cancino and Viguera (2024) found that although Kahoot improved lexical self-efficacy, it did not lead to any significant difference in performance versus conventional instruction, whereas Alfares (2025) found that vocabulary learning in Wordwall led to large improvements.

From a pedagogical point of view, we believe that interactive digital resources should never be viewed as a whole-class, automatic substitute for traditional methods, but as multi-modal cognitive scaffolds, which are only as durable as the links between software and linguistic skill. This interpretation finds theoretical backing in Dual Coding Theory (Kanellopoulou et al., 2019) and Multimedia Learning Theory (Immanuel & Mohamed Sahul Hameed, 2023), which is based on the fact that the simultaneous processing of auditory, textual, and visual stimuli is useful for efficient working memory and lexical retrieval. In A2-level EFL learning, this multi-modal scaffolding is particularly beneficial, as pre-intermediate students rely on predictable syntactic structures and high-frequency vocabulary to bridge the communication gap (Council of Europe, 2020; Zhyhadlo, 2022). Moreover, contextualizing task-based language teaching within digital frameworks establishes an interactive micro-context that enriches computer-assisted

instruction beyond simple memorization (Menon y Rajesh, 2025; Özdemir y Seçkin, 2024).

In addressing the second research question, the analysis demonstrates that the pedagogical value of Kahoot, Quizlet, and Wordwall is driven by cognitive, affective, and instructional dimensions, including vocabulary retention, decreased exposure anxiety, immediate formative evaluation, and self-directed learning. For instance, empirical evidence indicates higher delayed-test scores among Kahoot users (Ahamed et al., 2022), whereas Wordwall's ludic features significantly boost long-term retention (Arellano et al., 2026; Rubykania et al., 2025; Rusdiyani et al., 2025).

However, Menon and Rajesh (2025) add a key nuance by saying that short- and medium-term retention is well documented, but long-term lexical retention under a variety of instructional scenarios is still understudied. In the affective domain, there is a clear correlation between student motivation, engagement, and active participation with their learning experience and a decrease in classroom distractions and monotony (Amal et al., 2023; Angamarca et al., 2025; Aprilani et al., 2021; Licorish et al., 2018; Muhammad Arsyad, 2024; Shofiana & Maemanah, 2025; Wiedarti et al., 2020; Yunisa et al., 2025). On the theoretically level, this affective change could be seen as a significant reduction of the affective filter and the low anxiety environment that makes A2 students feel ready to experiment in their language without the fear of making mistakes. But there needs to be an understanding of the direct experience of learning and the perception (Amal et al., 2023; Aprilani et al., 2021; Situmorang et al., 2023) that positive feelings of empathy and receptivity are important for education, but it is not to be considered as a

whole as they do not translate into language acquisition.

The evidence in this context is very positive for teaching methods to support formative assessment and provide immediate feedback. Kahoot helps teachers to identify comprehension difficulties and to intervene during the lesson (Sianturi et al., 2022; Situmorang et al., 2023; Yunisa et al., 2025), and Wordwall allows learners to check their lexical and grammatical knowledge in front of the teacher in an intuitive way (Angamarca et al., 2025; Dafitri et al., 2026). Quizlet also has features that promote learning and self-regulation as students can review content independently and asynchronously using digital flashcards and spaced repetition (Aprilani et al., 2021; Najafi Karimi & Kheradmandi Amiri, 2025; Villalba et al., 2019; Waluyo & Bucol, 2021).

The potential of Quizlet is even more enhanced when it is merged with other resources in virtual learning (Tumaco et al., 2025). The results suggest that each of the three tools is capable of fulfilling its specific educational function simultaneously. While Quizlet is for individual vocabulary preparation and review, Kahoot is to help them interact together and come across problems in synchronous lectures, and Wordwall is to practice and build vocabulary and grammatical content in a flexible and guided manner (Carmona et al., 2022; Dafitri et al., 2026; Menon y Rajesh, 2025). So, their pedagogical value is not only based on the features of each platform but also on the teacher's method of incorporating them in accordance with the students' academic goals and necessities. Addressing the third inquiry of this study, existing literature presents a large number of technological, affective, pedagogical, and methodological challenges for

Kahoot, Quizlet, and Wordwall to be implemented in A2-level EFL classrooms.

Most of these barriers are the digital divide and the lack of technological infrastructure that is not sufficient (e.g., unstable internet and insufficient access to individual or institutional devices) (Duque & Vega, 2025; Plaza et al., 2025; Sianturi et al., 2022). In resource-poor educational settings such as public schools in developing countries, such infrastructure gaps can decrease participation and open up educational gaps (De Angelis, 2022; Guevara Peñaranda et al., 2024; Plaza et al., 2025). In addition, the evidence shows a digital competence issue: students who are just starting to learn how to use technology have a lot of difficulty in implementation (Sianturi et al., 2022) and teachers lack systematic training in incorporating digital tools in curriculum planning beyond superficial use (Dafitri et al., 2026; Plaza et al., 2025).

On an affective level, while digital resources are used to engage students in most cases, Kahoot timers and public leaderboards can cause performance anxiety, stress, and cognitive overload on some students, making it difficult for them to process language in an analytical or reflective manner (Ahamed et al., 2022; Sianturi et al., 2022). Dafitri et al. (2026), Situmorang et al. (2023), and Duque and Vega (2025) warn of trivialization, in which digital activities are merely a form of entertainment or class fillers rather than a structured learning environment. This contrast highlights that technology does not have any instructional value; teachers' mediation of students, their design of activities, and the learning criteria for CEFR A2 are responsible for teaching and learning. Finally, the corpus studied is not without data points to the methodological limitations of the literature. Most interventions

are short-term and not followed up (Aisyah et al., 2023; Menon & Rajesh, 2025; Nur Safitri et al., 2024), pre-experimental designs are not based on control groups (Sakkir et al., 2023), and they tend to be subjective (rather than a standardized linguistic assessment) in nature (Amal et al., 2023; Aprilani et al., 2021; Yunisa et al., 2025).

Conclusiones

Finally, we believe that incorporating these digital tools into the curriculum can help address key challenges and meet the needs of A2-level students, particularly through the use of high-frequency vocabulary, immediate feedback, and multimodal cognitive support. This pedagogical approach is grounded in principles associated with dual coding and multimedia learning (Mayer, 2009; Paivio, 1990). Evidence from diverse geographical and educational contexts suggests that Kahoot, Quizlet, and Wordwall should not be viewed as substitutes for traditional instructional methods.

Furthermore, this review shows that Kahoot, Quizlet and Wordwall should be used in English at the A2 level as part of a sequential, contextually-aware approach to teaching and learning, not in isolation. They can be used in different stages of learning (from preparing for and independent study to assessment to scaffolding and content consolidation). More evidence is needed in longitudinal studies, control groups, and standardized language assessments to see how long-term knowledge retention and the contribution of each resource will be. In this sense, these tools are complementary resources to enhance English language learning, provided they are used with teacher support to achieve the best learning outcomes.

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Contribución de los autores (Taxonomía CRediT). Dayanara Nicole Vásquez Sinmaleza.: conceptualización de la investigación, diseño metodológico, desarrollo del proceso investigativo, análisis formal de los datos, redacción del borrador original del manuscrito, revisión crítica del contenido científico y supervisión general del estudio.
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