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METHODOLOGICAL JOURNAL**<http://mentaljournal-jspu.uz/index.php/mesmj/index>**UNLOCKING ENGLISH PROFICIENCY: THE POWER OF
GAMIFICATION IN LANGUAGE LEARNING*****Khosiyat Turgunova****Master Degree Student**Jizzakh State Pedagogical University**Jizzakh, Uzbekistan***ABOUT ARTICLE**

Key words: key benefits, English learning, gamification, teaching, motivation, skills, educational rank.

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to present the findings of a review of research-based articles on gamification in the context of English learning. Through tweaks and alterations, the notion of games has evolved from self-entertainment to edutainment. This idea has been adopted by teachers in major countries such as Poland, China, and the United States to improve their English classes, with surprisingly favorable outcomes (Rothwell & Shaffer, 2019). These findings prompted the author to learn more about the benefits of gamification and to perform qualitative research as part of the review process. The author gathered and studied thirteen papers from journals and websites. The findings revealed that students benefited from gamification. The most important outcomes were increased motivation, good attitudes, and improved performance, cultivating 21st-century skills.

INTRODUCTION

Today's students are intimately familiar with technology. They are even referred to as digital natives because they are inseparable from technology (Kriyakova, Yordanova, & Angelova, 2014). Games are the most popular technological product among students. According to one study conducted by Basler and Dostal (2015), teenagers spend an average of eight to ten hours each day playing games, either online or offline. According to the study, there is a close association between pupils and the games that they spend the most of their days playing. This would have a significant impact on all aspects of their lives, including their school lives. If teachers are unaware of this, there will be consequences.

In the field of education, gamification is viewed as a novel approach by instructors. However, primarily, it was originally presented in 2002 and used by Bunchball Company in 2005 to inspire its workers to work more intensely and productively through the creation of a few gamified products, such as *Chore Wars* and *Dunder Mifflin Infinity* (Christians, 2018). The business created *Quest to Learn*, a game designed to gamify a sixth-grade classroom, in 2009 after the results were so compelling. The goal of the game was to test if it could improve the students' ability to retain information. Since then, gamification has evolved, been studied, examined, and used in academic settings more frequently.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

According to experts (Deterding, Khaled, Nacke, & Dixon, 2011; Kriyakova, Yordanova, & Angelova, 2014; Healey, 2018), gamification is an innovation in learning that incorporates game aspects into non-gaming situations. Gamification incorporates elements of play or games into the learning environment to increase engagement and involvement. It uses well-designed digital and non-digital games to enhance learners' language (Maloney, 2019). According to Marczewski (2013), gamification is anticipated to enhance students' motivation and dedication while also instilling in them a spirit of competition and positivity. It alludes to and concurs with Healey's (2018) assertion in her study that the initial design of gamification is grounded in psychological theories. She went on to say that gamification included both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, which was derived from Ryan and Deci's 1985 self-determination theory (SDT) and defined as the desire to act, such as learning content, as well as to respond or expect for specific rewards (2018, p. 5). According to the SDT perspective, motivation can result in more interest, excitement, and confidence in motivated individuals, which can then translate into improved performance. These three basic needs are relatedness or connection to others, competence or the sense of gaining skills and mastery, and autonomy or the feeling of being in control.

In its implementation, gamification or game-based learning adapts game elements to engage learners to take part in learning to build learners' problem-solving skills (Kapp, 2012). In countries with high educational rank, such as Ukraine, Poland, US, China, and Netherland, gamification has been familiarized and used by teachers, including English teachers that showed substantial results (Glowacki, Kriukova, & Avshenyuk, 2018; Rothwell & Shaffer, 2019; Antonaci, Klemke, & Specht, 2019). In Indonesian contexts, gamification is started to get familiarized, as well, despite its limited researches. Studies done by YanFi, Udjaja, & Sari (2017) and Mufidah (2016) are evidence. Although these two pieces of research had different foci and were conducted to or indifferent research subjects, the results similarly emphasized that the implementation of gamification was a success in both enhancing learners' interests and motivation in learning, as well as promoting their learning achievements. Moreover, the most surprising result from these researches was gamification did

motivate low-achiever learners that they would take part in learning activities actively without hesitation, even in speaking (Mufidah, 2016; YanFi, Udjaja, & Sari, 2017).

There is one similar study conducted by Dehghanzadeh et al. (2019) entitled Using Gamification to Support Learning English as A Second Language: A Systematic Review. This study was a review of 22 articles about gamification in the ESL context. The results of the study mainly talked about the researches of gamification implementation in ESL, including methodologies employed, types of game applications most used by teachers, and discussion about the impacts of gamifications on students' achievements. This study and the writer's research are similar in terms of its methodology that the writer also employed a reviewing technique in gathering and analyzing the most relevant articles. However, there is a respective gap between the writer's research and Dehghanzadeh's et al. that is the focus of the study. The writer in this research was concerned more about finding out what kinds of benefits that could be obtained by the students after the English teachers implemented gamification in the class. Following the aforementioned background, aimed at displaying and describing the benefits of gamification, the writer would present the analysis results focusing on the benefits of gamification discussed by the most relevant articles gathered. The writer expects that the results of the study can be helpful to accommodate English teachers who are not familiar with or curious about gamification. Also, the study is expected to give broader viewpoints of other possible approaches to conventional teachers to be more innovative and creative to promote their students' learning.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Gamification in education involves integrating game elements and principles into the learning environment to enhance engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes. The goal is to leverage the intrinsic appeal of games to make educational experiences more enjoyable and effective. Here are key aspects of gamification in education:

Game Elements:

Points and Scores: Students earn points for completing tasks or answering questions correctly, fostering a sense of achievement.

Badges and Rewards: Achievements and milestones are recognized with virtual badges or rewards, providing positive reinforcement.

Levels and Progression: Students advance through levels as they accomplish learning objectives, creating a sense of progression.

Competition and Collaboration:

Leaderboards: Displaying scores on leaderboards encourages friendly competition and motivates students to excel.

Team Challenges: Collaborative games promote teamwork and social interaction, fostering a supportive learning community.

Narrative and Storytelling:

Themed Environments: Incorporating a narrative or theme into educational content adds an element of storytelling, making learning more engaging.

Character Development: Students may have avatars or characters that evolve as they progress, creating a personal connection to the learning journey.

Immediate Feedback:

Instant Gratification: Games provide immediate feedback on performance, reinforcing correct actions or guiding students to understand and correct mistakes.

Adaptability: Gamified systems can adapt difficulty levels based on individual performance, ensuring an optimal learning pace.

Real-World Application:

Simulations and Scenarios: Games can simulate real-world situations, allowing students to apply knowledge in practical contexts.

Problem-Solving: Game-based learning often involves challenges and problem-solving, promoting critical thinking skills.

Intrinsic Motivation:

Autonomy: Games provide a sense of autonomy, allowing students to make choices and experience the consequences, fostering intrinsic motivation.

Inherent Fun: The enjoyable nature of games can transform learning into a more enjoyable and less stressful experience.

Technology Integration:

Digital Platforms: Many gamified educational experiences are facilitated through digital platforms and technologies.

Adaptive Learning: Technology allows for adaptive learning experiences tailored to individual student needs.

Overall, gamification seeks to tap into the natural inclination of individuals to play and compete, channeling these motivations into positive learning experiences. When effectively implemented, gamification can significantly enhance student engagement and knowledge retention in educational settings.

Gamification is the integration of game elements, mechanics, and design principles into non-game contexts, such as education, to enhance engagement, motivation, and participation. In the context of learning, gamification aims to make educational experiences more enjoyable, interactive, and effective by leveraging elements commonly found in games.

Key Components of Gamification in Learning:

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Inherent Fun: The enjoyable nature of games makes learning a more engaging and less stressful experience.

Role of Gamification in Making Learning More Engaging:

Increased Motivation:

Gamification taps into intrinsic motivations, making learning enjoyable and motivating students to actively participate.

Enhanced Engagement:

The incorporation of game elements captures students' attention and sustains their interest throughout the learning process.

Sense of Achievement:

Points, badges, and levels provide a tangible sense of achievement, reinforcing positive behaviors and accomplishments.

Personalized Learning:

Gamification allows for adaptive learning experiences, tailoring content and challenges to individual student needs and preferences.

Fostered Collaboration:

Collaborative elements, such as team challenges, promote social interaction and teamwork among students.

Immediate Feedback and Iterative Learning:

Instant feedback allows students to learn from their mistakes and iterate on their understanding, promoting continuous improvement.

In summary, gamification in education transforms the learning experience by incorporating elements that naturally appeal to individuals, fostering increased engagement, motivation, and participation in the educational journey.

English learners often face various challenges as they strive to acquire proficiency in the language. These challenges can be influenced by factors such as the learner's native language, cultural background, and the learning environment. Here are some common challenges faced by English learners:

Different learners enter English language programs with varying levels of proficiency. Tailoring instruction to accommodate diverse proficiency levels in the same class can be challenging. English pronunciation and accents can be difficult for learners, particularly when faced with the varied sounds and intonations in English. Overcoming accent-related challenges may require focused practice and exposure.

Building a rich vocabulary is a persistent challenge. English has a vast lexicon, and learners may find it overwhelming to memorize and effectively use a wide range of words. English grammar, with its intricate rules and exceptions, can be challenging for learners. Mastering grammatical concepts such as verb tenses, articles, and prepositions requires dedicated effort. English learners may encounter challenges related to cultural nuances, idiomatic expressions, and the cultural context embedded in language use. Understanding these aspects is crucial for effective communication. Understanding spoken English, especially in fast-paced conversations or various accents, can be challenging. This difficulty can impact overall language comprehension and communication skills.

Reading in English requires not only decoding words but also understanding context, idioms, and complex sentence structures. Comprehending written material may be a gradual process for English learners.

Expressing thoughts coherently and accurately in written English poses challenges. Learners may struggle with organizing ideas, using proper grammar, and producing well-structured written content.

Some learners may be hesitant to speak or write in English due to a fear of making mistakes. Overcoming this fear is essential for effective language acquisition. Lack of opportunities for immersion and practice in English-speaking environments can hinder progress. Consistent exposure and practice are crucial for language development. Limited access to technology or online resources may impede language learning, especially in a world where digital tools play a significant role in language education. Maintaining motivation over the long term can be challenging, especially if learners face setbacks or do not see immediate results. Persistence is key to overcoming obstacles in language learning.

Understanding and addressing these challenges can help educators and learners develop effective strategies to enhance the English language learning experience. Tailoring instruction to address individual needs and providing a supportive learning environment are essential for overcoming these hurdles. Gamification is a powerful tool in education that can significantly enhance student motivation. Here are several ways in which gamification achieves this:

Gamification taps into learners' intrinsic motivation by making the learning process enjoyable and engaging. The inherent fun of games can inspire students to participate actively in educational activities.

Games often provide clear objectives and goals, giving students a sense of purpose and direction. The presence of achievable goals motivates students to work towards success. Gamified systems offer instant feedback on students' performance. Immediate feedback reinforces positive behaviors and correct actions, providing a sense of accomplishment that boosts motivation. Leaderboards, badges, and other competitive elements create a sense of achievement and recognition. Students are motivated to outperform themselves and their peers, fostering healthy competition.

Gamification allows for personalized learning experiences. Students can progress at their own pace, and the system adapts to their individual needs, making the learning journey more relevant and engaging. Virtual rewards, such as badges, points, or virtual currency, act as incentives for students. These rewards serve as tangible symbols of achievement, motivating students to strive for success. Levels, progress bars, and other visual indicators of progress provide a sense of advancement. Students are motivated by the idea of moving forward and achieving higher levels of competence.

Incorporating a narrative or storyline into educational content adds an element of storytelling, making the learning experience more immersive and captivating. Students become more invested in the learning process. Gamification often includes collaborative elements, such as team challenges. Collaborating with peers fosters a sense of community and shared achievement, boosting motivation.

Games often provide choices and autonomy to players. Allowing students to make decisions in their learning journey gives them a sense of control, increasing motivation. Gamification can simulate real-world scenarios and challenges. Connecting learning to real-world applications enhances motivation by demonstrating the practical relevance of acquired skills. Games naturally present challenges, and overcoming these challenges leads to a sense of accomplishment. The element of challenge keeps students engaged and motivated to succeed. Gamification encourages social interaction, either through competition or collaboration. Social engagement enhances the overall learning experience and motivates students to actively participate.

By incorporating these motivational elements, gamification transforms the learning environment into a dynamic and engaging space where students are motivated to learn, explore, and succeed. It provides a positive and interactive approach that caters to diverse learning styles and preferences.

Several English language learning programs have successfully implemented gamification to enhance student engagement and motivation. Here are a few real-world examples:

Duolingo:

Features: Duolingo is a popular language learning app that incorporates gamified elements to make language learning fun and interactive.

Gamification Elements:

Points and Levels: Users earn points for correct answers and progress through levels.

Lingots (Virtual Currency): Virtual currency can be earned and spent in the Duolingo store.

Streaks: Users are encouraged to maintain daily learning streaks for added motivation.

Rosetta Stone's "TruACCENT":

Features: Rosetta Stone is known for its language learning software, and the "TruACCENT" feature focuses on improving pronunciation.

Gamification Elements:

Speech Recognition Challenges: Users engage in pronunciation challenges and receive immediate feedback.

Scores and Progress Tracking: Users can track their scores and progress over time, creating a sense of achievement.

WordUp by Muzzy Lane:

Features: WordUp is an English language learning game developed by Muzzy Lane.

Gamification Elements:

Story-based Gameplay: The game follows a storyline, making learning contextual and engaging.

Challenges and Quizzes: Users face challenges and quizzes to reinforce vocabulary and grammar concepts.

FluentU:

Features: FluentU is an online language learning platform that uses real-world videos.

Gamification Elements:

Interactive Video Quizzes: Users engage with video content through quizzes and challenges.

Points and Badges: Learners earn points and badges for completing activities and reaching milestones.

BBC Learning English - "The Grammar Games":

Features: BBC Learning English offers various language learning resources, including gamified elements.

Gamification Elements:

Interactive Games: "The Grammar Games" section includes interactive games to reinforce grammar concepts.

Achievement Badges: Users can earn badges for completing challenges and activities.

Kahoot! Language Learning Quizzes:

Features: Kahoot! is a widely used platform for creating and playing quizzes.

Gamification Elements:

Competitive Quizzes: Educators can create language learning quizzes with competitive elements.

Leaderboards: Displaying scores on leaderboards adds a competitive and engaging aspect.

These examples showcase how gamification can be tailored to different aspects of language learning, including vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation improvement, grammar reinforcement, and overall language proficiency. The success of these programs lies in their ability to make learning enjoyable, interactive, and relevant to real-world scenarios. Gamification encourages consistent practice, provides immediate feedback, and fosters a positive and motivating learning experience for users.

CONCLUSION

The key benefits of gamification in English learning can be summarized as follows:

Gamification makes the learning process enjoyable, tapping into intrinsic motivations and encouraging active participation. The incorporation of game elements captures students' attention and sustains their interest throughout the learning process. Games provide clear objectives and goals, giving students a sense of purpose and direction in their language learning journey.

Gamified systems offer instant feedback on students' performance, reinforcing positive behaviors and providing a sense of accomplishment. Competitive elements, such as leaderboards and

badges, create a sense of achievement and recognition, motivating students to excel. Gamification allows for personalized learning experiences, tailoring content and challenges to individual student needs and preferences. Levels, progress bars, and visual indicators provide a sense of advancement, motivating students to continue learning and mastering new skills. Incorporating a narrative or storyline into educational content adds an immersive and captivating element to the learning experience.

Gamification often includes collaborative elements, fostering teamwork and a sense of community among students. Games provide choices and autonomy to learners, allowing them to make decisions in their learning journey and increasing their sense of control. Gamification can simulate real-world scenarios and challenges, demonstrating the practical relevance of acquired language skills. The element of challenge keeps students engaged, promotes critical thinking, and motivates them to overcome obstacles in their learning path.

Gamification encourages social interaction, either through competition or collaboration, enhancing the overall learning experience. Gamification contributes to creating a positive and supportive learning environment, where students feel encouraged to explore and learn at their own pace. The enjoyable nature of games encourages consistent practice, leading to improved language retention and proficiency over time.

In summary, gamification transforms the English learning experience by making it interactive, enjoyable, and tailored to individual needs. It leverages the appeal of games to motivate learners, creating a positive and dynamic environment that fosters language acquisition and proficiency.

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