

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GAMIFICATION IN ENGLISH GRAMMAR LESSONS

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15119794>

Abstract: The general study of this research is situated at the intersection of educational technology and language acquisition, specifically examining how gamification can enhance English grammar instructions. Gamification is an educational strategy that uses game mechanics and components to enhance learning in order to increase motivation, engagement, and retention of information. It entails using games or activities that resemble games to reinforce and teach academic concepts and abilities. The ability to understand grammar is crucial for language fluency, yet many students find it difficult to grasp the intricate structures and rules that underpin grammatical ideas. Grammar issues among students constitute a major barrier to learning a language. The aim of this study is to determine, based on earlier research, the efficacy of game-based learning strategies in grammar acquisition. Key studies highlight that gamification, overcomes conventional barriers like nervousness and lack of confidence by including features like rewards, challenges, and interactive tasks into learning experiences. Gamified platforms increase continual student participation and intrinsic motivation by providing ongoing feedback and reward systems. The data was analyzed using both statistical methods for the quantitative elements (t-tests, ANOVA) and thematic analysis for the qualitative components, allowing for triangulation of findings across multiple data sources. The statistical significance of these results ($p < .01$) and their consistent pattern across different measures suggest that gamification has substantial potential to transform grammar instruction effectiveness, particularly for students who struggle with traditional approaches.

Key words: gamification, English language teaching, grammar instruction, student engagement, educational technology, motivation.

Introduction

The integration of game elements into educational contexts has gained significant attention in recent years, particularly in language learning. This chapter introduces the concept of gamification and its emerging role in English language acquisition. Gamification refers to integrating game elements and mechanics into non-game contexts, such as educational activities (Hanus and Fox, (2015). By incorporating elements like competition, rewards, challenges, and progression, gamification aims to create an engaging and immersive learning environment that motivates students and encourages active participation (Marell-Olsson, 2021). In the context of teaching English language skills, gamification offers the potential to make language learning more enjoyable, interactive, and effective (Hanus and Fox, 2015).

Teaching a language is a complex process that calls for carefully planning and implementing a strategy while carrying it out, whether foreign language learners are very keen on in studying grammar. They frequently request that their teachers teach them the fundamentals of foreign language grammar so that they can simplify a complex set of rules.

The usefulness of games in teaching grammar to students at varying levels is the focus of the current essay. This work reflects the variety of scientific research conducted by various

scientists on this topic. This publication presents the theories, viewpoints, and data of several scientists involved in game analysis. Thus, the study's goal was to demonstrate how well games teach grammar as a sub-skill to students.

Method

Although grammar is defined in many sources as the rules that comprise the structure of language, children find it difficult to learn the rules and become bored as a result. It's interesting to note that language grammar appears to be a challenging subject to master, even for adults. In our opinion, this is not the case. It is well known that the methods used to teach grammar should be straightforward and, of course, engaging. Referring back to the previous point, language instructors should make the content a little bit simpler and easier to understand while also boosting the children's interest in learning the grammar of a foreign language, because young children do not yet possess the cognitive analysis skills. When teaching is a subject, particularly a foreign language, to students this age, the principle of demonstration works well. Because young children are naturally enthusiastic and do not require a perfect understanding of grammar to communicate in English, it is not necessary for them to have perfect grammar knowledge. As a result, it is ideal for the grammatical content that is taught to kids to be engaging, intelligible, and fun.

The best method to keep kids interested in the early phases of learning English is to incorporate games into the lessons. Grammar lessons that incorporate games are also highly engaging. Scientists have shared their thoughts on games in this context.

According to Haldfield (1999): "A game is an activity with rules, a goal and an element of fun... Games should be regarded as an integral part of the language syllabus, not as an amusing activity for Friday afternoon or for the end of the term."

This definition strongly values the relevance of games in teaching. Haldfield (1999) adds: "Games can be used at all stages of the progression from controlled to free practice, serving at one end of the range as a memory aid and repetition drill, at the other as a chance to use the language freely and as a means to an end rather than an end in itself. They can also serve as a diagnostic tool for teacher, who can note areas of difficulty and take appropriate remedial action."

Hadfield also highlights how games can be used effectively. Pupils are never motivated to complete assignments. In order to give students an opportunity to practice or apply the newly learned language elements joyfully and voluntarily rather than making them do the activities against their will, games are strategically employed to encourage participation. When pupils can play and learn at the same time, it works better.

Dutch zoopsychologist F.Ya.Bentendijk considers the game as a special form of activity, which includes experimentation, manipulation, imitation, which contributes to the formation and development of imagination, fantasy, and intellect. The object of his consideration is a game as an activity with an object, which involves the recognition of familiar features and the perception of something new in the object.

In his opinion, a person is not only able to rise above reality, above everyday circumstances and the properties of things, but a person is a player and this is his nature.

Game theory from a sociological standpoint falls under more general interpretations of social behavior, social processes and movements. D.Riesman, K. Rainwater, M.Neumer and E.Neumer, as representatives of this approach, believes that the game is a special activity

determined by the current physical condition and social attitudes of a person, corresponding to the life of a group or groups, of which the person is a member. The study of the group nature of the game sent researchers to study the processes in the recreational group ("rest group"):

- competitions, conflicts, cooperation, accommodation ("adaptation to others");
- assimilation ("likening to others");
- socialization ("the process of social formation of the individual").

However, the rules of the games should be thoroughly explained and understood by the pupils before they begin to play. Only a few clearly stated rules should exist. Additionally, demonstrations can be highly beneficial because they can assist students comprehend the game and adhere to the rules.

As Caillois mentioned "A game is as activity that must have the following characteristics:

- *fun*: the activity is chosen for its light-hearted character;
- *separate*: it is circumscribed in time and place;
- *uncertain*: the outcome of the activity is unforeseeable;
- *non-productive*: participation is not productive;
- *governed by rules*: the activity has rules that are different from everyday life;
- *fictitious*: it is accompanied by the awareness of a different reality"

There are numerous game types made for various topics and skill levels so that students with varying degrees of language competency can benefit from them and get the most out of them.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Games are student-centered activities that demand students' active participation. According to Crookall, games allow students and teachers to alter their roles and relationships while also motivating students to actively participate in their education. Consequently, games give students an opportunity to guide their own education. Another benefit of games from an educational perspective is that they provide a relevant environment for language use. Because students' focus is on the message rather than the language, teachers can employ games to create circumstances that facilitate unconscious learning. Consequently, when students fully concentrate on a game as an activity, they learn the language in the same way they learn their mother tongue—that is, without realizing it.

When employed in foreign language lessons, games have a tremendous pedagogical value that offers language teachers numerous benefits. The analysis of research on language games shows that games play a critical role in teaching and learning foreign languages in many contexts. Using games to teach grammar to young learners, factors to consider when choosing games, knowing which game to use, knowing when to use it, the role of the teacher in using games to teach grammar to young learners, the teacher's preparation, the role of the teacher as a facilitator, class organization, learner participation, and the effectiveness of using games to teach grammar to young learners are the main topics covered in the literature.

Conclusion

Teaching young learners is a very demanding issue that needs consideration. Research in Turkey has shown that only 35% of pre-service teachers of English believe that their teacher education curriculum prepare them as effective teachers of English that can teach young learners successfully [O'zkan & Arikan, 2010].

This difficult problem is significant because the instructor must devise the best exercises

and assignments for young students. Games are therefore one of the best ways to focus young learners' attention on learning grammar as well as a variety of other language skills and areas. It should be taken into consideration that as learners are young ones, teaching them through games require special effort from the teacher. Games are fun and are structured according to rules. While most games need group projects or choral replies, problem-solving exercises (however structured) call for individual reactions and innovative solutions. Since these communicative tasks may only be completed after gaining sufficient grammatical and lexical knowledge, games are typically employed in the practice section following the presentation. Well-designed games allow students to thoroughly practice and comprehend grammar, vocabulary, and concepts. The games' provision of play and competitiveness boosts pupils' motivation.

Thanks to the motivation and interaction created by games, students can acquire their lessons better and more interestedly than other ways.

Since students naturally desire to outperform the other teams, games can motivate and inspire them to participate in the activity. In addition to having fun, students also study. They pick up a new language. Students start to grasp that if they want other people to understand them, they must utilize the language.

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