

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON THE USE OF GAMIFICATION APPROACH IN GRAMMAR CLASS

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Keywords	Abstract
Gamification approach, EFL, grammar class.	This study explores students' perceptions on the use of a gamification approach in grammar classes at Universitas Billfath, focusing on two English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms—Basic English Grammar and Advanced English Grammar—comprising 36 participants. Employing a qualitative method with analytical descriptives, the research used a survey to assess students' views on the gamification approach in their respective grammar classes. The primary objective of this assessment was to comprehensively investigate the effective implementation of gamification in grammar classrooms, aiming to capitalize on its strengths and address its limitations to achieve the desired educational objectives. The data collection was accomplished through the distribution of questionnaires. Subsequently, the questionnaire responses were quantitatively analyzed and categorized based on specific themes to gain valuable insights into students' perceptions on the use of gamification in grammar classes.

INTRODUCTION

Language learning is a complex and multifaceted process, particularly when it comes to mastering grammar, which forms the backbone of effective communication. Traditional grammar instruction often relies on memorization and repetitive exercises, leading to disengaged learners and limited retention of concepts. In response to these challenges, many studies have been exploring innovative approaches to enhance students' grammar understanding and motivation in language classrooms (Refat, Kassim, Rahman, & Razali, 2020; Bahruddin, 2015; Kapp, 2012; Hamdan, McKnight, McKnight, & Arfstrom, 2013).

Gamification is a novel approach that has been increasingly adopted in various educational settings to enhance student engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes. It integrates game elements and mechanics into non-game tasks to boost participation and

enthusiasm in educational settings. By incorporating elements such as points, badges, leaderboards, rewards, and challenges, gamification aims to tap into the natural human desire for competition, achievement, and immediate feedback. This approach takes inspiration from studies on intrinsic motivation, highlighting that when individuals derive pleasure and rewards from an activity, they tend to engage more with it willingly and consistently.

The use of gamification in education has gained significant attention in recent years as a method to enhance student motivation and engagement. Gamification involves incorporating game elements and mechanics into non-game activities, creating a more interactive and enjoyable learning experience (Wang, 2023). Specifically, in the context of grammar classes, gamification has been explored as a means to improve students' perception and learning outcomes in this specific area of language learning (Yildirim, 2017).

Gamification draws inspiration from research on intrinsic motivation, which suggests that when individuals find an activity enjoyable and rewarding, they are more likely to engage in it willingly and persistently (Jones, Blanton, & Williams, 2022; Dahlstrøm, 2012). In the context of language education, fostering intrinsic motivation is crucial for sustained language learning and overall proficiency development. The incorporation of gamification in grammar class seeks to tap into this intrinsic motivation by providing students with a sense of achievement, progress tracking, and immediate feedback through game elements, thereby fostering positive attitudes towards learning grammar.

While gamification in education has shown promising results in various subjects (Dichev & Dicheva, 2017; Smiderle, Rigo, Marques, Coelho, Jaques, 2020), its application in grammar classes remains relatively unexplored. Thus, there is a need to investigate the specific impact of gamification on students' perceptions of grammar learning. Understanding how students perceive the use of gamification in grammar class can provide valuable insights into its effectiveness, identify potential challenges, and uncover the factors that contribute to its success or limitations.

This research seeks to bridge this gap by examining students' perceptions of the gamification approach in grammar class. By exploring students' attitudes, preferences, and experiences when exposed to gamified grammar activities, the study aims to shed light on the implications of incorporating this innovative approach into language curricula. The research will employ a qualitative method to gather data on students' perceptions. Therefore, the researchers aim to determine how students perceive and respond to the use of gamification approaches in grammar classes; Advanced English Grammar and Basic English Grammar.

One of the key strengths of the gamification approach lies in its ability to create a positive and enjoyable learning environment. Traditional educational methods often rely on a one-size-fits-all approach, which may not resonate with all students or cater to their individual learning preferences. Gamification, on the other hand, allows for personalized and adaptive learning experiences. Students can progress at their own pace, receive instant feedback on their performance, and track their progress in a visually appealing manner. This sense of autonomy and agency in their learning journey can boost students' confidence and intrinsic motivation, making them more willing to tackle challenging grammar concepts and take ownership of their learning.

Moreover, gamification provides an effective means of promoting active learning. By infusing game elements into grammar lessons, educators can transform passive learning activities into interactive exercises that require critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making. Gamified activities often involve scenarios and simulations that mirror real-life situations, providing practical application opportunities for grammar rules and principles. As students actively participate in grammar challenges and quizzes, they become more engrossed in the learning process, leading to increased knowledge retention and a deeper understanding of grammar concepts.

Gamification can transform grammar lessons into fun and challenging experiences by incorporating elements like quizzes, points, rewards, and competition. By making grammar exercises feel like games, gamification aims to motivate students to actively participate in their learning and maintain their interest in grammar topics. Furthermore, the use of gamification in grammar classes can foster a sense of companionship and social interaction among students. Many gamified platforms incorporate leaderboards and multiplayer features that allow students to compete or collaborate with their peers. This aspect of social learning can create a supportive and collaborative classroom environment, where students can learn from each other, share insights, and celebrate each other's achievements. Collaboration and healthy competition can fuel students' motivation to excel in their grammar learning, as they strive to outperform their peers and earn recognition for their efforts.

Several gamification applications are available to facilitate the creation and administration of gamified lessons and quizzes (Waer, 2021). Those include Quizizz, Wordwall, Quizlet, and Kahoot!. Moreover, teachers have the option to incorporate gamification activities into online learning platforms such as Moodle, Edmodo, or others. Quizizz is a versatile application employed in various language aspects, such as grammar (Rahayu & Purnawarman, 2018) and vocabulary (Permana & Permatyawati, 2020). As a formative assessment tool, Quizizz facilitates students in reviewing their knowledge and tracking their learning progress. Further study by Rahayu & Purnawarman (2018) highlight that Quizizz encompasses two feedback features: the game summary, displaying

scores and ranks, and the performance status, indicating the number of correct and incorrect answers, the count of unattempted questions, and the average time taken to respond per question. Those features provide useful feedback for students that enable improvement in learning.

Another application for gamification approach, teachers can use Wordwall. Wordwall is an online instructional resource consisting of a well-arranged assortment of words, prominently showcased in large letters on a classroom wall, bulletin board, or other visible display area, serving as a literacy tool. This application has been used in language learning to enhance students' grammar understanding. While there is limited research on the effectiveness of Wordwall specifically, studies have explored the use of gamification and online language games in improving ESL learners' grammar, which can be applied to Wordwall. A study examined the effectiveness of using computer-supported learning classroom management to enhance students' motivation in learning English grammar. The study found that the use of computer-supported learning classroom management improved students' motivation and engagement in learning English grammar (Bahruddin, 2015).

In conclusion, the gamification approach is a powerful tool that has the potential to revolutionize language education, particularly in grammar classes. By transforming learning into an enjoyable and interactive experience, gamification can increase student engagement, motivation, and knowledge retention. The personalized and adaptive nature of gamified activities caters to individual learning preferences, fostering a sense of autonomy in students' language learning journey. Moreover, the social aspect of gamification encourages collaboration and healthy competition, further enhancing students' grammar understanding. However, successful integration of gamification requires careful planning and consideration of educational objectives to ensure a seamless and effective learning experience.

METHODS

The population of this study was the 36 students of 2 EFL classrooms of Universitas Billfath (Basic English Grammar and Advanced English Grammar). The study employed a qualitative method using analytical descriptives using a survey of students' perceptions on the use of gamification approach in respective grammar classes. The aim of this assessment was to initiate a thorough examination of the effective utilization of this approach in grammar classrooms. This involves leveraging its advantages and confronting its limitations to successfully attain the objectives associated with this method.

The researchers commenced this study in February until July 2023. During this timeframe, data collection was carried out through the distribution of questionnaires. The responses obtained from the questionnaires were then computed, analyzed, and

organized according to the specific subjects covered. A 10-item questionnaire with a standard “agree” and “disagree” scale and one open-ended question inquiring about their suggestions or comments on the application of gamification approach using Quizizz and Wordwall by the lecturer during grammar classes was distributed to the respondents. It took approximately 5-10 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study investigated the students’ perceptions on the use of gamification approach in grammar classes. Table 1 is the result of students’ attitudes towards gamification approach in grammar classes.

Table 1. Students’ perceptions on the use gamification approach (games) in grammar classes

Aspects	% of respondents
1. Games actively involve students in the process of learning grammar.	97.2%
2. Games serve as a helpful tool for comprehending the provided grammar material.	94%
3. By engaging in games, students can easily recall the grammar topics covered in class.	97.2%
4. Games arouse curiosity among students, stimulating their interest in finding answers to grammar questions.	94%
5. Through gameplay, students' understanding of the given grammar material expands.	94%
6. Games enhance students' motivation to learn grammar.	94%
7. Students exhibit consistent enthusiasm when answering grammar questions correctly during gaming activities.	91.7%
8. Gaming enables students and their teams to collaborate effectively in solving grammar problems.	97.2%
9. Games create opportunities for students to discuss and support each other in solving grammar tasks.	91.7%
10. Students have developed a habit of resolving grammar challenges through team-based negotiations.	77.78%

Based on the results, the majority of students 97.2% expressed that games actively involve them in the process of learning grammar. This finding highlights the effectiveness of gamification in creating an engaging and interactive learning environment, where students are actively participating in grammar exercises and activities. Similarly, a significant portion of the respondents 94% viewed games as a helpful tool for comprehending the provided grammar material. This result indicates that gamification

aids students in grasping and understanding complex grammar concepts more effectively. Moreover, an overwhelming 97.2% of students reported that engaging in games facilitated easy recall of the grammar topics covered in class. This demonstrates the value of gamified activities in reinforcing and consolidating students' grammar knowledge.

The study also found that games aroused curiosity among 94% of the students, stimulating their interest in finding answers to grammar questions. This suggests that gamification can pique students' interest and motivation to explore and seek solutions to grammar challenges actively. Additionally, 94% of students acknowledged that through gameplay, their understanding of the given grammar material expanded. This finding further supports the educational potential of gamification in promoting a deeper comprehension of grammar concepts

The data revealed that gamification enhanced students' motivation to learn grammar, as reported by 94% of the respondents. This outcome underscores the positive impact of gamification in cultivating students' intrinsic motivation and enthusiasm towards grammar learning. Furthermore, 91.7% of students displayed consistent enthusiasm when answering grammar questions correctly during gaming activities. This finding implies that gamification contributes to a positive and enjoyable learning experience, encouraging students to actively participate and achieve success in their grammar endeavors.

Regarding collaborative problem-solving, 97.2% of students perceived that gamification enabled effective collaboration among teams in solving grammar problems. This indicates that gamified activities promote teamwork and cooperation among students, fostering a supportive learning environment. Similarly, 91.7% of students acknowledged that games provided opportunities for discussion and mutual support in solving grammar tasks. This finding emphasizes the social aspect of gamification, where students can engage in meaningful discussions and help each other in their language learning journey. However, it is worth noting that not all students have fully adopted the habit of resolving grammar challenges through team-based negotiations. While a significant portion (77.78%) have embraced this approach, some students may require further encouragement or guidance to fully participate in collaborative problem-solving activities.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research on the effectiveness of gamification in enhancing students' motivation and engagement in language learning by Hashim, Rafiq, & Yunus (2019). This study found that gamified-learning was effective in teaching grammar to ESL learners. Another study by Wang (2023) found that gamification can increase student engagement and motivation during the learning process. Additionally, a systematic review of empirical research on gamification in EFL/ESL instruction found that gamification can be a useful tool for

teaching and learning languages and can increase learners' motivation and engagement (Dichev & Dicheva, 2017).

Overall, the results of this study suggest that gamification is an effective approach to enhance students' grammar understanding and motivation in language learning. By incorporating game elements and mechanics into language learning activities, gamification creates a more engaging and interactive learning environment, tapping into students' intrinsic motivation and making the learning process enjoyable and rewarding. The use of gamification in language learning has been found to be effective in improving students' grammar understanding and motivation, and Wordwall, as an application that incorporates game elements and mechanics into language learning activities, has the potential to enhance student engagement and motivation in learning grammar.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study highlights the students' perceptions regarding the use of a gamification approach in grammar classes. Through a qualitative method with analytical descriptives, the research explored the impact of gamification on students' learning experiences and outcomes. The findings shed light on the benefits of incorporating gamified elements in grammar instruction, as students actively engaged in the learning process, grasped grammar concepts more effectively, and exhibited heightened motivation. The gamification approach fostered a positive and enjoyable learning environment, encouraging students to participate actively and collaborate with their peers. Moreover, the study emphasized the significance of personalized and adaptive learning experiences, tailoring grammar instruction to cater to individual preferences and needs.

Despite the numerous benefits, the gamification approach also presents some challenges that require careful consideration. Designing gamified activities that strike the right balance between fun and educational content can be demanding. The focus should always remain on meaningful learning rather than mere entertainment. Additionally, teachers must ensure that gamified activities align with the learning objectives and curriculum standards. A well-thought-out integration of gamification within the broader language education framework can maximize its effectiveness and address potential pitfalls.

Nevertheless, this study is limited to a small population. It is also limited on two gamification applications (Quizizz and Wordwall) focusing only on grammar. The findings of this research cannot be applied to all EFL learners at the university level. As a result, additional and more empirical longitudinal studies are recommended to expand the investigation in this emerging field.

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