The Impact of Gamification on Students' Motivation Towards Learning System Lessons in Online Classrooms

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Abstract

This Exploratory Action Research project investigates the impact of gamification on students' motivation in online English classrooms. It was conducted at International House Yangon-Mandalay with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) B1/B1+ students. The study addresses the low engagement in traditional textbook controlled-practice exercises by replacing them with games to explore learners' motivation. A mixed-methods approach was used, including questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations. Initial findings revealed a preference for game activities, with students reporting increased motivation and a preference for pair work in most games. The action stage discovered pre-assigned roles in games and examined whether students' preferences shifted due to these roles. The action stage's data showed high student satisfaction with assigned roles and a continued preference for collaborative learning: pair work in vocabulary and group work in grammar. The study observed that role assignments can influence students' engagement and their perceived comfort with applying vocabulary and grammar, suggesting potential benefits for the learning experience. The findings suggest further studies into English learning across diverse proficiency levels and class modes.

Keywords: gamification; online classroom; system lessons; collaborative learning; learners' motivation; exploratory action research

1. Introduction

The use of educational technology has brought remarkable changes to teaching practices. The shift towards online teaching has occurred rapidly, subsequently changing how students are engaged (Atmacasoy & Aksu, 2018). There are multiple disciplines to be considered as part of the online teaching-learning setting when digitalisation comes together with both advantages and side effects in the classrooms. Especially in maintaining interactive online language learning, rapid digitalisation in education has led to new distinct problems regarding greater accessibility and flexibility (Hodges et al., 2020). Thus, one of the systematic approaches that teachers can master in applying in a language education setting is gamification.

Gamification is defined as the use of game-involved features and game concepts in non-game situations (Deterding et al., 2011). It has emerged as a viable method for increasing student motivation and engagement in multiple teaching and learning environments. This approach promotes the chances of success in learning by appealing to social interaction and competition, thus making learning tasks more enjoyable. When it comes to language teaching, gamification brings solutions to some of the most common issues of students' low motivation and concentration difficulties in distance learning (Dehghanzadeh et al., 2019).

Thus, this action research investigates the application of gamification methods in an online English language classroom for students with the Common European Framework of Reference Languages (CEFR) B1/B1+ levels. It explores the impact of game activities on student motivation and engagement while learning two system lessons: vocabulary and grammar. Examining students' specific preferences and behaviours in different game formats (individual, pair, and group), this study investigates gamification aspects in language learning.

1.1 Research Background and the Problem

This research was part of Exploratory Action Research Thailand 2024 (EAR-Th 2024). The researcher was a school teacher in the project, responsible for conducting classroom research after the theoretical and practical training. Thus, this study was conducted at the International House Yangon-Mandalay, Myanmar, with 23 CEFR B1/B1+ level students. Their average age was 28.6. All participants were Myanmar nationality students; some resided in Japan, Singapore, and Thailand. All students were enrolled in a General English four-skills online course that uses the Cambridge Empower series (B1 level).

1.2 English Language Learners' Problems in Myanmar

Myanmar was unfamiliar with the online mode of learning until COVID-19. Gradually, hundreds of online language classes tried to open along with advanced technologies and teaching resources during the first lockdown period. A year later, in February 2021, the Military Coup caused online censorship, internet blackouts in conflict areas, and raised the cost of operators' mobile data and Wi-Fi networks. The average internet bandwidth in Myanmar is not strong enough for users to learn online seamlessly. Moreover, the electricity supplies run with the shift, in which everyone could access electricity for 6-12 hours a day in monsoon and 3-4 hours in summer. The problems continued when the Military Conscription Law was announced in early 2024, leading many young people to avoid going outside at night and forcing them to leave the country (as much as possible). At the same time, they need to learn English for multiple purposes in their destination countries, such as professional communication, business English, and academic English.

1.3 The Problem

The initial observations during online classes revealed that students were not enthusiastic about the typical system lesson exercises from the textbook. Despite following instructions, their engagement seemed lacking. It was discovered when I casually asked their preference for games or exercises in the textbook. I did not use to host many games because I worried that several students did not have a strong connection to engage in the play. However, I realised that they were expecting something more exciting and interactive. This concerned me as the researcher wanted to ensure they got the most out of our lessons. The students were learning through technological devices but doing regular exercises from the coursebook as if they were attending traditional in-person classes. Therefore, this action research focuses on the impact of implementing gamified controlled practice exercises instead of textbook pen-and-paper exercises.

2. Literature Review
2.1 Gamification in Education

The theoretical foundation of gamification in education is rooted in several learning theories. Firstly, constructivism, as proposed by Piaget (1976) and elaborated by Vygotsky (1978), underscores a learner's activity in the construction of knowledge through interaction with the environment and people socially. More research has proved how gamification can perform well with constructivist principles by offering learners interactive, experiential, and gamified learning lessons (Kingsley & Grabner-Hagen, 2015). For example, Hamari et al. (2016) found that some constructivist aspects of gamified learning, such as manual work and group gameplay, were positively associated with learners' learning capability and better construction of knowledge.

2.2 Self-Determination Theory and Motivation

Learners' autonomy dramatically drives modern teaching-learning. One of the defining motivations for students is their self-determination. According to Ryan and Deci's (2000) Self-Determination Theory (SDT), an individual's intrinsic motivation emerges if three basic psychological needs are satisfied: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Gamified learning environments often foster these needs through choice-driven activities, progressive challenges, and collaborative tasks. A systematic review by Sailer and Homner (2020) revealed that elements designed to support learners' autonomy in gamification increased intrinsic motivation while providing feedback on their competencies facilitated greater effort. Additionally, van Roy and Zaman (2019) conducted a longitudinal study that underscored that the learners' satisfaction needs were associated with continued participation in gamified learning with strong autonomy support.

2.3 Gamification in Language Learning

Gamification has proven effective in relieving learner anxiety and motivation-related challenges in language learning. Kapp (2012) contended that educational gamification elevates one's motivation and engagement by exploiting the basic human need for competition, success, and socialisation. This is very important for online students who need to stay engaged in the learning process, especially while being physically away from the teachers (Dichev & Dicheva, 2017).

The use of gamification within online language learning also had its achievements. In one study, Yang et al. (2020) researched the effects of a cognitive complexity-based competition game on English vocabulary learning, developing a system with three levels that automatically adjusted difficulty based on 51 high school students' performance. The study revealed that participants using the adaptive game had significantly better learning outcomes compared to those using a traditional game, particularly with low-achieving students benefiting most from this approach. The study highlighted that effective in-class games should balance between cognitive complexity and gaming challenges to create an optimal "flow state" for learners.

Lee and Hammer (2011) claimed that gamification could motivate classroom engagement, give teachers better tools to guide students, and show that education can be joyful. However, educators need to be aware of its challenges as it might consume teacher resources

or teach students to learn only for external rewards. Successful gamification must address real school challenges, focus on high-value areas, be research-based, and avoid potential dangers.

2.4 System Lesson Acquisitions and Gamification: Vocabulary and Grammar

Systems of the English language contain grammar, vocabulary, phonology, and discourse (British Council, n.d.). This study focuses on vocabulary and grammar, particularly controlled-practice exercises, which will lead the learners to the production stage or freer practice in the English language classroom. There are several benefits of using game activities in delivering input and measuring the output of the learners' system, such as lesson acquisition.

Schmitt (2008) conducted multiple research studies on the effectiveness of vocabulary teaching in second language learning. The article also addresses factors that may assist in vocabulary acquisition, such as the quality of input and learner participation. Schmitt (2008) has pointed out that several contexts of target words should be encountered for successful vocabulary learning, with the repetition of various gamified language learning activities. This supports the idea that learners can improve vocabulary through gamification since learners are provided with active and motivating experiences.

Wu and Huang's study (2017) on gamification in vocabulary lessons claimed its efficiency during an experiment conducted with 94 EFL learners. Learners with gamified lessons had better vocabulary retention, greater motivation to learn new vocabulary, and higher self-reported enjoyment. These findings propose that vocabulary teaching can be greatly assisted with gamification, as it is possible to expose learners to high-quality inputs along with their active participation.

Ellis (2006) reviewed the issue of teaching grammar based on second language acquisition by addressing explicit and implicit teaching, input and output, and various methodologies. Ellis (2006) noted that all learners benefit from a blended approach. In terms of grammar, learners are able to notice grammatical forms and structures while explicit instruction is given, and learn them implicitly because of their procedural knowledge. However, both implicit and explicit grammar teaching forms can be utilised through gamified learning by providing explanations, examples, and explicit correction, as well as through contexts that possess grammatical structures used for everyday communication.

The Schmitt (2008) and Ellis (2006) studies have provided evidence for using gamification in teaching system lessons, especially vocabulary and grammar. Thus, the results stated in these studies can be used to gamify language learning by optimising exposure, input, learner participation, and the ratio of explicit and implicit instruction, and all these improve the learning experience and increase the motivation and engagement of students.

2.5 Exploratory Action Research

Exploratory action research has emerged as a powerful tool for teachers to systematically investigate and improve their teaching practices through two cycles of planning, action, observation, and reflection (Smith & Rebolledo, 2018). Classroom action research is a systematic inquiry made public that involves teachers investigating issues within their classrooms (Dickey, 2024). While traditional academic research often focuses on finding gaps in the literature, teacher-driven classroom research typically starts from practical, specific classroom challenges (Smith & Rebolledo, 2018). Thus, the emergence of fresh, exploratory

action research can enable educators to bridge the needs of practical classroom experience, challenges, and success to existing theory-driven academic studies. This study uses an Exploratory Action Research (EAR) approach. It was conducted in two phases, each guided by specific research questions: an exploratory phase followed by an action phase.

The following three questions were investigated in the EAR first cycle.

1. How do learners feel about playing games to practice grammar and vocabulary system lessons?
2. What types of online games motivate the learners (individual, pair, and team)?
3. What is the role of the teacher while playing games?

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Context and Course Structure

The study was conducted in an online General English course at International House Yangon-Mandalay. The course followed the Cambridge Empower series (B1 level) curriculum, which allocates approximately 30-40% of class time to system lessons (vocabulary and grammar). In a standard 120-minute class session, approximately 45-50 minutes were dedicated to teaching vocabulary or grammar daily. During the research period, these textbook exercises were replaced with game-based activities. Each game activity lasted approximately 15-20 minutes, replacing the original controlled practice portion of the lesson while keeping the teacher explanations and freer practice components intact.

In the action phase, the same frequency of game implementation was maintained (3 times per week), but with the addition of assigned student roles. The games primarily utilised Wordwall, Kahoot, and Baamboozle. Class sessions maintained their regular structure of warm-up activities, presentation of new language, controlled practice (now implemented as games), and freer practice or production activities.

Since this EAR primarily highlighted the impact of gamified controlled practice activities in the class, all the necessary controlled practice activities needed to be transformed into interactive game activities. Thus, Kahoot, Baamboozle, and Wordwall websites were used to create grammar and vocabulary practices into games that can be performed in groups, pairs, and individually. Most activities from the Cambridge Empower series textbook, Units 3 to 5, were focused on seeing the result of the exploratory phase, also named "First Cycle."

3.2 Transformation of Textbook Exercises into Game Activities

The textbook exercises from the Cambridge Empower series (B1 level) were systematically transformed into interactive game activities. For each unit, textbook exercises were redesigned into controlled-practice game activities. In the first example (3.1), a vocabulary exercise that students were supposed to match clothing items was converted into a Kahoot quiz where students selected the correct answer from multiple choices. The second example (3.2) shows how a reading and vocabulary exercise about travel problems was transformed into a Baamboozle team competition where students competed to identify travel-related vocabulary. The third example (3.3) demonstrates how a grammar exercise on modal verbs (must/have to/can) was redesigned as an interactive Wordwall activity where students moved the characters to match the correct modal verbs in context.
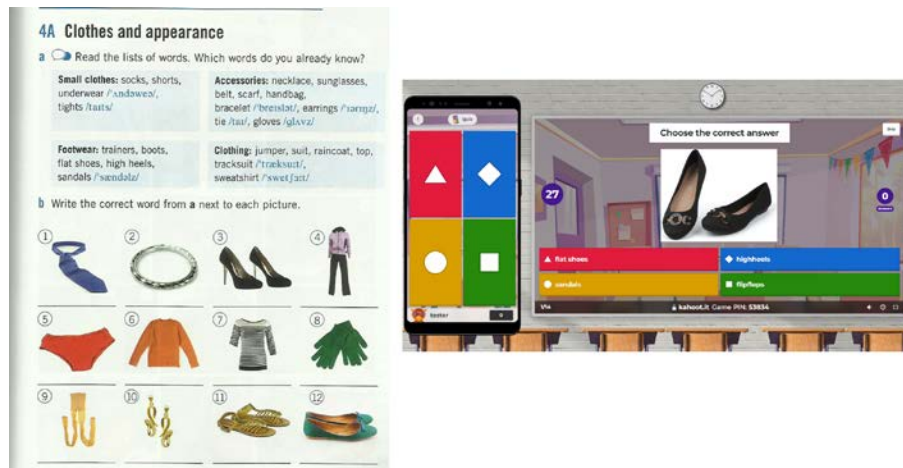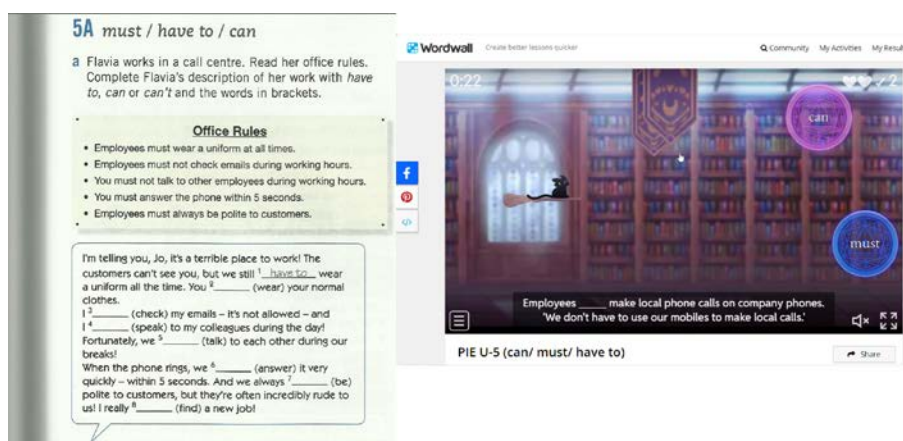
Figure 3.1.
An illustration of how a vocabulary exercise was transformed into a Kahoot activity
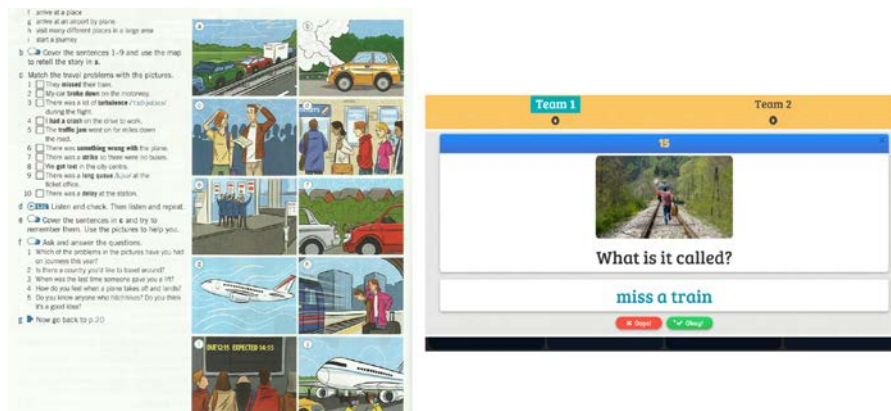
Figure 3.2.
An illustration of how a vocabulary exercise was transformed into a Baamboozle activity

Figure 3.3.
An illustration of how a grammar exercise was transformed into a Wordwall activity

3.3 First Cycle Process

3.3.1 Data Collection

The data collection tool was a bilingual questionnaire developed in Myanmar and English, which allowed participants to answer the questions comfortably in their preferred language. This questionnaire aimed to collect information from students regarding their experiences with different game platforms, the types of activities they preferred, and the levels to which they were comfortable participating.

Particular participants were selected to investigate further information. The semi-structured interviews were conducted in the language the student was most comfortable with and explored the understanding of their motivations, challenges, and suggestions for gamified activities. Seven interview participants were selected based on their interest, participation during the gamified activities, and availability. The interview was conducted in either English or the Myanmar language outside of the class period. Both questionnaires and semi-structured interview questions were developed after careful discussion with two mentors, as the research project period was limited to running a pilot test or cross-checking the validity.

In addition to this, the students were also observed regularly throughout the study period. Observations were documented in the teacher's reflection notes, in which the daily observations were organised week by week. These observations covered the students' behaviours, the level of engagement in the gamified activities, and the interaction patterns within the activities.

3.3.2 Data Analysis Process

The collected data was analysed using qualitative (thematic analysis) and quantitative approaches. The qualitative information was derived from interviews, observations, and reflective journals. Data from questionnaires was quantitatively processed using descriptive statistics to highlight students' participation and preference patterns. This combination of methods created a more holistic approach to understanding how gamification affects student motivation and engagement.

3.3.3 Ethical Considerations

Every participant received written details about the focus of the study. Since all learners were over 18, no additional parental consent was considered. Then, all of their consent was achieved. Information was collected in a manner that had the least or no impact on the normal learning practices. Additionally, the students were informed that the volunteer interviewees might have an additional 10-15 minute section after the class and were interviewed in a one-on-one discussion. To protect students' confidentiality, all information that was collected was anonymised. Furthermore, the research was conducted with the supervision and guidance of the International House Yangon-Mandalay.

4. Results

4.1 Exploratory Phase Findings

The initial investigation unveiled important insights into students' perspectives and preferences towards gamified activities. It was noted that all students like working on both vocabulary and grammar games, with most feeling at ease when playing them. However, every student clearly stated in their interview that vocabulary games facilitated particular aspects of

their learning. There are four benefits they received from playing games in the controlled practice.

1. Visual Learning
2. Engagement & Motivation
3. Memory Techniques
4. Spelling Awareness

The interview data analysis suggests a preference for interactive, visual, and gamified controlled practice for vocabulary learning over traditional exercises. Participant 3 quoted, *"I can learn by telling and listening the answers in the game."* Participant 4 also quoted, *"picture and words together, so that's more memorize* (easier to memorise) *for me.* Finally, Participant 2 expressed their opinion, *"…word practice in the games gives us some awareness to spell them correctly."*(Translated by the researcher). There's also an emphasis on engagement and enjoyment as factors that enhance memory and retention.

Most students revealed information about grammar games during the interview, as follows.

1. Interactive Game-Based Learning
2. Pattern Recognition
3. Word Order and Sentence Structure
4. Contextual Learning
5. Engagement and Accessibility

The result of the interview on gamified grammar activities reveals more comprehensive answers. Participant 1 and 2 stated their opinion, *"Reordering the words to get the correct structure gives us more exposure to the correct use of them in the speaking activities."* (Translated by the researcher). Participant 2 continued, *"extra example sentences in the games make me remember better."* (Translated by the researcher). Participant 7 also supported that idea, *"With the example sentences, it's easy to understand."* Participant 7 also concluded, *"fun and competitive elements of games can keep you motivated to practice more often."*

Thus, "Pattern recognition" emerges as one of the techniques that helps them internalise language patterns. Additionally, word order and sentence structure activities improve their awareness of syntax rules. Contextual learning through example sentences also provides practical demonstrations of grammar in use. Finally, engagement and accessibility feature prominently throughout the responses, with an emphasis on simplicity, clear choices, and enjoyable learning processes.

Table 1.
Students' initial perception towards playing games

Aspect of Game-Based Learning	Mean (out of 5)
Enjoyment of in-class games	5.0
Comfort level while playing	4.3
Helpfulness of vocabulary games	5.0
Helpfulness of grammar games	4.7
Motivation to play after winning	5.0
Motivation to play after losing	4.7

Finally, students were motivated irrespective of the game achievements, which, for other research on the benefits of gamification, is an important factor to consider regarding why students are engaged in their learning.

The analysis of game format preferences revealed the answer to the second research question. The pie charts represented the percentages of 23 students' preferences towards the games. For vocabulary games, approximately half of the class preferred group competition. In grammar games, preferences between group and pair competition were evenly distributed. Notably, very few students expressed interest in individual competition. During follow-up discussions, students mentioned various reasons for these preferences. Some students highlighted the increased opportunities for vocabulary practice, while others appreciated the higher level of activity involved.
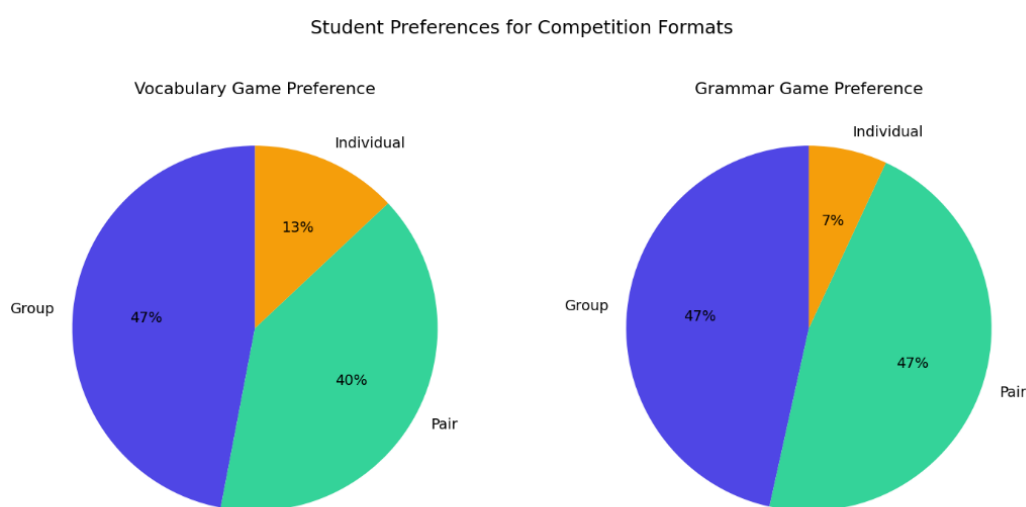
Figure 4.1.
Students' initial preferences towards playing games

The outcomes of the surveys conducted on game format preferences are worth discussing. For vocabulary games, approximately fifty percent of the class respondents selected group competitions. Group and pair competition were equally preferred in grammar games. 7-13% of students appeared to be interested in more individualistic types of competition.

Regarding teacher participation, the students noted overwhelmingly that the instructions given were to the point and easy to understand. Their questionnaire answers showed some appreciation of the different roles, and none of them wished the teacher would take part in the games as a competitor, indicating a preference for a more conventional form of teacher-student relationship in a game situation.

4.2 Second Cycle Implementation

Referring back to the exploratory stage, I planned an implementation stage, focusing on role allocation in practising through games. The plan consisted of students being assigned to three specific roles prior to any group or pair game. These roles included 1) game hosts, who shared their screen and controlled the game; 2) discussion leaders, who negotiated the answers

with other students; and 3) followers, who noted down the answers. This strategy was intended to improve participation and task distribution during the game activities.

Then, action phase research questions were applied to observe the implementation stage and how role shifting influences their preference for the games.

1. What are the students' perceptions of their roles while participating in pair work and group work?
2. How did the students behave while learning in pairs and groups? Were there any differences between the two?
3. Did the students' preferences shift when each was given a role when participating in pair and group work? Why?

The implementation phase lasted around 25 days (more than 3 weeks) and included a systematic rotation so that every student could experience different roles. This strategy was applied to all vocabulary and grammar games from the coursebook, regardless of whether the activities were done in pairs or groups. Special attention was always paid to the technical struggles of some students during the implementation. For example, students using mobile phones were not assigned as hosts because they had limited capabilities.

Finally, the teacher maintained reflective journals throughout the research period, recording the observations and insights about the implementation process. These provided valuable contextual information and helped track the progress of action-stage strategies based on student feedback.

4.2.1 Action Phase Outcomes
Role Assignment Impact. Students enjoyed the role-based approach, as noted from the post-implementation data. 96% of participants enjoyed their assigned roles, whereas 89% noted that participation in activities was easier due to the students' confidence in the structure put into place. The preference for student role assignments was so strong that 92% of students indicated that this method was the most effective for organising group work, which was a systematic approach.

Students demonstrated certain patterns in their preferred styles of learning. For instance, in vocabulary exercises, three-quarters of the participants (73%) said they preferred working in pairs, whereas 68% preferred working in groups during grammar classes. The reasoning behind this is believed to stem from the need for varying types of language learning activities to be designed with an element of collaboration.

The students reported feeling comfortable across the different collaborative formats in equal measure, although they preferred pair work. The mean reported comfort level was 4.2 out of 5 for pair work activities compared to 4.1 out of 5 for group work. These high comfort levels across both formats suggest that the role-based approach successfully created a supportive learning environment regardless of the group size.

Observable Behavioral Changes. Teacher journals and classroom observation showed that students' engagement improved markedly during implementation. Students participated more actively in discussions and were more willing to provide ideas and comments and respond to their peers. Additionally, the quality of interactions among peers improved. Students engaged in more constructive exchanges and collaborative problem-solving. For example, within a group, Student A shared the screen and hosted the game, Student B referred to the textbook to double-check the answers, and Student C led the answer negotiation and discussion. Another significant example is during the Baamboozle game, there was a host and two team members, who accommodated some answer differences and ensured that the other students' spelling and pronunciation were correct. Moreover, task completion rates also improved, indicating students' motivation and commitment to learning activities increased.

The implementation process further revealed significant trends regarding the use of technology. Students with computers and tablets tended to favour hosting roles owing to the ease of screen sharing and navigating through these devices. In comparison, mobile phone users had technical limitations affecting their ability to participate in certain active roles. Nonetheless, students showed great flexibility by employing various techniques for these technical challenges and ensuring they could participate effectively regardless of the type of device used.

5. Discussion

The findings of this action research project reveal several significant insights about gamification's impact on student motivation and engagement in online language classrooms. The results can be analysed through multiple theoretical lenses while considering the practical implications for online language teaching.

5.1 Impact on Student Motivation and Engagement

The results of the exploratory phase showed that the students were comfortable participating in the vocabulary and grammar games. Gamification helps them improve their engagement by using competition and achievement, which aligns with Kapp's (2012) claim that games enhance engagement through natural human inclinations toward competition. Another supporting factor is that all students are motivated regardless of the outcomes of the games, which shows that the level of motivation was high in the first place, even before anything competitive took place.

5.2 Collaborative Learning Preferences

An interesting observation was also noted concerning students' preferences towards collaboration: collaboration in pairs, groups and individually in competitions. During the vocabulary games, around half of the classroom preferred competition in groups, while in the grammar games, there was an even split between group work and pair work. There was a very low preference towards individual competition. This study supports Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory that highlights the role of social interaction in cognitive development. These findings indicate that collaborative game formats are useful for peer learning, especially in situations where social interactions are distant, as in some online learning environments.

5.3 Role Assignment and Structured Participation

The action phase findings demonstrated the effectiveness of structured role assignments, as 96% of students expressed satisfaction with their assigned roles. This high satisfaction rate is consistent with Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of "legitimate peripheral participation," which posits that defined roles within a learning community promote more profound engagement. Different language learning tasks may benefit from specific collaborative configurations, as evidenced by the emerging preference patterns: pair work for vocabulary (73%) and group work for grammar (68%).

Regarding the third research question about preference assigned role shifts, the data showed distinct patterns emerging after role implementation. Different language learning tasks appeared to benefit from specific collaborative configurations, as evidenced by the preference patterns: pair work for vocabulary (73%) and group work for grammar (68%). This represents a shift from the exploratory phase, where preferences were more evenly distributed between pair and group formats. The structured roles appeared to clarify which collaboration format was most effective for different language tasks, suggesting that role clarity might influence format preferences.

5.4 Technology Integration and Adaptation

The implementation revealed critical considerations regarding device limitations in online learning. Students using computers and tablets showed strong preferences for hosting roles, while mobile phone users confronted certain technical constraints. However, the observation data demonstrated remarkable student adaptability in developing strategies to overcome these limitations. This finding contributes to our comprehension of how technological factors influence participation patterns in online gamified learning environments.

The observation data demonstrated student adaptability in developing strategies to overcome these limitations. This adaptation showed that students modified their interaction patterns based on their assigned roles. For instance, mobile phone users developed better note-taking skills as followers, while laptop users excelled in screen-sharing and hosting duties.

Moreover, addressing the third research question, these technological considerations partially explain why preferences shifted after role implementation. Students' comfort with certain roles based on their technological capabilities likely influenced their preference for pair or group formats, depending on their convenience.

6. Conclusion and Implications

This EAR provided insight into gamification and its success, which rests not in introducing games to classes but in carefully implementing them in the way the teacher wants the learners to achieve. Most students responded positively to having distinct responsibilities in-game activities, indicating how structure may enhance the gaming experience. Moreover, students exhibited obvious preferences for different collaborative arrangements: pair work emerged as the favoured structure for vocabulary acquisition, while group work was more beneficial for grammatical practice. These diverse preferences demonstrate how careful attention to activity designs can steer online language learning from a passive experience into engaging and collaborative learning. Students changed their roles to overcome their obstacles. These adjustments should accommodate the different technology worlds that learners practise.

Observation notes suggested that students began incorporating vocabulary and structures from game activities into their independent work, indicating potential for transfer of learning. This study has fundamentally changed my approach to online language instruction as a teacher-researcher.

As a teacher-researcher, this study has changed my approach to online classes. In the future, I plan to continue adapting my teaching practices based on these findings. I intend to differentiate my grouping strategies according to the specific language focus, implementing pair work for vocabulary acquisition where students demonstrated higher comfort levels. Additionally, I will be more attentive to technological equity issues and strategies that ensure all students can participate regardless of their individual limitations. By continuing to apply action research principles to my teaching practice, I hope to create increasingly effective and engaging learning environments adapted to my students' specific needs and preferences.

7. Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations should be considered when analysing these results. The relatively short implementation time of three weeks may limit the generalizability of the results. Future research could address these limits by conducting longitudinal studies to investigate long-term effects and the extent of the transfer; these initial observations suggest that well-designed gamification might help bridge the gap between classroom activities and practical language usage.

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Acknowledgements

Declaration of Possible Conflict of Interest

The author has no financial or conflicts of interest to declare. I hereby certify that the submission is my own original work.

Appendix

Exploratory stage questionnaire

Part 1: Students' background

1. What devices are you using to attend class?
   - o Phone
   - o Laptop/PC
   - o tablet

2. What games have you played in the class so far?
   - o Kahoot
   - o Wordwall
   - o Bamboozle

Part 2: Students' perception

3. How comfortable are you in general while playing games in class?

   No comfortable   1   2   3   4   5   very comfortable

4. How easy/challenging do you find the games in general?

   Very easy   1   2   3   4   5   very challenging

5. Which games do you like the most for vocabulary exercises?
   - o Kahoot
   - o Wordwall
   - o Bamboozle

6. Which games do you like the most for grammar exercises?
   - o Kahoot
   - o Wordwall
   - o Bamboozle

7. Do you enjoy playing games for vocabulary exercises?
   - o Yes
   - o No
   - o If yes,

8. What mode of competition do you like the most for vocabulary exercises?
   - o Individual competition
   - o Pair-by-pair competition
   - o group competition
   - o playing against the teacher

9. Do you enjoy playing games for grammar exercises?
   - o Yes
   - o No
   - o If yes,

10. What mode of competition do you like the most for grammar exercises?
    - o Individual competition
    - o Pair-by-pair competition
    - o group competition
    - o playing against the teacher

11. Do you think games help you remember the vocabulary exercises better?

              Disagree   1   2   3   4   5   Agree

12. Do you think games help you remember the grammar exercises better?

              Disagree   1   2   3   4   5   Agree

13. Do you feel motivated to play next time when you win the game?
    o Yes
    o No
    o It depends / Sometimes (probably)

14. Do you still feel motivated to play when you lose the game next time?
    o Yes
    o No
    o It depends / Sometimes (probably)

15. What would you like your teacher to be/do while playing vocabulary games?
    o Game host (*screen share like Kahoot*)
    o Judge
    o Contestant
    o Observer

16. What would you like your teacher to be/do while playing grammar games?
    o Game host (*screen share like Kahoot*)
    o Judge
    o Contestant
    o Observer

17. How often does your teacher give complete instructions and rules before the games?

              Never 1   2   3   4   5   Always

Interview Questions
18. How does playing games help you learn vocabulary and grammar?

Action stage questionnaire

1. Did you enjoy the roles you were assigned by the teachers in the learning activities?
    • Yes
    • No

If you answered "**Yes**," **why** did you enjoy your role?
If you answered "**No**," **why** didn't you enjoy your role?

2. For vocabulary learning activities, which do you prefer?
    • Pair Work
    • Group Work

Why?

3. For grammar learning activities, which do you prefer?
    • Pair Work
    • Group Work

Why?

4. In pair work activities, which role did you prefer?
  • a person who is reading the questions and discussing
  • a person who is discussing and writing the answers
  • a person who is screensharing and playing
Other:

5. How comfortable did you feel in your assigned role during pair work?
very uncomfortable   1   2   3   4   5   very comfortable

6. Do you think pair work helped you learn the material better?
  • Yes
  • No
  • Maybe
Please explain your reason

7. In group work activities (e.g., Wordwall, Kahoot, Baamboozle), which role did you like the most for **vocabulary** games?
  • team leader (who mostly leads the discussion)
  • team member (who mostly follows the discussion)
  • game host (who mostly shares the screen fpr the games)

8. In group work activities (e.g., Wordwall, Kahoot, Baamboozle), which role did you like the most for **grammar** games?
  • team leader (who mostly leads the discussion)
  • team member (who mostly follows the discussion)
  • game host (who mostly shares the screen for the games)

9. How comfortable did you feel in your assigned role during group work?
very uncomfortable   1   2   3   4   5   very comfortable

10. Do you think group **work helped you learn** the lesson better?
  • Yes
  • No
  • Maybe
Please explain your reason

11. Did you feel more **challenged** when working in:
  • Pairs
  • Groups
  • Equally challenged in both

12. In which setting do you think you learned more?
  • Pair work
  • Group work
  • Both equally

13. Do you feel you learned more about the lesson by having assigned roles in the games? Please explain.