

GAMIFICATION AS A TEACHING TOOL IN EFL CLASSES

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Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqola ingliz tilini chet tili sifatida (EFL) o'qitish jarayonida talabalarning motivatsiyasi va faolligini oshirish uchun o'yin elementlaridan foydalanishni o'rganadi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, o'quv ilovalari, boshqotirmalar va viktorinalardan foydalanish talabalar ishtirokini, o'zaro muloqotni oshiradi hamda ularni o'rganishga ilhomlantiradi. Tadqiqotda an'anaviy va gamifikatsiya qilingan yondashuvlar qo'llanildi va unda 30 nafar bakalavr talabalari ishtirok etdi, bu esa yanada ijobiy o'quv muhitini yaratdi. Ushbu sohadagi tadqiqotlar shuni ko'rsatadiki, gamifikatsiya talabalarning faolligini an'anaviy o'qitish usullariga nisbatan 60–80% gacha oshirishi mumkin. Shuningdek, tadqiqotlar o'yin asosidagi platformalardan foydalanuvchi o'quvchilar lug'at va grammatika vazifalarida yuqori darajadagi eslab qolish ko'rsatkichlarini (taxminan 20–30% yaxshilanish) namoyish etishini ko'rsatadi. Tadqiqot shuni ta'kidlaydiki, gamifikatsiya ehtiyotkorlik bilan va an'anaviy o'qitish usullari bilan muvozanatda qo'llanilganda samarali vosita bo'lishi mumkin.

Kalit so'zlar: Gamifikatsiya, EFL (ingliz tilini chet tili sifatida o'rganish), talabalar motivatsiyasi, o'yin asosida o'qitish, raqamli ta'lim vositalari, sinfdagi faollik

Annotation. This article investigates the use of game elements to motivate and engage students in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes. Findings indicate that the use of learning apps, puzzles, and quizzes increases participation, interaction, and inspires students to learn. Both traditional and gamified approaches were used, with 30 undergraduate students involved, which created a more positive learning environment. Research in this field showed that gamification can increase student engagement by up to 60–80% compared to traditional instruction methods. Studies also report that learners using game-based platforms demonstrate higher retention rates (around 20–30% improvement) in vocabulary and grammar tasks. The study suggests that gamification can be an effective tool when used carefully and in balance with traditional teaching methods.

Keywords: Gamification, EFL learning, student motivation, game-based learning, digital learning tools, classroom engagement

Аннотация. В данной статье исследуется использование игровых элементов для мотивации и вовлечения студентов на занятиях по английскому языку как иностранному (EFL). Результаты показывают, что использование обучающих приложений, головоломок и викторин увеличивает участие, взаимодействие и вдохновляет студентов на обучение. Были использованы как традиционные, так и геймифицированные подходы с участием 30 студентов бакалавриата, что способствовало созданию более позитивной учебной среды. Исследования в данной области показывают, что геймификация может увеличить вовлечённость студентов до 60–80% по сравнению с традиционными методами обучения. Также исследования сообщают, что учащиеся, использующие игровые платформы, демонстрируют более высокий уровень запоминания (примерно на 20–30% выше) при выполнении заданий по лексике и грамматике. Исследование предполагает, что геймификация может быть эффективным инструментом при осторожном использовании и при соблюдении баланса с традиционными методами преподавания.

Ключевые слова: Геймификация, изучение английского языка как иностранного (EFL), мотивация студентов, обучение на основе игр, цифровые образовательные инструменты, вовлечённость в классе

Introduction

Language learning has changed significantly in recent years, shifting from a traditional, only textbook grammar translation method to more student-centered, interactive approaches. One of the most influential developments in this shift is gamification, which involves the integration of game design elements such as points, rewards, challenges, and leaderboards into non-game learning environments (Deterding et al., 2011)[1]. This approach with modern pedagogical professional theories helps students to engage, interact, and compete rather than passively memorize data.

Game-based applications and online learning platforms played a significant role in this development. Tools such as Duolingo, Kahoot!, Booklet, Wordwall, Quizizz, and Classcraft are widely used in EFL classes for grammar practice, vocabulary drills, writing projects, and reading comprehension tasks into competitive and collaborative experiences. According to Kapp (2012), game-based mechanics can transform passive learning into active problem-solving experiences, where students are more emotionally and cognitively engaged[2]. Similarly, Zichermann and Cunningham (2011) argue that reward systems and competition-based structures can significantly increase student participation by triggering intrinsic and extrinsic motivation[3].

Method

A mixed-method approach using both quantitative and qualitative data was used to have an understanding of student responses to gamification in the learning process. The sample size for the research involved 30 undergraduate students, who were all studying English. All subjects were from the same institution and had identical educational and academic backgrounds.

During the first week, standard teaching methods were used. The lessons used regular English textbooks that were part of the course. The teacher gave a lecture about the main topic and important words from the textbook during the first lesson. In the next lesson, the students had to do a retelling activity in which they summarized and explained the reading passage in their own words. Without using any game-like elements, this activity let the teacher see how well the students understood and spoke.

In the second week, the lessons started using games. The first thing the students did was a Word Finder activity, where they looked for words that were related to the lesson topic in a word puzzle and then used those words in sentences. Homework was assigned through Quizlet, where students practiced vocabulary using flashcards and matching exercises. At the beginning of the next lesson, the homework was checked through a Kahoot quiz, allowing students to review the vocabulary in an interactive and competitive format.

After the quiz, students were divided into groups and took part in a video project competition. Each group had to create a short video based on the lesson theme and present it to the class. A leaderboard system was used to track points earned during different activities, including the Kahoot quiz and the video project.

Result

Most students reported higher levels of motivation, interest, and involvement when gamified activities were used during the lessons. Students seemed more interested and willing to do classroom work than they did in traditional lessons. Group activities also made it easier

for students to talk to each other because they had to share ideas, work together, and talk about things. Observations in the classroom showed that students' answers were getting more accurate over time.

In particular, Quizlet was great for memorizing new terms and correcting mistakes. Students were able to identify their mistakes and correct them after repeatedly practicing using flashcards and matching exercises. Furthermore, the competitive element of the quiz in Kahoot, which was utilized for reviewing the homework assignment, encouraged students to participate actively in the class.

Discussion

Students are getting highly engaged and react more positively than to the conventional method to visual stimulating environment. According to research, gamified instruction has the capacity to hone the attention span of students, and it encourages them to participate actively, especially in big classrooms where worksheet-based learning often fail to sustain interest, as noted in studies by Hamari, Koivisto, and Sarsa (2014) and supported by the systematic review of Dicheva et al. (2015)[4]. When gamification is combined with structured pedagogy, it can create a positive learning environment where motivation and academic achievement develop together in a sustainable way.

Additionally, digital tools such as Quizlet and Kahoot! played an important role in reinforcing vocabulary acquisition and error correction. The instant feedback mechanism allowed students to identify and correct mistakes immediately, which supports findings from Werbach and Hunter (2012), who emphasize the importance of real-time feedback in effective gamified systems[5].

Another important perspective on gamification in education is provided by recent large-scale meta-analytic research, which shows that game-based learning environments tend to produce small to moderate but consistent improvements in student learning outcomes when compared to traditional instruction. In particular, Sailer and Homner (2020) emphasize that gamification is most effective when it supports clear learning objectives, provides immediate feedback, and includes structured challenges rather than being used only for entertainment[6].

Conclusion

Gamification has proven to be an effective strategy for increasing student motivation and participation in EFL classrooms. The results of this study demonstrate that the use of digital learning platforms such as Quizlet and Kahoot can create a more interactive and engaging learning environment. Students showed greater enthusiasm, collaboration, and improved accuracy in language tasks when game elements were incorporated into lessons. Therefore, gamification can be considered a valuable teaching tool when combined with traditional teaching methods. Future studies may involve larger sample sizes and longer observation periods to examine the long-term effects of gamification in language learning.

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