

Students' Perceptions of Using ClassDojo in a Teaching and Learning Process

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the students' perceptions of using ClassDojo in the teaching and learning process. In the present educational context, the teaching and learning process is gradually associated with computers to maximize its outcomes. One of the platforms which are commonly used is ClassDojo. Implementing the principles of gamification, ClassDojo is considered effective to motivate students to be more active in online classes, push healthy competitiveness, and enhance learning and enjoyment. This study is a cross-sectional survey involving 77 participants ranging from 17 to 23 years of age. A close-ended questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale was distributed and then analyzed to find the mean of the scores. Then, several interviews were carried out as the data triangulation. The result shows that there are two main components of ClassDojo that motivate students in the English class; points and avatars. The students are more motivated and engaged in the teaching and learning process as they strive to earn more points. In addition, the students are eager to customize their own characters and enjoy playing them throughout the class. Thus, not only points, but avatars are also an essential component of ClassDojo which motivates and engages the students in the teaching and learning process.

Keywords: ClassDojo, Perception, Student, English Class

INTRODUCTION

The roles of technologies in this digital age are widely spread in all human aspects. A language teaching and learning process is no exception. Under the umbrella of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), the teaching and learning process is gradually associated with computers to maximize its outcomes. Warschauer and Healey (1998) agree that computers are an essential element for language learning and teaching as the current focus is not on the computer itself, but on naturally integrating computers into the language learning process. This principle is in line with a study conducted by Armanda, et. al (2022) aiming to find out students' perspectives and opinions on using Grammarly in writing articles. They found out that the students have positive

perspectives and opinions on using Grammarly in a way that is easy to use and it helps them deal with grammar, spelling, punctuation, and language style.

The principle of CALL is not only related to improving language skills, but it also includes a classroom management system. The classroom management platform has been closely related to the use of Google Classroom. Janzen (2014), in Iftakhar (2016), mentions that Google Classroom is easy to use as it helps teachers deliver and track assignments, and communicate with the course or students through announcements, email, and push notifications. However, alternatives to Google Classroom as a classroom management platform have swiftly emerged. One of which is ClassDojo.

ClassDojo is an internet-based platform where teachers and families share kids' learning moments at school and home through photos, videos, and messages (ClassDojo). Other than these media, ClassDojo points are also awarded to students to foster their positive behaviour. Using points makes ClassDojo's environment more competitive and eventually encourages students' participation in the class. The principle of CALL in ClassDojo is closely related to what is called gamification.

Gamification roots in the word 'game'. Salen and Zimmerman (2003) define a game as "a system in which players engage in an artificial conflict defined by rules, that results in a quantifiable outcome." This definition features some elements, such as system, players, artificial conflict, rules, and a quantifiable outcome. Kerriemuir and McFarlane (2007) state that games have been so engaging as they combine fantasy, challenge, and curiosity as well as a level of engagement in which the users are not likely to be distracted. Above all, the purpose of games is solely to amuse the players regardless of the "objectives" which are provided in the games (Chou, 2015).

Gamification itself is defined by Kapp (2012) as "gamification is using game-based mechanics, aesthetic and game thinking to engage people, motivate action, promote learning, and solve problems." Gamification makes use of the mechanics of gaming to non-game activities to alter people's behaviour and derives all the fun and engaging elements in games and applies them to real-world or productive activities (Bunchball, 2010; Chou, 2015). Kapp (2012) also adds that provided it is implemented properly, gamification has the power to engage, inform, and educate.

Bunchball (2010) proposes game mechanics as rules and rewards involving tools, techniques, and widgets which make games challenging, fun, and satisfying. Some of the game mechanics include:

a. Points

Points can be utilized to reward users across various dimensions. Different categories of points can be used to foster different behavior in the same site or application.

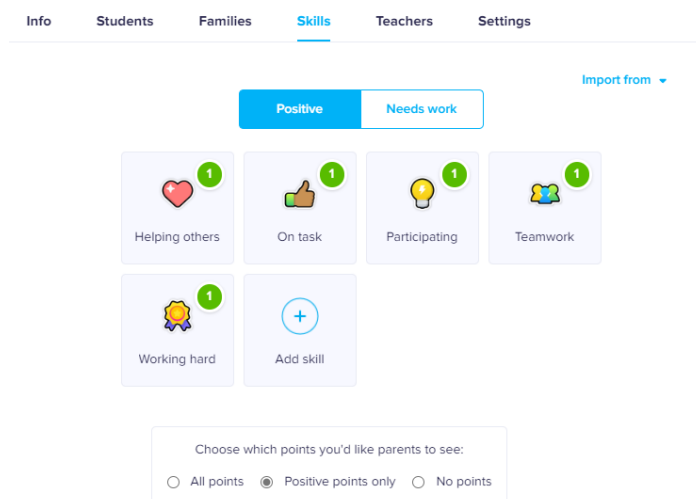


Figure 1: Points in ClassDojo

The figure is an example of points featured in ClassDojo. Each action carried out by students is rewarded with points. There are two kinds of points in the platform: positive and negative. However, I avoid giving negative points as I do not want the students to feel less motivated. Marouf and Brown (2021) mention that negative points make students demotivated and less engaged.

b. Levels

Levels can be used to indicate status and control access to content on the site. Users can automatically level up based on their participation.

c. Challenges, Trophies, Badges, and Achievements

Challenges provide people with goals and the feeling of fulfilling duties. The use of trophies, badges, and ribbons is a recognition that the users have reached new levels or completed challenges.

Bunchball (2010) argues that gamified activities are able to satisfy human desires, creating addictive user experiences that encourage users to take certain actions. In addition, Werbach and Hunter (2012) mention that collecting points are used to encourage people to do things. Thus, points are most likely to be one of the most essential components of gamification.

Another component of gamification is avatars. In a game, an avatar is a virtual representation of a player's character that can take on the role of a magical creature or a medieval warrior (Werbach and Hunter, 2012). Apart from including points, ClassDojo also features customizable characters.

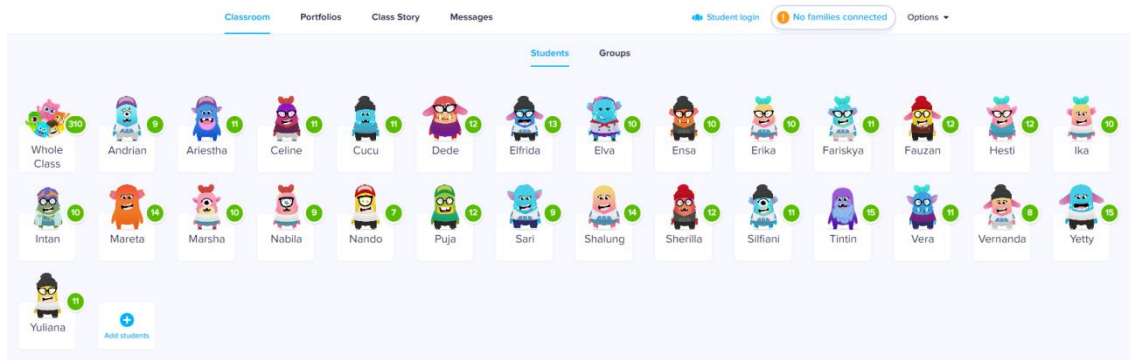


Figure 2: Classroom Interface on ClassDojo.

Kapp (2012) mentions that the character of a person that manipulates a character in the game is a commonly used element in a number of games. The points obtained by students are presented like this alongside their avatars.

The study of implementing ClassDojo in a teaching and learning process is not new and in fact, has been conducted by many researchers.

Santos and Ruiz (2021) investigated the efficiency of ClassDojo to motivate sixth-grader Ecuadorian students' participation during online classes. The participants of the study are 29 sixth-graders with ages 9 to 11 years old. The study is conducted in a private school in Los Rios Province, Ecuador, during English classes. The result shows that ClassDojo motivates students to be more active in online classes, pushes healthy competitiveness, and enhances learning and enjoyment. In addition, using ClassDojo, the students can also learn, interact, and have fun at the same time.

MacLean-Blevins (2013) examined the effects on student conduct of tracking their positive self-monitoring behaviours using ClassDojo and considers students' affective response to using the platform. The study was carried out with 23 third-grade students at Hollywood Elementary School ranging in age from 8 to 10 years old. Ten of the students have been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and are being medicated in accordance with doctor recommendations. The results indicate that students found the ClassDojo fun, engaging, and a fostering forum to challenge themselves to improve. Using ClassDojo, the researcher successfully commends students for showing positive and self-regulatory behaviours.

Seixas, et. al, (2016) evaluated the effectiveness of a gamification platform (ClassDojo and ClassBadges) as a strategy for student engagement in Brazil. There were 61 students participating in this study ranging between 13 and 14 years old. This study concludes that gamification has positive effects on the engagement of students as those with more badges present the highest levels of engagement and vice versa. The teacher's performance is also essential to stimulate the students to do their activities to obtain badges.

Homer, et. al, (2018) conducted an experimental study examining the classroom experience of elementary school ESL students by implementing digital badges and points on ClassDojo. 120 students in eight different classes participated in this study. The experimental group used ClassDojo while the control one employed a conventional point system. The result indicates that most of the students in the experimental group behave notably better than those in the control one. The teacher and the students consider that using gamification in the class has a positive impact on behaviour and motivation.

Based on previously conducted studies, ClassDojo is considered effective in creating a fun competitive environment that allows students to be more motivated and challenged to improve themselves. The use of points is considered the essential element to support the claim. Thus, this study aims to find out students' perceptions of using ClassDojo in the teaching and learning process. There is one research question addressed to be answered by the end of the study: what are the students' perceptions of using ClassDojo in the teaching and learning process?

METHOD

The primary data were in the form of numerical ones. To collect the data, I adapted five steps of the data collection technique proposed by Cresswell (2012) which are 1) determining the participants to study, 2) obtaining permissions needed from the research sites, 3) considering what types of information to collect from several available resources, 4) locating and selecting instruments to use, and 5) administering the data collection process.

The participants in this study are the students of an aviation school. I chose the participants through purposive sampling. Gay (2012) mentions that in purposive

sampling, researchers select the sampling based on their experience and knowledge of the group to be involved in the study. There are three classes that are involved; AC 1, AC 2, and AC 3 which make 77 participants in total. The students range from 17 to 23 years old.

The ClassDojo platform was used to teach English to the participants from 19th August to 4th November 2022. To answer the research question, I conducted a survey study. A survey study aims to gather beliefs or perceptions about a recent issue taken from a large group of people (Lodico, et. al, 2010). In this study, I implemented one of the survey research, which is a cross-sectional survey design. A cross-sectional survey design is used to collect participants' perceptions of a current issue at one point in time and examines current attitudes, beliefs, opinions, or practices (Cresswell, 2012).

I used a questionnaire to obtain the data. Mackey and Gass (2005) state that researchers are able to gather information from which learners can report their beliefs and motivations about learning or their reactions to learning and classroom instructions and activities. Furthermore, questionnaires are less expensive and offer greater anonymity (Kumar, 2011). In addition, I also conducted a few interviews as data triangulation. Basturkmen (2010) states that administering interviews to respondents who completed a questionnaire or developing a set of questionnaire items from information gathered in the interview is commonly conducted.

I utilized the five points of agreement proposed by Likert to analyze the data. Nemoto and Beglar (2013) state that a Likert scale is a psychometric scale with various categories from which respondents choose to indicate their opinions, attitudes, or feelings about a certain issue. In addition, Singh (2006), mentions that Likert Scaling Technique has a five-point scale position being assigned to a scale value as listed in the following table.

Table 1. Five-Point Likert Scale

| | Statement | Scale Value |
|----|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. | Agree | 5 |
| 2. | Tend to agree | 4 |
| 3. | Cannot say | 3 |

| | | |
|----|------------------|---|
| 4. | Tend to disagree | 2 |
| 5. | Disagree | 1 |

All statements are scored from maximum to minimum. I distributed the questionnaire in Bahasa Indonesia for easier understanding. Sugiyono (2013) proposes the Indonesian version of the Likert scale as mentioned in the table below.

Table 2. Five-Point Likert Scale Bahasa Indonesian Version

| | Statement | Scale Value |
|----|----------------------------|-------------|
| 1. | <i>Sangat Setuju</i> | 5 |
| 2. | <i>Setuju</i> | 4 |
| 3. | <i>Ragu-ragu</i> | 3 |
| 4. | <i>Tidak Setuju</i> | 2 |
| 5. | <i>Sangat Tidak Setuju</i> | 1 |

The data were analyzed through descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics are mathematical techniques for organizing and summarizing a set of numerical data (Gall, et al., 2007). After I distributed the questionnaires, I analyzed the data to find out the mean of each statement in the questionnaires. Cresswell (2012) mentions that the mean is calculated by summing all of the scores and then dividing the sum by the number of scores.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, I discuss the results of the questionnaires collected from the participants' responses. The questionnaire consists of 21 statements. Furthermore, I also conducted several interviews to obtain more detailed information supporting the questionnaire.

Students' perspective on the features of the Class Dojo application

Table 3. Students' perspective on the features of the ClassDojo application

| No. | Statements | Degree of Statement | | | | |
|-----|---|---------------------|-------|------|-------|-------|
| | | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 1. | Using ClassDojo is interesting and fun. | 0% | 1.3% | 0% | 26% | 72.7% |
| 2. | The teacher uses ClassDojo well. | 0% | 1.3% | 0% | 16.9% | 81.8% |
| 3. | I've used ClassDojo before. | 29.9% | 33.8% | 9.1% | 16.9% | 10.4% |
| 4. | ClassDojo is easy to use. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 32.5% | 67.5% |
| 5. | The ClassDojo interface is clear and attractive. | 1.3% | 1.3% | 1.3% | 24.7% | 71.4% |
| 6. | The features in ClassDojo are clear and easy to understand. | 0% | 0% | 1.3% | 32.2% | 67.5% |
| 7. | ClassDojo is easy to access. | 0% | 1.3% | 3.9% | 27.3% | 67.5% |
| 8. | I like to view and modify my "monsters" in ClassDojo. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 18.2% | 81.8% |

The statements from numbers one to eight cover the students' perspective on the features of the ClassDojo application. In no. 1, 72.7% of participants strongly agree that using ClassDojo is exciting and fun. Likewise, 67.5% of participants strongly agree that ClassDojo is easy to use and the feature of the application is clear and easy to understand as stated in no. 4 and no. 6. These statements are in line with the data gathered from the interview.

"It's like we are gaming, but we are actually studying. Compared to (Google) Classroom, ClassDojo is more interesting because it has a lot of features. The monster is also easy to customize so we won't get bored." **(Student 4)**

"It (ClassDojo) is interesting because I have my own character (monster)" **(Student 5)**

"It's interesting because we can get points and there is such a cute monster we can easily customize." **(Student 10)**

Moreover, in no. 5, 71.4% of participants strongly agree that the interface of ClassDojo is clear and interesting.

“It’s lively. The interface is exciting.” **(Student 7)**

Another perspective is related to the simplicity of the application. In, 7, 67.5% of participants strongly agree that ClassDojo is easy to access.

“It’s convenient. We don’t have to use any kinds of (website) links.” **(Student 2)**

To put it in context, I also used Quizizz in the teaching and learning process when I wanted to give the participants quizzes. It is most likely that the participants found it less practical because they would need different links for the quizzes. In addition, most of the participants were not familiar with ClassDojo before I introduced it to them. It can be seen in no. 3 which shows that 33.8% of participants disagree that they had used the application before.

“At first, it (ClassDojo) was a bit clumsy to use. I was not familiar with it as it was new for me.” **(Student 2)**

In relation to the teacher’s ability in using the application, 81.8% of participants strongly agree that the teacher uses ClassDojo very well. As stated by Benhadj, et. al. (2019), teachers should teach Digital natives, the Net generation, the Google generation, or the Millennials the way they want to learn. From this section, we can see that most of the participants enjoy using a gamification class management platform, which is ClassDojo. It seems that it is easy to use and access and it has unique features in the form of customizable characters. The teacher also facilitates the use of the application very well.

Students' attitude towards feedback

Table 4. Students' Attitude Towards Feedback

| No. | Statements | Degree of Statement | | | | |
|-----|--|---------------------|------|------|-------|-------|
| | | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 1. | I love earning points in ClassDojo. | 0% | 1.3% | 1.3% | 18.2% | 79.2% |
| 2. | I like to see my points in ClassDojo. | 0% | 1.3% | 7.8% | 26% | 64.9% |
| 3. | I feel anxious when my points are lower than other students. | 1.3% | 1.3% | 6.5% | 22.1% | 68.8% |
| 4. | I try to get more points because my classmates | 1.3% | 0% | 5.2% | 29.9% | 63.6% |

see my points.

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|------|-------|------|-------|-------|
| 5. | I feel sad when I do not get points in ClassDojo. | 2.6% | 1.3% | 6.5% | 27.3% | 62.3% |
| 6. | I feel bored when I do not get points in ClassDojo | 3.9% | 11.7% | 9.1% | 26% | 49.4% |

The table shows the participants' opinions related to the use of points on ClassDojo. It is illustrated in no. 1 that 79.2% of students strongly agree that they like to acquire points in ClassDojo. Moreover, in no. 5, as many as 62.3% of the students strongly agree that they feel sad when they do not obtain points. Likewise, in no. 6, 62.3% of the participants strongly agree that they feel bored if they do not get any points. The students' responses towards the use of points on ClassDojo can also be seen in their statements in the interview.

“I like ClassDojo because I have a lot of scores.” **(Student 3)**

“It (the point) increases my motivation. If my point is so low, I will be embarrassed” **(Student 10)**

A sense of competitiveness is also perceived among the participants. In no. 3, 68.8% strongly agree that they become uneasy when their points are lower than that of their classmates. Furthermore, in no. 4, 63.6% strongly agree that they try so hard to get more points as their classmates can see their points. Their will of being competitive can also be observed in the following transcript.

“If the score is so low, I will challenge myself to be more competitive.” **(Student 7)**

In no. 2, 64.9% of students strongly agree that they like to see their score in ClassDojo. During the implementation of ClassDojo, I regularly displayed the score to the whole class. A number of students responded positively after seeing the score displayed.

“So motivated, sir.” **(Student 11)**

“It is competition so I like to get more points” **(Student 10)**

However, a student who got a lower score responded rather negatively.

“I am ashamed. My score is low so I am ashamed.” **(Student 2)**

It can be assumed that there was a different attitude between participants who obtained a high score and those who got a low score when I displayed the score. This is in line with Seixas, et. al, (2016) stating that gamification has positive effects on the

engagement of students as those with more badges present the highest levels of engagement and vice versa.

Table 5. Students' Attitude Toward the Teaching and Learning Process Using ClassDojo

| No. | Statements | Degree of Statement | | | | |
|-----|---|---------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| | | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 1. | Using ClassDojo encourages me to be more active in answering questions. | 0% | 0% | 3.9% | 20.8% | 75.3% |
| 2. | Using ClassDojo encourages me to be more active in asking questions to the teacher. | 0% | 0% | 11.7% | 26% | 62.3% |
| 3. | ClassDojo encourages me to pay more attention to the teacher. | 0% | 1.3% | 2.6% | 28.6% | 67.5% |
| 4. | Using Class Dojo makes me want to study harder. | 0% | 2.6% | 3.9% | 35.1% | 58.4% |
| 5. | Using ClassDojo increases my motivation to learn English. | 0% | 0% | 1.3% | 23.4% | 75.3% |
| 6. | I like to use ClassDojo when learning English. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 29.9% | 70.1% |
| 7. | I want to use ClassDojo again. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 28.6% | 71.4% |

This table shows the students' attitudes toward the teaching and learning process using ClassDojo. Most of the participants strongly agree that ClassDojo makes them more active in asking questions (62.3%) and answering teachers' questions (75.3%). It can also encourage participants to pay more attention to the teacher (67.5%). In addition, most of the participants seem more motivated (75.3%) and more eager to work harder (58.45) when using ClassDojo.

“When I see the score, I feel motivated to get more.” **(Student 8)**
 “I feel motivated. It is like I want to keep increasing my score.”
(Student 5)

The use of points can be described as a core of the student's interest in ClassDojo. It is in line with Homer (2018) who concludes that the digital badges and points in ClassDojo make students enjoy the learning process and show more positive and on-task behavior. Moreover, positive rewards, like points, create a classroom's sense of

competitiveness. Students found the ClassDojo fun, engaging, and a fostering forum to challenge themselves to improve (MacLean-Blevins, 2013).

In relation to points, I only gave positive points to avoid students being demotivated. As stated by Marouf and Brown (2021), negative points make students unmotivated and less engaged. However, after having some interviews with the students, I find out that the students are fine to be given negative points as they think that it is their consequence of misbehaving.

“That's the consequence (of getting negative points). I personally feel more motivated (by the use of negative points)” **(Student 8)**

“(More motivated) because I am afraid the points will be decreased.” **(Student 6)**

“Perhaps it's good to be our reminder to keep behaving in the class.” **(Student 10)**

Instead of feeling demotivated and less engaged, the students agree that the use of negative points motivates them to behave well in order not to lose some points.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to investigate the students' perceptions of using ClassDojo in English class. ClassDojo has two prominent features which are to be the main interests of the students; points and avatars. Points are already well known to be one of the centers of attention in building a motivating atmosphere in the teaching and learning process. In this study, the students are more motivated and engaged in the teaching and learning process as they strive to earn more points. I did not use any negative points in this study to avoid demotivating the students. Nevertheless, later on, it is found out that the students are fine to be given negative points as a consequence of their misbehaviour. Furthermore, avatars become an essential component of the platform. In this study, the students are eager to customize their own character and enjoy playing it throughout the class. The avatars become the distinctive features of the platform. Therefore, not only points, but avatars are also an essential component of ClassDojo which motivates and engages the students in the English class.

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