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EFFECTS OF REAL LIFE LEARNING AND LIVE LEARNING WITH GAMIFICATION ON ELEMENTARY STUDENTS' FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Abstrak
Pembelajaran majas di sekolah dasar masih menghadapi berbagai kendala karena menuntut kemampuan berpikir simbolis dan kontekstual. Permasalahan tersebut diperparah oleh penggunaan metode pembelajaran yang masih berpusat pada guru sehingga partisipasi siswa cenderung rendah. Penelitian ini bertujuan membandingkan hasil belajar majas antara model *Real Life Learning* dan *Live Learning* berbantuan *educational gamification*, menganalisis perbedaan berdasarkan minat belajar, serta menguji interaksi kedua variabel tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode eksperimen semu (*quasi-experiment*) dan desain *nonequivalent control group*. Data diperoleh melalui tes hasil belajar dan angket minat belajar, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan uji Two-Way ANOVA berbantuan SPSS. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya perbedaan hasil belajar yang signifikan antara siswa yang belajar menggunakan model *Real Life Learning* dan *Live Learning* berbantuan *educational gamification*. Siswa yang belajar dengan model *Real Life Learning* memperoleh hasil yang lebih baik. Selain itu, minat belajar tidak berpengaruh signifikan terhadap hasil belajar siswa dan tidak ditemukan interaksi antara model pembelajaran dan minat belajar. Dengan demikian, model *Real Life Learning* lebih efektif digunakan dalam pembelajaran majas dibandingkan pembelajaran langsung berbantuan gamifikasi

Kata Kunci: *educational gamification*; hasil belajar*; live learning*; minat belajar; *real life learning*

Abstract
Learning figurative language in elementary schools still faces various challenges because it requires symbolic and contextual thinking skills. These problems are exacerbated by the use of teacher-centered learning methods, resulting in low student participation. This study aims to compare students' learning outcomes in figurative language between the Real Life Learning model and Live Learning assisted by educational gamification, analyze differences based on learning interest, and examine the interaction between the two variables. The study employed a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental method with a nonequivalent control group design. Data were collected through learning outcome tests and learning-interest questionnaires and were analyzed using the Two-Way ANOVA test with the assistance of SPSS. The results indicate a significant difference in learning outcomes between students taught using the Real Life Learning model and those taught through Live Learning assisted by educational gamification. Students who learned through the Real Life Learning model achieved better learning outcomes. In addition, learning interest did not have a significant effect on students' learning outcomes, and no interaction was found between the learning model and learning interest. Therefore, the Real Life Learning model is more effective for teaching figurative language than direct instruction assisted by gamification.

Keywords*: educational gamification; figures of speech; learning interest; learning outcomes; live learning; real life learning*

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INTRODUCTION

The internalization of Indonesian language learning at the elementary school level plays a crucial role in fostering students' literacy skills, critical reasoning, communication abilities, and linguistic proficiency. Among the various topics taught, figurative language (majas) is considered content that requires higher-order thinking skills. This is because students are not merely required to interpret texts literally but must also be able to analyze and interpret the implicit symbolic meanings contained within them. Nevertheless, instructional practices at the elementary level continue to face various challenges. Based on preliminary observations and interviews with fellow teachers at SDN Ujung IX/34 Surabaya, the majority of sixth-grade students were found to experience significant difficulties in comprehending the essence of reading materials, identifying contextual meanings, and producing various forms of written work. The limited active engagement of students stems from the dominance of conventional, one-way, and teacher-centered instructional approaches.

As a compulsory subject, Indonesian language plays a vital role in equipping students with the ability to interact effectively through both oral and written communication. Through this curriculum content, students are expected to be able to analyze the essence of texts, construct narratives according to linguistic conventions, and articulate ideas logically and systematically. However, these competencies cannot be optimally achieved when students lack sufficient attention and participation throughout classroom activities. The empirical phenomenon observed at SDN Ujung IX/34 Surabaya confirms that most students perceive Indonesian language as a tedious subject because learning practices tend to emphasize the memorization of theoretical concepts. Previous studies have demonstrated that affective factors, particularly interest and intrinsic motivation, make an important contribution to improving students' academic achievement, both in language-related learning and in other subject areas that rely on language as a medium for transferring information (Nuraini et al., 2020; Rahmawati & Dewi, 2019; Wiradarma et al., 2021).

The complexity of these problems is closely related to the cognitive developmental stage of elementary school children. Based on the cognitive development theory of Piaget & Inhelder (1972), sixth-grade students, who are generally between 11 and 12 years old, are in the concrete operational stage. At this stage, children's knowledge construction is more effective when it is connected to direct experiences and concrete activities related to their everyday lives. This psychological reality requires teachers to adaptively adopt innovative learning models that are capable of connecting theoretical content with students' real-life experiences. The integration of educational games, whether presented in traditional or digital formats, has been empirically demonstrated to stimulate motivation, strengthen conceptual understanding, and develop children's social skills when designed around their authentic experiences (Kapp, 2012).

To address the characteristics and needs of elementary school students, the Real Life Learning model is considered a relevant solution. This approach is derived from the principles of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) (Johnson, 2002), which emphasizes meaningful connections between curriculum content and concrete situations experienced by students. Through this reality-based learning scheme, teachers no longer merely transfer abstract theoretical knowledge but instead act as facilitators who guide students in connecting their prior knowledge with real events in their surrounding environment (Kolb, 1984; Marta et al., 2020). In language learning, contextual activities such as analyzing language variations within the school environment, producing texts based on personal impressions, and examining social phenomena in students' immediate surroundings have been shown to improve conceptual understanding and language proficiency. This approach, which begins with real-life cases, is also effective in stimulating critical thinking and increasing students' sensitivity to the pragmatic functions of language in social contexts (Kolb, 1984; Tobamba et al., 2019).

On the other hand, the acceleration of technology in education has opened new possibilities for digital instructional innovation, one of which is Live Learning. This strategy utilizes digital devices to facilitate direct and synchronous learning interactions, either through blended face-to-face formats or virtual learning platforms. The implementation of Live Learning facilitates real-time two-way communication between students and teachers as well as among peers through discussion sessions, question-and-answer activities, and collaborative projects, thereby transforming the classroom environment into a more active and participatory learning space (Farid et al., 2022; Kahfi et al., 2021). The concept of Live Learning at SDN Ujung IX/34 Surabaya was initially introduced during the pandemic through the distribution of instructional videos and the completion of interactive online worksheets. However, its implementation continued to encounter challenges due to the limited variety of stimuli capable of maintaining students' focus and learning persistence. Consequently, students' concentration was easily disrupted when learning activities lacked interactive elements that could stimulate their interest.

To overcome this limitation, an effective strategic intervention is required to strengthen student engagement, which can be achieved through educational gamification. Gamification refers to the adoption of game mechanics and elements, such as points, badges, leaderboards, progressive challenges, and reward systems, within a non-game learning environment. This approach has been shown to create an enjoyable learning atmosphere, stimulate psychological motivation, and foster active student participation (Sailer & Homner, 2020; Septiani et al., 2025; Subhash & Cudney, 2018). Various empirical studies have demonstrated that gamification can enhance intrinsic motivation and language learning outcomes through interactive quizzes, vocabulary competitions, writing tournaments, and digital simulations. Students who receive gamification-based interventions have demonstrated greater improvements in language proficiency than those exposed solely to conventional instructional methods (Rahmani & Abduh, 2022).

The synergistic convergence of Real Life Learning, Live Learning, and educational gamification is expected to create a more engaging, contextual, and meaningful instructional experience. Through this combination, students are not only provided with learning experiences that are relevant to their real-world lives but are also given extensive opportunities to develop critical thinking, teamwork, and independent learning skills, which are essential for Indonesian language learning in the twenty-first century (Kapp, 2012). However, beyond external factors such as instructional models, internal determinants such as learning interest also play an equally important role in determining academic success. Learning interest represents an intrapersonal psychological disposition manifested through attentional concentration, curiosity, enthusiasm for learning, and overall engagement during classroom activities. Previous research has shown that students with high levels of learning interest demonstrate stronger persistence, participate more actively in classroom discourse, and achieve higher learning outcomes than students with low levels of interest (Erdiana et al., 2024; Zega & Harefa, 2024).

Unfortunately, field data obtained through interviews indicate that students' intrinsic interest in Indonesian language learning remains relatively low. Most students perceive learning activities merely as an academic obligation rather than as an activity driven by intrinsic motivation. This deficit in intrinsic engagement corresponds with their low learning outcomes. Based on these problems, the implementation of a combination of Real Life Learning and Live Learning models assisted by educational gamification is expected to serve as a catalyst for enhancing students' learning interest and improving their learning outcomes through an approach that is relevant, engaging, and responsive to the characteristics of contemporary learners.

Based on the conceptual and empirical gaps described above, this study is specifically designed to examine differences in Indonesian language learning outcomes on figurative language materials between students taught using the Real Life Learning model and those taught using the Live Learning model assisted by educational gamification. Furthermore, this study aims to examine the significance of the effect of learning interest on academic achievement and to identify the interaction effect between the selected learning model and students' levels of learning interest at the elementary school level.

METHOD

A quantitative method with a quasi-experimental design was employed in this study using a Nonequivalent Control Group Design with a 2×2 factorial arrangement. This design was selected due to field constraints that prevented the researchers from conducting absolute randomization of the subjects. Nevertheless, this design remained appropriate for comparing the effectiveness of two instructional models on students' learning outcomes, with learning interest positioned as a moderating variable. In this context, the independent variables examined were the Real Life Learning model and the Live Learning model supported by educational gamification. Meanwhile, the dependent variable was students' Indonesian language learning outcomes on the topic of figurative language.

The study was conducted at SDN Ujung IX/34 Surabaya during the even semester of the 2025/2026 academic year, with the population consisting of all sixth-grade students. The research sample was selected using purposive sampling based on students' comparable academic records and similar initial characteristics. From this process, two classes were selected as research subjects, namely class VI-C (20 students) as the experimental group taught using the Real Life Learning model, and class VI-E (20 students) as the control group receiving Live Learning integrated with educational gamification. Thus, the total number of students involved in the study was 40. The operationalization of the Real Life Learning model was implemented through a series of activities that connected the topic of figurative language with students' everyday empirical realities. The learning process followed five main phases, beginning with concrete experience, followed by reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, active experimentation in a new context, and concluding with an assessment phase. In contrast, the Live Learning model supported by educational gamification was implemented through direct digital face-to-face interaction. This model optimized the use of digital media and adopted game mechanisms such as point allocation, challenge completion, rewards, and interactive stimulation to enhance students' attention and active engagement in the virtual classroom. Primary data were collected using two main instruments: a learning interest questionnaire and a learning outcome assessment for figurative language. The learning interest questionnaire was developed using a four-point Likert scale consisting of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. Through this instrument, students were classified into two categories, namely high-interest and low-interest groups. This categorization was based on the measurement of four psychological indicators, including enjoyment, level of interest, attention, and students' deep engagement during the instructional process. The detailed blueprint and matrix of the learning interest instrument are presented comprehensively in Table 1.

Table 1. Learning Interest Questionnaire Grid

Variable	Indicator	Item Number
Learning Interest	Joy of learning	1, 2, 3
Learning Interest	Interest in figurative language	4, 5, 6
Learning Interest	Attention during learning	7, 8, 9
Learning Interest	Engagement in learning activities	10, 11, 12

The learning outcome test was used to measure students' ability to understand figurative language after receiving the treatment. The test instrument was developed based on the Indonesian Language learning outcomes for Grade VI under the Merdeka Curriculum, covering the abilities to identify types of figurative language, explain their meanings, and apply figurative language in sentences. The test blueprint is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Specification Grid for Indonesian Language Achievement Test on Figures of Speech

Learning Outcomes	Topic / Material	Question Indicators	Item Number
Understanding linguistic elements	Definition of figurative language	Identifying the definition of figurative language	1-3
Understanding types of figurative language	Figures of comparison	Determining the type of figure of speech in a sentence	4-8
Understanding types of figurative language	Figures of opposition / contradiction	Identifying the type of figures of opposition	9-12
Understanding types of figurative language	Figures of emphasis	Determining figures of emphasis in a text	13-16
Analyzing the use of figurative language	Meaning of figurative language	Explaining the meaning of figurative language in a passage	17-20
Applying concepts	Use of figurative language	Using figurative language in a sentence	21-25

To ensure the reliability of the collected data, all research instruments were required to undergo a standardization process through validity and reliability testing before being administered in the field. The validity of individual instrument items was statistically examined using the Pearson Product-Moment correlation formula. Meanwhile, the internal consistency of the instruments was estimated by calculating Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. Based on the results of the pilot-test data analysis, the accumulated scores indicated that all questionnaire items met the established criteria for validity and reliability. Therefore, the research instruments were considered empirically adequate and ready to be used as assessment tools in the data collection process.

The computation and processing of the research data were conducted using SPSS version 26. The statistical analysis consisted of several crucial stages. The analysis began with prerequisite assumption tests, including an examination of data distribution using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test for normality and the Levene Test to assess the homogeneity of variance. After all parametric assumptions were satisfied, the analysis proceeded to hypothesis testing using a Two-Way Analysis of Variance (Two-Way ANOVA) to identify the main effects and interaction effects among the variables. Hypothesis testing was conducted at a 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) to determine differences in learning outcomes based on the instructional model, learning interest, and the interaction between the two variables on Indonesian language learning outcomes concerning figurative language among sixth-grade elementary school students.

RESULT

The primary focus of this scientific investigation is to examine the differences in Indonesian language learning outcomes on the topic of figurative language between students who received the Real Life Learning model and those who participated in the Live Learning model integrated with educational gamification. In addition, this study was also aimed at evaluating the contribution of learning interest and the interaction effect between the instructional model and the internal factor of learning interest on students' learning outcomes. Before proceeding to hypothesis testing, the collected data were first examined through descriptive statistical analysis and a series of classical assumption tests, including tests of normality and homogeneity of variance.

Through the descriptive approach, an overview of the distribution of learning outcome scores for each treatment group could be clearly identified. Based on the results of data processing,

empirical evidence indicated that students who received the Real Life Learning model achieved a higher mean score than students who participated in Live Learning activities supported by educational gamification. The descriptive statistics of students' learning outcomes are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive Results of Learning Indonesian Language on Figures of Speech

Learning model	Learning Interest	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sample Size (N)
Real Life Learning	High	84,35	4,215	11
	Low	79,88	5,102	9
	Total	82,34	4,876	20
Live Learning	High	78,10	3,845	10
	Low	73,44	4,287	10
	Total	75,77	4,356	20
Total	High	81,29	5,023	21
	Low	76,66	5,441	19
	Total	79,09	5,487	40

As shown in Table 3, students who participated in learning using the Real Life Learning model obtained a mean score of 82.34. Meanwhile, students who received the Live Learning model integrated with educational gamification achieved a mean score of 75.77. This difference in scores indicates that the implementation of the Real Life Learning model had a stronger tendency to improve students' learning outcomes on the topic of figurative language. Furthermore, the standard deviation values of the two groups confirmed that the degree of data dispersion was relatively balanced, thereby meeting the requirements for further analysis. Before conducting statistical hypothesis testing using the Two-Way ANOVA procedure, the collected data were required to undergo verification of the basic assumptions, including normality and homogeneity of variance. The normality of the data distribution was examined using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test with the assistance of SPSS version 26. A summary of the results and output of the normality test is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Normality Test Results (Kolmogorov-Smirnov)

Parameter	Value
Sample Size (N)	20
Mean	83.0500
Standart Deviation	8.19159
Most Extreme Differences (Absolute)	0.145
Most Extreme Differences (Positive)	0.105
Most Extreme Differences (Negative)	-0.145
Test Statistic	0.145
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.200

Based on the statistical output presented in Table 4, the obtained p-value was 0.200. This value exceeded the predetermined significance level of 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the distribution of students' learning outcome data was normal. Consequently, the data met one of the essential assumptions required for the application of parametric statistical analysis.

Table 5. Results of the Homogeneity of Variance Test

Method	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Based on Mean	1,279	1	18	0,273
Based on Median	1,262	1	18	0,276
Based on Median and with adjusted df	1,262	1	16,942	0,277
Based on Trimmed Mean	1,298	1	18	0,270

The next step in verifying the data assumptions was to conduct a homogeneity of variance test using Levene's Test. This procedure was conducted to determine whether the variances among the

research groups were equal or homogeneous. A comparison and summary of the homogeneity test results are presented in Table 5.

Based on the results of the homogeneity of variance test, the obtained significance value was 0.273. Since this value was greater than the significance threshold of 0.05, the variability or variance of the data across the observed groups was considered equal (homogeneous). With the assumptions of normality and homogeneity having been satisfied, the empirical data in this study were considered to meet the requirements for further analysis using Two-Way Analysis of Variance (Two-Way ANOVA).

The first hypothesis test was conducted to identify differences in learning outcomes between students who received the Real Life Learning model and those who participated in Live Learning integrated with educational gamification. The second hypothesis test was focused on evaluating the contribution of learning interest to students' learning outcomes. Meanwhile, the third hypothesis test was aimed at determining whether there was an interaction effect between the instructional model and students' level of learning interest on their mastery of figurative language in Indonesian language learning. The statistical results of the Two-Way ANOVA are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Two-Way ANOVA Test Results

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	432.150[a]	3	144.05	14.547	0
Intercept	249640.2	1	249640.2	25211.04	0
Model	430.103	1	430.103	43.436	0
Interest	1.848	1	1.848	0.187	0.668
Model * Interest	0.198	1	0.198	0.02	0.888
Error	356.475	36	9.902		
Total	250428	40			
Corrected Total	788.625	39			

As shown in Table 6, the significance value for the instructional model variable was 0.000. Since this value was considerably lower than the significance threshold of 0.05, it can be concluded that there was a statistically significant difference in learning outcomes between students who received the Real Life Learning model and those who participated in Live Learning supported by educational gamification. Based on this empirical finding, the first hypothesis of the study was accepted.

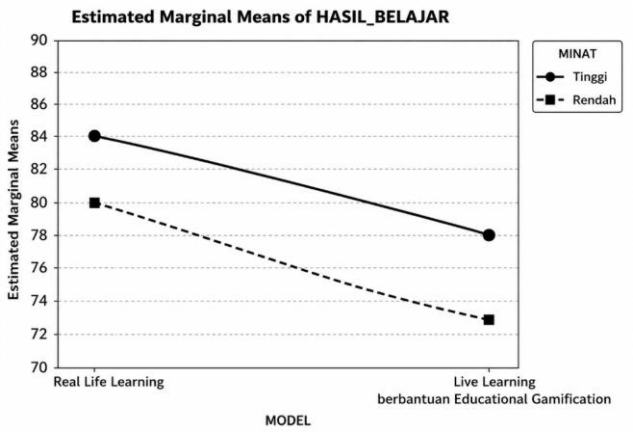
This finding confirms that the implementation of the Real Life Learning model was more effective in improving Indonesian language learning outcomes on the topic of figurative language than Live Learning integrated with educational gamification. Students who participated in instruction based on real-life experiences tended to internalize concepts of figurative language more readily. This may be attributed to the direct connection between the learning content and real-life phenomena encountered in students' everyday environments.

Furthermore, the analysis of the learning interest variable showed a significance value of 0.668. Since this value exceeded the predetermined significance level of 0.05, the results indicate that there was no statistically significant difference in learning outcomes between students with high and low levels of learning interest. Therefore, the second hypothesis of the study was rejected.

This finding indicates that learning interest was not the only psychological determinant influencing students' success in mastering figurative language. Other external factors, such as the appropriateness of the instructional strategies implemented by teachers, the quality of classroom

interactions, and the meaningfulness of the learning experiences encountered by students, may have played a more dominant role in influencing their learning outcomes.

Meanwhile, the analysis of the interaction effect between the instructional model and learning interest produced a significance value of 0.888. Since this value was considerably higher than the critical significance level of 0.05, it can be concluded that there was no statistically significant interaction effect between the instructional model and learning interest on students' final learning outcomes. In other words, the effectiveness of the instructional models implemented by the teacher was independent of the students' level of learning interest. To provide a clearer illustration of the relationship between the instructional model, learning interest, and students' learning outcomes, the results were visualized using an Estimated Marginal Means graph, as presented in Figure 1.



Graph 1. Estimated Marginal Means of Learning Outcomes

The Estimated Marginal Means graph shows that the trends representing students with high and low levels of learning interest tended to move in parallel and did not form a clear intersection. This visual pattern reinforces the results of the previous parametric statistical analysis, which indicated the absence of a significant interaction effect between the two independent variables examined. Nevertheless, students who received the Real Life Learning model consistently demonstrated substantially higher learning outcomes than those who participated in Live Learning integrated with educational gamification.

Overall, the accumulated empirical findings of this study provide scientific evidence that the instructional model made a substantially greater contribution to improving students' learning outcomes than the internal factor of learning interest. These findings highlight an important pedagogical perspective: successful Indonesian language learning outcomes, particularly in the mastery of figurative language, depend considerably on teachers' competence and capacity to design learning experiences that are contextual, meaningful, and aligned with the cognitive developmental characteristics of elementary school students.

DISCUSSION

The computational analysis confirms that the instructional models implemented in this study exerted significantly different effects on students' mastery of figurative language in Indonesian language learning. The empirical findings indicate that students who participated in the Real Life Learning model demonstrated substantially superior academic performance compared with those who learned through the Live Learning model supported by educational gamification. Conversely, students' individual learning interest was found to have no significant contribution to their learning outcomes (Havizul, 2019), and the interaction effect between the instructional model and learning interest was also found to be statistically insignificant. This phenomenon provides a pedagogical basis for the

argument that the effectiveness of instructional processes is not determined solely by students' personal characteristics but is more strongly influenced by the appropriateness of the learning strategies and instructional scenarios orchestrated by teachers in the classroom (Apipia et al., 2025).

The significant difference in learning outcomes between the two treatment groups demonstrates the clear advantage of contextualized content visualization. The higher mean score obtained by the Real Life Learning group confirms that anchoring learning materials in students' everyday empirical realities can facilitate elementary school students' understanding of abstract concepts of figurative language. Theoretically, this finding is consistent with Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory, which conceptualizes the learning cycle into four transformative phases: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Through this approach, students are provided with opportunities to observe linguistic phenomena in their surroundings, reflect on them through group discussions, relate them to the theoretical structures of literal texts, and subsequently apply them in new contexts.

Kolb emphasized that direct involvement serves as a fundamental foundation for the construction of new knowledge structures. Students are no longer positioned as passive consumers of information but rather as architects of their own understanding. In Indonesian language learning, this approach is particularly important because figurative language requires an understanding of contextual and non-literal meanings. When instruction relies solely on theoretical lectures, students may encounter cognitive difficulties in connecting linguistic symbols with concrete realities. This argument is further supported by the developmental theory of Piaget & Inhelder (1972), which places elementary school-aged children within the concrete operational stage, during which they require real-life analogies to process abstract information. Students' active involvement in constructing their own knowledge through authentic experiences not only improves learning outcomes but also contributes to the development of 21st-century competencies, including communication, collaboration, and critical reasoning.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research by Kolb (1984), which reported that learning based on concrete experiences was effective in increasing active engagement while facilitating students' internalization of linguistic concepts. Likewise, Kolb (1984) concluded that the design of authentic tasks could stimulate higher-order thinking skills and improve academic performance among elementary school students. This argument is further supported by research published in JKTP, which emphasizes that the success of instructional design at the elementary level strongly depends on the ability of the learning environment to provide visual and contextual representations that are familiar to children, thereby bridging the gap between abstract theory and empirical understanding (Luis et al., 2020).

On the other hand, the finding that Live Learning integrated with educational gamification was unable to outperform Real Life Learning provides an important basis for further evaluation. Conceptually, synchronous online interaction through Live Learning offers advantages in terms of real-time two-way communication and the utilization of digital learning environments. Nevertheless, the adoption of advanced technology does not automatically guarantee improved conceptual understanding if it is not accompanied by meaningful content that is relevant to students' experiences.

The integration of game elements such as points, badges, leaderboards, and interactive challenges is fundamentally intended to stimulate students' motivation and learning engagement, as formulated by Kapp (2012). However, the findings of this study indicate that the stimulation provided by game mechanics alone is insufficient to optimize cognitive learning outcomes. This finding reinforces the view of Deterding et al. (2011), who emphasized that the effectiveness of

gamification is largely determined by the quality of the underlying instructional design. Gamification should function as a supporting mechanism for facilitating meaning-making rather than as the primary objective of instruction. When digital visualization becomes overly focused on recreation and entertainment without addressing children's real social contexts, its impact on improving learning outcomes may be limited. In the context of instructional technology, literature published in JKTP also highlights that unsuccessful technology integration often occurs when digital platforms are used merely as one-way information delivery tools without incorporating personalized tasks based on real-world problem solving (Aziz et al., 2022). The use of interactive media should therefore extend beyond cosmetic visual elements and engage students in deeper levels of cognitive processing (Kapp, 2012; Kustandi et al., 2021; Pangarti & Yaswinda, 2023).

The second finding of this study reveals an interesting phenomenon in which students' learning interest did not have a significant effect on their academic achievement. This result differs from the dominant perspective in classical research, such as that proposed by Hidi & Renninger (2006), which suggests that individual interest serves as a primary driver of students' attention, curiosity, and persistence in classroom learning. However, in the present study, variations in students' initial levels of interest did not result in significant differences in learning outcomes.

This condition strongly indicates that the instructional design implemented by teachers may exert a more dominant influence in mitigating differences in students' initial characteristics. A meaningful learning scenario based on authentic activities can provide inclusive and equitable opportunities for all students to master the competencies being taught, regardless of their initial level of interest. This finding is consistent with the argument of Indriana et al. (2023), which states that the contribution of learning interest is dependent on the instructional strategies implemented in practice. Through models emphasizing collaboration and empirical exploration, differences in individual motivation can be optimally reduced.

Furthermore, the psychological characteristics of elementary school-aged children, whose motivational states are still relatively unstable, make their learning motivation highly dynamic and dependent on external environmental stimuli, such as teachers' approaches, classroom climate, and the nature of learning activities. This psychosocial condition is relevant to findings reported in JKTP, which indicate that the management of digital and physical learning environments centered on collectively fulfilling students' psychological needs can minimize learning barriers arising from low levels of individual internal interest (Aziz et al., 2022).

The absence of an interaction effect between the instructional model and learning interest indicates that the effectiveness of the Real Life Learning intervention was consistent across different levels of students' learning interest. This is visually demonstrated through the Estimated Marginal Means graph, in which the trend lines between the groups move in parallel without forming a significant point of intersection. The practical implication for instructional management at the elementary school level is that teachers do not necessarily need to implement complex differentiated instructional strategies solely based on students' levels of interest. Instead, greater emphasis should be placed on improving the quality and meaningfulness of the learning scenarios being developed.

Theoretically, these overall findings reinforce the principles of social constructivism, which assert that knowledge is developed through active engagement and reflection on meaningful experiences. From the perspective of educational technology, this study further reinforces the JKTP paradigm that technological sophistication and the adoption of gamification trends cannot serve as an instant solution to pedagogical problems without the integration of authentic pedagogy (Luis et al., 2020). Elementary school teachers are therefore encouraged to shift classroom orientations from text-centered instruction toward contextual activities, such as environmental observation, role-play

simulations, and periodic reflection. The implementation of game elements in learning should also be systematically reconceptualized to ensure alignment with the depth of conceptual mastery required by the curriculum.

Despite presenting important findings, this study has several limitations. First, the research was conducted in only one school with a relatively small sample size (N = 40), which limits the generalizability of the findings. Second, the study was restricted to the topic of figurative language and did not control for other potential confounding variables, such as students' prior knowledge, family background, and digital literacy levels. Therefore, future research is expected to expand the sample across multiple schools and investigate additional external moderator variables to enrich the body of knowledge in educational technology at the elementary school level.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the selection of an appropriate instructional model is an important factor in improving elementary school students' understanding of figurative language. The implementation of learning that connects linguistic concepts with students' real-life experiences and surrounding environment was found to produce a more effective learning process than instruction focused primarily on the use of technology and gamification elements. Meanwhile, students' learning interest was not found to have a direct effect on learning outcomes. The success of learning was instead more strongly determined by teachers' ability to design activities that are contextual, communicative, and aligned with students' developmental stages. These findings indicate that the use of technology in education should primarily serve as a supporting tool for providing authentic learning experiences, thereby deepening conceptual understanding while improving the quality of Indonesian language learning at the elementary school level.

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