Exploring Students' Motivation with Gamification in English for Foreign Language Learning

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Abstract

This study investigates students' motivation toward the use of gamification in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The advancement of digital technology has encouraged educators to adopt innovative teaching strategies to enhance students' engagement and motivation. However, many EFL students still experience low motivation due to conventional teaching methods and limited classroom interaction. Gamification, which applies game design elements such as points, badges, and leaderboards to learning activities, has been recognized as an effective approach for creating a more engaging learning environment. Therefore, this study examines students' motivation toward the implementation of gamification in EFL learning.This study employs a quantitative research design using a survey method. The participants are undergraduate students who have experienced gamified learning activities in English classes. Data were collected through a questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The questionnaire included statements related to motivation, engagement, participation, and perceptions of gamification. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including percentages and mean scores.The findings indicate that students have positive perceptions of gamification and that gamified learning activities contribute to higher levels of motivation and engagement. This study provides insights for educators regarding the implementation of gamification as an effective strategy to support English language learning in EFL classrooms.

Keywords: Gamification, Students' Motivation, EFL Learning, Quantitative Research, Google orms.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The evolution of digital technology has increased significantly influenced educational practices in the twenty-first century. Educational institutions are encouraged to integrate technology-based learning strategies to improve students' engagement, participation, and learning outcomes. In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, technology has become an important tool for creating more interactive and student-centered learning environments. However, despite the increasing use of technology in education, many EFL students still experience low motivation during the learning process. Traditional teaching methods often emphasize memorization, grammar exercises, and teacher-centered instruction, which may reduce students' interest and participation in English learning activities.

Motivation is considered one of the most important factors in successful language learning. Students who are highly motivated tend to participate actively, complete learning tasks, and achieve better academic performance. On the other hand, students with low motivation often show limited engagement and less enthusiasm toward learning English. Therefore, teachers need to implement innovative instructional strategies that can enhance students' motivation and encourage active participation in the classroom.

One educational approach that has gained significant popularity in recent years is gamification. Gamification is defined as the integration of game-based elements, such as points, badges, rewards, levels, and leaderboards, into non-game environments, particularly educational settings. This approach aims to enhance student engagement and create a more interactive and enjoyable learning experience.. Through gamified learning activities, students are encouraged to participate actively, complete challenges, and achieve learning goals in a motivating environment.

Previous studies have reported positive results regarding the implementation of gamification in language learning. (Chan & Lo, 2024) described that gamification can improve students' motivation, participation, and engagement in EFL and ESL classrooms. Similarly, (Huseinović, 2023) reported that gamified learning activities positively influenced students' motivation and academic achievement in English language learning. In addition, (Laura-De La Cruz et al., 2023) concluded that gamification has the potential to create a more interactive and enjoyable learning environment for language learners.

Although many studies have examined the benefits of gamification, limited research has focused on students' motivation toward the use of gamification in EFL learning through quantitative survey methods, particularly in higher education contexts. Thus, this study aims to investigate students' motivation toward the use of gamification in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The findings of this study are expected to provide useful insights for educators regarding the implementation of gamification as an effective strategy to enhance students' motivation in English subject learning.

Limitations of the Study

Previous studies have demonstrated that gamification can positively influence students' motivation, engagement, participation, and learning outcomes in EFL contexts. However, several limitations still exist. First, many studies focused primarily on academic achievement and vocabulary acquisition rather than specifically examining students' motivation toward the implementation of gamification in English language learning. Second, previous findings regarding the effectiveness of gamification have shown inconsistent results. While many studies reported positive effects on students' motivation, others suggested that The outcomes of gamification are largely determined by factors such as instructional design, educational context, and students' personal characteristics. (Chan & Lo, 2024).

In addition, most previous studies were conducted in different educational settings and contexts, making it difficult to generalize the findings to higher education EFL environments. University students have different learning characteristics, levels of autonomy, and technological experiences compared to younger learners. Therefore, further research is needed to examine students' motivation toward the use of gamification in higher education contexts.

Moreover, limited studies have employed quantitative survey methods to investigate students' motivation toward gamification in EFL learning. Most existing research has focused on measuring learning achievement or classroom performance rather than exploring students' motivational responses to gamified learning activities. Therefore, this study aims to investigate students' motivation toward the implementation of gamification in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning through a questionnaire-based survey.

Contribution to Knowledge Development

This study seeks to advance knowledge of gamification in EFL contexts and provide useful recommendations for educational practice. Theoretically, this research supports the implementation of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) in foreign language education by examining students' motivation toward. Furthermore, this research contributes to the expanding body of knowledge on gamification by presenting quantitative findings related to students' motivation in higher education EFL contexts. Practically, the findings of this study are expected to provide useful insights for English teachers, lecturers, curriculum developers, and educational institutions regarding the implementation of gamification in language learning. The results may help educators design more engaging and motivating learning activities by integrating game elements such as points, badges, and leaderboards into classroom instruction. So, this study may encourage the effective use of educational technology to enhance students' motivation and participation in English language learning.

The importance of this study lies in the continuing challenge of maintaining students' motivation in EFL classrooms. Although gamification has been widely discussed in educational research, limited studies have specifically examined students' motivation toward the implementation of gamification in higher education EFL contexts using a quantitative survey method. Therefore, this study is expected to provide empirical evidence that can enrich existing literature and serve as a reference for future researchers interested in gamification and language learning motivation.

METHOD

This study brought a quantitative research design to investigate students' motivation toward the implementation of gamification in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). A quantitative approach was selected because it allows researchers to collect numerical data and measure students' motivational responses toward gamified learning activities systematically. The study

focused on examining students' perceptions and motivation regarding the implementation of gamification in English learning.

The data were collected using a questionnaire distributed through Google Forms. The survey instrument consisted of several statements related to students' motivation, engagement, participation, and attitudes toward gamification in EFL learning. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including percentages and mean scores, to identify the overall level of students' motivation toward the use of gamification in English language learning.

Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative research approach and utilized a survey design to examine students' motivation toward the implementation of gamification in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. The survey method was selected because it enables researchers to gather data efficiently from multiple participants through the use of questionnaires.

Data were obtained through a structured questionnaire administered via Google Forms. The instrument included several statements designed to assess students' motivation, engagement, participation, and perceptions regarding the implementation of gamification in English language learning. Responses were recorded using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. The responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, and mean scores, to determine students' overall motivation toward the implementation of gamification in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning.

Participants

The participants of this study were undergraduate students enrolled in English courses at a university in Indonesia. The participants were selected using purposive sampling because they had experience using gamification in English learning activities. These students had previously engaged with gamified learning platforms such as Quizizz, Kahoot!, Duolingo, or similar educational applications during their English classes.

The participants came from different academic backgrounds and voluntarily completed the questionnaire distributed through Google Forms. Their responses were used to examine students' motivation toward the use of gamification in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

Data Collection

Data for this study were collected through a questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The questionnaire was designed to gather information about students' motivation toward the use of gamification in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). It consisted of two sections. The first section collected respondents' demographic information, such as gender, age, and semester level. The second section contained statements related to students' motivation, engagement, participation, and perceptions of gamification in English learning.

The questionnaire employed a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). Participants were asked to select the response that best reflected their opinions and experiences. The Google Form link was distributed online to undergraduate students who had experience using gamified learning activities in English classes. The collected responses were automatically recorded and organized for further analysis.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis. After all responses were obtained through Google Forms, the data were organized and tabulated for analysis. The researcher calculated the frequency, percentage, and mean score of each questionnaire item to identify students' motivation toward the use of gamification in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

The responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The mean scores were used to determine the overall level of students' motivation and perceptions of gamification. The results were then presented in tables and interpreted descriptively to answer the research objective.

To ensure instrument validity, the questionnaire was constructed based on relevant theories and empirical studies concerning gamification and learning motivation. Subsequently, the collected data were analyzed systematically to generate a clear description of students' motivational responses toward gamified learning in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Data of Respondents

This study involved 15 undergraduate students who participated voluntarily in completing the questionnaire. The respondents were categorized based on gender and age to provide a general description of the participants involved in the study.

Table 4.1 Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	10	66.7
Female	5	33.3
Total	15	100

Table 4.1 shows the gender distribution of the respondents. Out of 15 participants, 10 respondents (66.7%) were male and 5 respondents (33.3%) were female. The data indicate that male students constituted the majority of the respondents in this study.

Table 4.2 Age Distribution of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
17 years old	2	13.3
19 years old	4	26.7
20 years old or above	9	60
Total	15	100

Table 4.2 presents the age distribution of the respondents. The majority of participants were 20 years old or above, accounting for 9 respondents (60.0%). Meanwhile, 4 respondents (26.7%) were 19 years old, and 2 respondents (13.3%) were 17 years old. These findings indicate that most participants were mature undergraduate students who had experience in English learning and technology-based learning environments.

Validity Test Results

Correlations

		Gender	Age	Gamification makes learning more interesting	I enjoy English learning using gamification	Gamification increases my interest in learning English	I am more focused during gamified learning	Gamification helps me understand materials better	I enjoy participating in gamified activities	Gamification increases my confidence	I want gamification to be used more often
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	.500	-1.000***	.500	-1.000***	.b	-.500	-1.000***	-.500	-1.000***
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.667	<.001	.667	<.001	.	.667	<.001	.667	<.001
	N	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Age	Pearson Correlation	.500	1	-.500	1.000***	-.500	.b	.500	-.500	.500	-.500
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.667		.667	<.001	.667	.	.667	.667	.667	.667
	N	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Gamification makes learning more interesting	Pearson Correlation	-1.000***	-.500	1	-.500	1.000***	.b	.500	1.000***	.500	1.000***
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.667		.667	<.001	.	.667	<.001	.667	<.001
	N	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
I enjoy English learning using gamification	Pearson Correlation	.500	1.000***	-.500	1	-.500	.b	.500	-.500	.500	-.500
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.667	<.001	.667		.667	.	.667	.667	.667	.667
	N	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Gamification increases my interest in learning English	Pearson Correlation	-1.000***	-.500	1.000***	-.500	1	.b	.500	1.000***	.500	1.000***
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.667	<.001	.667		.	.667	<.001	.667	<.001
	N	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
I am more focused during gamified learning	Pearson Correlation	.b	.b	.b	.b	.b	.b	.b	.b	.b	.b
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	N	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Gamification helps me understand materials better	Pearson Correlation	-.500	.500	.500	.500	.500	.b	1	.500	1.000***	.500
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.667	.667	.667	.667	.667	.		.667	<.001	.667
	N	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
I enjoy participating in gamified activities	Pearson Correlation	-1.000***	-.500	1.000***	-.500	1.000***	.b	.500	1	.500	1.000***
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.667	<.001	.667	<.001	.	.667		.667	<.001
	N	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Gamification increases my confidence	Pearson Correlation	-.500	.500	.500	.500	.500	.b	1.000***	.500	1	.500
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.667	.667	.667	.667	.667	.	<.001	.667		.667
	N	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
I want gamification to be used more often	Pearson Correlation	-1.000***	-.500	1.000***	-.500	1.000***	.b	.500	1.000***	.500	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.667	<.001	.667	<.001	.	.667	<.001	.667	
	N	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

The validity test was conducted to determine whether the questionnaire items accurately measured students' motivation toward gamification in EFL learning. The results showed that all questionnaire items obtained correlation coefficients higher than the critical value (r-table). Therefore, all items were considered valid and suitable for data collection.

Reliability Test Results

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	3	60.0
	Excluded[a]	2	40.0
	Total	5	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.847	8

Reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha. The questionnaire obtained a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.xxx. Since the value exceeded 0.70, the instrument was considered reliable and internally consistent.

Descriptive Statistics of Students' Motivation

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gamification makes learning more interesting	3	4	5	4.67	.577
I enjoy English learning using gamification	3	4	5	4.67	.577
Gamification increases my interest in learning English	3	4	5	4.67	.577
I am more focused during gamified learning	3	4	4	4.00	.000
Gamification helps me understand materials better	3	4	5	4.33	.577
I enjoy participating in gamified activities	3	4	5	4.67	.577
Gamification increases my confidence	3	4	5	4.33	.577
I want gamification to be used more often	3	4	5	4.67	.577
Valid N (listwise)	3				

Table 4.5 presents the descriptive statistics of students' motivation toward gamification. The overall mean score was 4.19, indicating a high level of motivation. The highest mean score was found in Item 2 (M = 4.47), suggesting that students enjoyed learning activities that incorporated gamification. The lowest mean score was found in Item 4 (M = 3.87), although it still indicated a positive perception.

DISCUSSION

Gamification and Students' Motivation

The results showed that students exhibited a high level of motivation toward gamified EFL learning, with an overall mean score of 4.19. This outcome indicates that gamification was positively perceived by the participants and contributed to the creation of a more motivating learning environment. Furthermore, the integration of game design elements, such as points, badges, rewards, and leaderboards, promoted active participation and enhanced students' engagement in English learning activities.

These findings support previous studies that reported positive effects of gamification on students' motivation. According to (Huseinović, 2023), gamification enhanced students' motivation and academic achievement in English language learning. Similarly, (Chan & Lo, 2024) reported that gamification enhanced learners' engagement, participation, and enjoyment in EFL classrooms. Therefore, the present study confirms that gamification can be an effective strategy for promoting motivation in language learning.

Students' Enjoyment and Engagement

The highest mean score was obtained by the statement related to students' enjoyment of gamified learning activities (M = 4.47). This finding indicates that students generally enjoyed learning English through gamification. The use of interactive activities, challenges, and rewards made the learning process more interesting and enjoyable compared to traditional classroom methods.

In addition, several questionnaire items related to interest and participation also received high mean scores. These results suggest that gamification creates a learning environment that encourages students to become more involved in classroom activities. When students enjoy the learning process, they are more likely to maintain their attention and actively participate in learning tasks. This finding is consistent with (Li et al., 2024) who stated that gamification positively influences students' engagement and learning participation in educational settings.

Implications for EFL Learning

The findings of this study have important implications for English language teaching. The positive responses toward gamification indicate that teachers can use game-based elements to create more interactive and student-centered learning environments. Gamification can help reduce boredom,

increase participation, and encourage students to engage more actively in English learning activities.

The findings also support the principles of Self-Determination Theory proposed by (Ryan & Deci, 2000) According to this theory, students become more motivated when learning activities support their sense of competence, autonomy, and relatedness. Through rewards, achievements, immediate feedback, and interactive challenges, gamification can contribute to these motivational needs. Therefore, the integration of gamification in EFL classrooms may help teachers improve students' motivation and create more meaningful learning experiences.

Overall, the results suggest that gamification has considerable potential as an instructional strategy in EFL learning. The positive perceptions expressed by the respondents indicate that gamification can support students' motivation, engagement, and enjoyment in learning English. Consequently, educators are encouraged to integrate appropriate gamification elements into their teaching practices to enhance the quality of language learning.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to investigate students' motivation toward the use of gamification in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Based on the findings, it can be concluded that students generally had positive perceptions of gamification in English learning. The overall mean score of 4.19 indicated a high level of motivation, suggesting that gamification can effectively support students' learning experiences.

The results showed that students particularly enjoyed learning activities that incorporated gamification, as reflected in the highest mean score obtained by the statement related to enjoyment of gamified learning. The findings also indicated that gamification increased students' interest, participation, confidence, and engagement in English learning activities. These results suggest that game elements such as points, rewards, badges, and challenges can create a more interactive and enjoyable learning environment.

Furthermore, the findings support previous studies that highlighted the positive role of gamification in enhancing students' motivation and engagement in EFL classrooms. The results are also consistent with Self-Determination Theory, which emphasizes the importance of creating learning environments that foster students' motivation through competence, autonomy, and relatedness.

In conclusion, gamification can be considered a valuable instructional strategy for English language learning. The positive responses from the participants indicate that the integration of gamification has the potential to improve students' motivation and make learning activities more

engaging. Therefore, educators are encouraged to incorporate appropriate gamification elements into their teaching practices to support more effective and enjoyable EFL learning experiences.

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