

## USING GAMIFICATION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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**Annotation:** This article explores the teaching method known as gamification, highlighting its benefits and potential drawbacks within the educational process.

**Key words:** Gamification, motivation, game mechanics, non-game, methods, drawbacks, leaderboard.

**Аннотация:** Данная статья предоставляет информацию о методе обучения под названием геймификация, а также содержит сведения о его преимуществах и недостатках в образовательном процессе.

**Ключевые слова:** Геймификация, мотивация, игровая механика, неигровой, методы, недостатки, таблицы лидеров.

**Annotatsiya:** Ushbu maqola gamifikatsiya deb nomlangan o‘qitish metodi haqida ma’lumot beradi, uning ta’lim jarayonidagi afzalliklari hamda kamchiliklari haqida ma’lumotlar bilan ta’minlaydi.

**Kalit so‘zlar:** Gamifikatsiya, motivatsiya, o‘yin mexanikasi, o‘yin bo‘lmagan, metodlar, kamchiliklar, a’lochilar doskasi.

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, educators around the world have been searching for innovative approaches to enhance student motivation and engagement in language learning classrooms. One such method that has gained popularity is gamification. The gamification of learning is an educational approach that seeks to motivate students by using video game design and game elements in learning environments. The primary goal is to make learning more enjoyable and engaging by sparking students’ interest and encouraging them to stay involved in their studies. Gamification generally involves identifying the features that make games enjoyable and using those features in non-game settings, such as classrooms to influence student behavior positively [1]. It has many advantages over traditional learning approaches, including:

- Boosting learners’ motivation
- Enhancing the ability to retain knowledge
- Improved learner involvement through social features such as badges, points, or leaderboards [2].

Although modern gamification became popular in the early 2000s, its roots go back much further. For example, in 1896, Sperry and Hutchinson Co. was founded in Alabama and soon gained national popularity. They introduced “Green Stamps”,

which customers earned after spending a certain amount of money. These stamps could be collected and later used to purchase specific products, forming an early customer loyalty program. This was S&H's method of encouraging repeat business through a rewards system. Even though the setup was somewhat complex, it stands out as one of the earliest instances of gamification.

Another early example was the Boy Scouts of America, which implemented a badge system. This system quickly became a key symbol of the organization and a motivational tool for achievement. The Boy Scouts of America implemented a badge system in 1908, which is considered one of the earliest instances of gamification. This system became a symbolic part of the organization. Such early practices laid the foundation for modern gamification, which blends engaging game-like elements into different areas to boost involvement and motivation.

In 1981, American Airlines launched its Advantage program—a loyalty initiative for frequent flyers aimed at building customer loyalty.

As video games advanced, gamification methods became easier and more innovative. The actual term "gamification" was introduced in 2002 by game developer Nick Pelling. Later, in 2005, the company Bunchball was established. Bunchball remains active and is known for creating gamification solutions to this day.

### **METHODOLOGY**

Emotionally engaging and interest-driven stories connected to gamification activities can spark users' interest and lead to positive emotional responses, thereby enhancing their involvement.

With the growth of the internet and widespread access to digital tools, the use of games in education has become increasingly common and effective. Video-game-inspired methods grounded in gamification principles are now widely used in classrooms. Research shows that gamification can significantly enhance learning by boosting concentration, proactive behavior, and participation in online settings. Additional studies have found that gamification positively impacts language learning by fostering a more relaxed and engaging learning environment. Various studies have explored how personality traits and individual differences affect academic performance and language acquisition. The findings generally support that gamification is a helpful teaching strategy. It not only introduces game-based elements into non-gaming contexts but also promotes a comfortable, motivating, and engaging environment for learners. These characteristics are believed to interact with gamified systems to influence academic outcomes. Some studies have shown mixed results when examining how personal traits affect language learning through gamification, especially among healthcare students learning English.

Here are some gamification experts:

Professor Karl Kapp is widely recognized as a leading expert in the field of instructional technology, known for his scholarly work, authorship, and teaching. Over the course of his career, he has penned six best-selling books, most notably *The Gamification of Learning and Instruction* (2012). His keynote talks, coaching

sessions, and workshops are held in high regard not only among gamification professionals but also within the broader learning and development community.

Dr. Sebastian Deterding is an accomplished designer and researcher who founded the Gamification Research Network, a platform created in 2010 that stands among the first of its kind. Acting as a collaborative hub for scholars and students delving into gamification, the GRN fosters communication and knowledge sharing within this growing field. Dr. Deterding remains a passionate proponent of gamification, firmly believing in its potential to reshape how we learn and engage with digital experiences.

Dr. Marigo Raftopoulos is a specialist in digital media whose research has significantly contributed to increasing awareness around gamification. She is also a well-respected business consultant who leverages games and gamification strategies to foster innovation and help businesses grow. With her international influence and strong commitment to the impact of gamification, Marigo is widely recognized as a leading voice in the field.

Gabe Zichermann is a writer and speaker who has dedicated himself to applying game mechanics in areas outside of traditional gaming, such as business and education. He is widely recognized as a passionate advocate for gamification. Through his TED Talks, he emphasizes how game-based techniques can effectively engage learners who might otherwise remain unmotivated.

Monica Cornetti was recognized as the world's top Gamification Guru by Leaderboard. As a speaker and gamification designer, she collaborates with both organizations and individuals aiming to think outside the box and achieve extraordinary outcomes. Notably, she held the No.1 spot on the 'Gamification Gurus Power 100' list in both 2015 and 2016. Monica is considered one of the leading voices in gamification design, especially in the realm of corporate learning.

## RESULTS

At its core, gamification in education refers to the purposeful use of game-like features and principles in learning environments to boost student engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes. By bringing the thrill and satisfaction found in games into the classroom, gamification can revolutionize how education is delivered. Tools like badges, leaderboards, and rewards appeal to the natural human drive for achievement and growth, encouraging learners to actively pursue and master new knowledge and skills.

As its advantages become more widely acknowledged, the gamification industry is projected to grow at an average rate of 28% annually through 2030.

An experiment involving 365 students from the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the National Technical University of Athens in Greece examined the impact of a web-based gamified tool called Horses for Courses on students' learning in statistics. The study revealed that using challenge-based gamification significantly boosted student performance—showing an improvement of 89.45% compared to traditional lecture-based teaching. Overall, students' academic outcomes improved by 34.75%.

## DISCUSSION

Gamification has become a popular strategy in various sectors, but it's not without its drawbacks. From psychological impacts to unintended consequences in business and education, the dark side of this trend deserves attention. While gamification aims to boost engagement, it can decrease intrinsic motivation over time. When external rewards become the primary driver, users may lose interest in the activity itself. This phenomenon was first proposed by the “over-justification hypothesis”.

Leaderboards and competitive elements, while engaging for some, can become a source of stress for others. Gray et al. (2018) discovered that fitness apps with leaderboard systems often promoted unhealthy competition over user well-being. This constant pressure to perform and compare oneself to others can increase anxiety and decrease self-esteem.

## CONCLUSION

To sum up, Gamification, as an innovative and effective strategy in English language teaching, revolutionizes conventional classroom activities by turning them into engaging, motivating, and interactive experiences. This approach not only encourages active student participation but also plays a crucial role in skill development while creating a positive and inclusive learning environment. Although it may not be a universal solution for every classroom, when implemented thoughtfully and strategically, gamification can significantly enhance the learning process. By making English language learning more dynamic, enjoyable, and relevant, it offers a powerful means of engaging 21st-century learners in a way that aligns with their interests and learning styles. Ultimately, gamification brings a sense of excitement and purpose to language learning, fostering an atmosphere where students are more motivated to participate and succeed.

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