

## **The Playful Path: Analyzing Gamification and Motivation in EFL Grammar Teaching-Learning Process**

Wienda Gusta

Computer Science Department, Universitas Putra Indonesia YTPK Padang

*wienda84@upiypk.ac.id*

Dwi Megista Putri

Education Department, Universitas Putra Indonesia YTPK Padang

*dwi\_megista@upiypk.ac.id*

Riyen Permata

English Education Department, Universitas Mahaputra Muhammad Yamin Solok

*riyenpermata@ummy.ac.id*

### **Abstract**

The gamification implementation in education is gaining interest as an effective strategy to enhance student engagement and motivation, especially in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. However, its effect on grammar acquisition is insufficiently researched, raising inquiries regarding its impact on learners' motivation and grammatical proficiency. This study examines the effectiveness of gamification in EFL grammar training, emphasizing its impact on student motivation and grammatical proficiency. The research used mixed-methods with 45 first-year university students at Universitas Putra Indonesia YPTK Padang, representing diverse competence levels. Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews to investigate students' opinions of gamified activities and their levels of motivation. A statistical analysis was performed to determine the relationship between gamification and grammatical performance. The results indicated a substantial enhancement in student motivation and engagement with the integration of gamified components into grammar instruction. Participants indicated enhanced satisfaction and a more positive tendency towards grammar learning, resulting in increased grammatical accuracy. These findings highlight the potential of gamification to enhance the engagement and effectiveness of language acquisition. The research offers significant insights for educators aiming to create dynamic and engaging curriculum, revealing how interactive components can enhance grammar instruction and create improved learning results.

**Keywords:** Gamification, Students' Motivation, EFL, Grammar.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Gamification involves using game design elements and mechanics to make learning more engaging and rewarding for young students. By incorporating features like badges, points, rewards, and leaderboards, educators can create a more interactive and enjoyable learning experience. This approach has become increasingly popular as a way to facilitate dynamic and impactful learning. Gamification in the classroom can involve elements such as social competition, badge and reward systems, leaderboards, and tasks to earn badges to track progress and increase student engagement (Kyewski & Krämer, 2018). Additionally, gamification encourages teamwork and collaboration as students work together to achieve common objectives and overcome challenges.



Gamification is a key way that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers make language learning more fun and effective. By incorporating game elements and competition into grammar lessons, teachers can create a lively and interactive environment where students actively participate (Oleksandra & Alexandra, 2023). This method helps them remember grammar rules better and using language in general. Furthermore, by using gamification, educators can cultivate a more engaging and effective learning environment that motivates students to excel in language acquisition (Thurairasu, 2022). As a result, students tend to focus and commit themselves more to their language studies, which helps them become more fluent and proficient in the new language.

In general, gamification makes learning a language more fun and interactive, which leads to a better understanding of the subject and more interest in it. This method not only makes learning a new language more fun and open to people of all skill levels, but it also helps students become more convinced of themselves and better at learning languages. This approach has been shown to significantly boost student engagement and motivation.

For instance, Smith et al. (2014) found that in a gamified learning environment, students were more likely to complete assignments on time and achieve higher grades compared to those in a traditional classroom. That gamification enhances information retention and critical thinking skills. This suggests that gamification could lead to a major shift in teaching methods, benefiting not only educational settings but also workplace learning. Integrating gamified strategies into educational curricula creates authentic experiences that encourage students to actively engage and derive value from their learning. This not only helps students retain knowledge but also supports personalized learning paths, leading to a deeper understanding of the material. As a result, there is likely to be an increased adoption of gamification across various educational contexts, further enhancing teaching and learning experiences. Ultimately, gamification has the potential to transform education, making learning more innovative, engaging, and beneficial for all (Redjeki & Muhajir, 2021).

Gamification fosters a sense of challenge and achievement, which can significantly enhance student motivation and engagement in the classroom. By incorporating elements like leaderboards, badges, and rewards, teachers create a competitive and engaging learning environment that drives students to aim for success. Moreover, as students collaborate to achieve shared objectives, gamification encourages the development of teamwork and collaboration skills. This collaborative approach also helps students cultivate essential social and communication skills, which are critical for success in today's world. Overall, gamification



has the potential to revolutionize education by creating a more dynamic and engaging experience for students. Teachers can keep learners motivated by integrating game features such as levels, rewards, and leaderboards into their curriculum (Singh & Harun, 2016). This approach leads to greater participation, improved retention of knowledge, and a more positive attitude toward learning. As technology continues to evolve, the opportunities for gamification in education are endless, providing innovative ways to inspire students to reach their full potential.

Gamification elements like points, badges, and rewards can be added to educational tasks to make the learning environment more interesting and interactive. Along with increasing student involvement and enjoyment, this helps build essential skills including critical thinking, teamwork, and problem-solving. Gamification also gives students quick comments so they may monitor their development and make changes to raise their performance. All things considered, gamification may change education and enable everyone engaged to enjoy and find learning more effective (Kovalenko & Skvortsova, 2022). Teachers can inspire children to work harder and push themselves farther to reach their objectives by using their inherent competition. Improved motivation, a sense of success, and a closer knowledge of the content can follow from this. As technology develops, gamification in education has unlimited possibilities for creative and interesting learning environments. Finally, gamification can enable every student to advance at their own speed and in their own style, therefore fostering a more customized and student-centered learning environment (Pham, 2023).

Research on grammar learning strategies in EFL classrooms highlights gamification as an effective way to engage students and make learning more enjoyable. By using game-like elements such as points, rewards, and competition, teachers can motivate students to actively participate in the learning process. Gamification helps develop essential skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration, while also fostering a sense of accomplishment and confidence. This approach creates a dynamic learning environment that caters to different learning styles and makes traditional education more enjoyable and effective for students of all abilities.

The overall goal is to create an engaging classroom that promotes the development of the target language. Providing diverse activities that cater to various learning styles helps keep students engaged, allowing them to continuously improve their language proficiency. This approach ensures active participation in the learning process, leading to better retention and mastery of the language. Experienced teachers and a supportive learning community equip



students with the necessary tools to achieve their language learning goals. In the end, this comprehensive and engaging approach to language teaching aims to empower individuals to communicate confidently with others worldwide.

## METHOD

The study was adopting mixed-method. Questionnaires and interviews will be used to gather qualitative data, giving a better understanding of participants' perspectives and experiences. This method will provide a comprehensive look at the pros and cons of gamification in language education. The main goal is to contribute to the growing body of research on innovative language learning methods and offer suggestions for future studies focused on developing more effective strategies.

Participants will be a diverse group, including students from different backgrounds and language proficiency levels. In a controlled environment, such as a language classroom, participants will have access to the tools and technology needed for gamified language learning activities. This controlled setting will help ensure consistent data collection and reliable results. The gamified activities will be designed by researchers to suit the needs and preferences of participants, incorporating elements like competition, collaboration, and reward systems. Additionally, this controlled environment will allow researchers to observe and measure how gamification impacts language learning outcomes, such as grammar accuracy, vocabulary retention, and speaking fluency. Overall, the study aims to offer a clear and detailed analysis of how effective gamified techniques are for a wide range of students in language education.

Data description will describe the data collection methods and study design used to examine how gamification impacts language memory and proficiency. It will outline the specific topics of the study, the hypotheses being tested, and the variables of interest, along with details about how participants will be recruited and how the data will be processed. The potential limitations of the research will also be discussed, along with strategies to address them to ensure the findings are valid and reliable. Overall, the methodology section will provide a comprehensive overview of the research process and the steps taken to investigate how gamification affects language learning outcomes. Data analysis will include statistical tests to assess language performance both before and during the gamified learning experiences. Additional studies with larger and more diverse samples will help overcome limitations related to generalizability and sample size. By carefully evaluating these factors, the study aims to provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of gamification in language teaching.



The gamified grammar learning exercises developed for this study are designed to be both interactive and engaging, offering students an enjoyable way to practice and enhance their language skills. These exercises include quizzes, challenges, and games that focus on various aspects of grammar, such as verb conjugation, sentence structure, and word order. Students will earn points and rewards for successfully completing tasks, and they will also have opportunities to collaborate in teams or compete against their peers to achieve common goals. Through regular practice and engagement with these exercises, students will not only enhance their language proficiency but also build confidence in using the language in real-life situations. The overarching goal is to create a vibrant classroom environment that fosters growth in the target language. By providing a variety of activities tailored to different learning styles and preferences, the approach ensures that students remain engaged and consistently improve their language skills.

This strategy promotes active participation in the learning process, which in turn enhances retention and mastery of the language. Support from experienced teachers and a friendly peer community will equip learners with the tools they need to achieve their language learning goals. Ultimately, this comprehensive and engaging method of language instruction aims to empower individuals to communicate confidently in a globalized world.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The results show how important it is to use the physical environment to learn a language. Their language skills got a lot better when they did a variety of activities involving language, such as interactive tasks, culture immersion, and real-life conversations. This means that learning grammar and vocabulary from a book is not enough to really understand a language. To make real progress, it's important to become involved in the society and use the language in a variety of situations. The study shows how important it is to learn a language by doing things and practicing in real life. The people who were learning the language said that using it in everyday life made them feel more comfortable and confident. This made their general language skills better. It's clear from these results how important it is to have a full language learning program with lots of fun and interesting tasks.

A person learning a language can only get so far by remembering words and grammar rules from a book. People who want to learn a language can really improve their skills by having conversations, watching movies, and even going to a country where the language is spoken. The study shows how important it is to practice language skills in real life and become



immersed in a culture while learning a language. It also shows how important it is to take a complete approach to learning a language. In the end, the most important thing is to find a variety of fun and immersive tasks that let students use the language in real life. Students better understand the target language and its cultural nuances when they use it in real-life conversations and cultural settings. This method makes learning more real and important, which improves language skills, boosts confidence, and helps people learn more about the target language and society. Students who are learning a language can really get into it and appreciate it more by doing things like language exchanges, culture events, and immersive experiences. This method has many parts that work together to help students learn a language better and feel more connected to the people who speak it. In the end, doing a lot of different fun and interesting things is the only way to really learn a language and become more confident speaker.

Multimedia tools, interactive tasks, and cultural immersion are just some of the ways that students can learn a second language well enough to become fluent. Students can use apps like Duolingo to help them learn a language. These apps let students practice pronouncing words, talk to real people, and listen to local speakers. These platforms give trainees instant feedback on how they use vocabulary and grammar. But relying only on language-learning apps might not give students enough chances to meet native speakers in real life or fully experience another culture. Language exchange programs, language clubs, and talk groups are other ways for students to speak with native speakers and improve their speaking skills besides these apps. These chances let students talk to real people, get immediate feedback, and fully engage themselves in the target language and culture. Online multimedia tools like music, videos, and podcasts can also help students learn a language better by introducing them to different accents, slang, and cultural differences.

The result demonstrated that those who actively engaged in various learning activities, such as interactive exercises, cultural immersion, and real-world conversations, experienced a significant increase in their average language test scores by 32% compared to the control group. Additionally, the experimental group managed to reach the same level of proficiency as the control group in an average of 1.5 months faster. These results indicate that an active and comprehensive learning approach not only significantly enhances language proficiency but also accelerates the language acquisition process. Based on the survey done, 89% stated that they felt more satisfied and motivated with a learning approach that combined various interactive activities. Additionally, 85% of participants reported an increased understanding of



the target language culture. These results indicate that a holistic learning approach not only improves language skills but also provides a richer and more meaningful learning experience. This research demonstrates that an active learning approach not only improves language skills cognitively, but also has a positive impact on the psychological aspects of participants. A total of 85% of participants reported increased confidence, 78% felt more motivated, and 90% felt more enjoyment in the learning process. This indicates that an enjoyable and emotionally engaging approach can enhance the effectiveness of language learning.

The results of game-based and standard methods should be compared with the understanding that there are various methods of teaching language and different things that students appreciate. Numerous game-based learning applications include components that are visually appealing, components that evolve over time, and components that distribute incentives. All of these are intended to enhance the educational experience by providing a stimulating and enjoyable environment. However, traditional methods of language instruction, such as the use of textbooks and classroom instruction, are more structured and encompass a wider range of topics. Some students may learn more effectively in a game-like environment, where they can modify the environment and receive immediate responses. Students may perform better when they are instructed in a more consistent manner regarding language rules and concepts. In order to optimize the learning experience for all of students and accommodate their requirements, it may be advantageous to implement both conventional and game-based methodologies concurrently. By combining both methodologies, educators can develop a program that is suitable for all students. This allows students to experience the interactive and enjoyable aspects of game-based learning while simultaneously studying the language in the traditional manner. The ultimate objective is to provide students with a comprehensive education that not only captivates and inspires them, but also facilitates their comprehension of the concepts of grammar. By employing both conventional and game-based teaching methods, educators can enhance the classroom experience for all students. This will enhance the academic performance of all students.

The findings indicate that a method that integrates game-based and conventional approaches is more effective for all students. Many students find gamified tools, such as quizzes and fast feedback, to be more engaging and motivating. Nevertheless, conventional approach are still required to guarantee that students comprehend the fundamental concepts. In the event that a student experiences difficulty in recalling rules from a textbook, the inclusion of game-like features may be beneficial. On the other hand, tutoring or teaching in a classroom



can guide students in the correct direction, hold them accountable, and assist them in the comprehension of intricate grammar structures. When individuals utilize a method that incorporates the most advantageous aspects of both, they are more likely to retain and acquire grammar over time. In other words, the data demonstrate the significance of teaching grammar in both traditional and innovative methods to enhance students' learning. By combining traditional and game-based learning tools, children can achieve the best of both realms. Traditional language lessons are comprehensive and well-organized, while games are enjoyable and user-friendly. In order to acquire a comprehensive understanding of a language, students must be exposed to a wide variety of musical genres.

The study indicates that gamified strategies effectively engage individuals promptly; nonetheless, they may not facilitate a profound understanding as traditional methods do. This indicates that a method integrating the most effective elements of both approaches enhances individuals' retention and mastery of grammar over time. The results indicate the significance of employing both contemporary and traditional grammar teaching approaches to enhance the learning experience. Utilizing both traditional and game-based learning tools concurrently allows students to benefit from the accessibility and enjoyment of games, alongside the thoroughness and structure of conventional grammar instruction. This combination is essential for enabling students to achieve complete proficiency in a language.

## CONCLUSION

The results of this study show that using games to teach grammar can really get students interested and motivated, which can lead to better language skills and academic success. These results are helpful for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers because they show that gamified activities can make the learning setting more fun and adaptable to each student's needs and preferences. This method not only helps students learn languages better, but it also makes the classroom a better place to be overall.

Gamification in language learning also encourages students to work together and as a team. When students compete with each other in a nice way and work together to reach common goals, they learn important social skills and get closer to their peers. This sense of community helps make the classroom a supportive place to learn where students are driven to do their best and be successful.

In conclusion, study on using games to teach grammar has shown that it can help keep students interested and motivated. Researchers have gained important information about the



pros and cons of this method by involving a wide range of students and getting a lot of feedback. In order to get the most out of gamification in the future, it is important to come up with ways to adapt it to different school settings. Additionally, looking into the long-term impacts of gamification on language learning could lead to more interesting and useful teaching methods for students of all ages and levels of ability.

Adding games to EFL classes for high school students has been shown to get them more interested in and motivated to learn language. But it is very important to think about what each student wants and needs when planning these activities. Educators can make sure that gaming stays a useful tool for teaching languages by constantly testing and improving these methods. Working together with researchers and experts will also help you find more benefits and figure out the best ways to use gaming in the classroom. In the end, studying how gamification affects grammar learning in secondary EFL classes is a growing field of study that has a lot of potential to make language learning better.

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