

GAMIFICATION IN ESL/EFL CLASSROOMS: USING GAME-BASED LEARNING PLATFORMS SUCH AS KAHOOT AND QUIZLET TO MOTIVATE STUDENTS AND IMPROVE LANGUAGE SKILLS

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Abstract:

Gamification in ESL/EFL classrooms has emerged as a powerful approach to boost student motivation and engagement while enhancing language skills. Game-based learning platforms, such as Kahoot and Quizlet, provide interactive and enjoyable opportunities for students to practice vocabulary, grammar, listening, and reading in a dynamic, competitive environment. This article examines the impact of using these tools on language acquisition, focusing on student motivation, participation, and performance. By integrating elements of gamification, educators can transform traditional language exercises into immersive activities that foster enthusiasm and improve retention, leading to more effective language learning outcomes.

Key words: gamification, ESL, EFL, game-based learning, Kahoot, Quizlet, language skills, student motivation, engagement, vocabulary acquisition.

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Gamification has been increasingly adopted in education and even more so in ESL (English as a Second Language) and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classes. For instance, adaptable learning games like Kahoot, and Quizlet help teachers create a more enjoyable and motivating environment that improves learners' language skills and proficiency.

What is Gamification?

The term gamification refers to the incorporation of game-design concepts into spaces that are not necessarily game-playing with the aim of increasing the level of engagement and attention of users. This can mean implementing a points system, awarding badges, creating levels and assigning tasks to make students more participative. Gamification is that it makes learning a language fun and useful at the same time. For instance, the learners will not simply be required to learn vocabulary like in the traditional system, but will instead take part in active operational procedures that will assist in the learning of the language.

Exploring How Kahoot is Used in Education.

Kahoot is a widely known quiz-based application that enables its users, especially teachers, to develop engaging quizzes for active participation of students through their gadgets.

- Instant feedback: According to the designers of Kahoot, competitive learning is a beneficial type of learning because it enables learners to understand their strengths and weaknesses in record time enhancing adaptive learning.

- Teamwork: The very design of Kahoot promotes interaction among participants who compete in games. Such an environment builds a community and familial love, encouraging students to be at ease with language learning and boosting their self-confidence.

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Adjustable Material: Educators have the flexibility to create quizzes emphasizing distinct language abilities, terminologies, or grammatical aspects that fit their teaching schedule, which helps to keep the content within the limits of curriculum objectives.

Using Quizlet for Learning Purposes

Quizlet is a multi-functional tool that is useful for improving one's vocabulary and even grammar because it involves flashcards, games, quizzes and even more other activities.

- **Different Learning Modes:** Quizlet includes different learning approaches, starting from flashcards to very interesting games like "Match" and "Gravity". This has helped students in learning even the challenging aspects of language with ease.

- **Assessing Progress:** The application allows the teachers to assess student performance at any given moment. This assures them of implementing differentiated instruction where in this case they are able to effectively assist the students as per their needs.

- **Study Sets:** Both teachers and learners are able to design appropriate study sets that contain new words, grammar or aspects that they wish to concentrate on in order to achieve specific targets.

Advantages of Gamification in the Context of Language Learning

1. **Motivation Boost:** The introduction of game features turns the learning style into a less fearsome and a more attractive one, making the students willing and actively participating.

2. **Improved Retention:** Interventions such as Kahoot and Quizlet employed in classes help students to interact and actively participate in the lesson, which contributes to the content retention better than passive learning techniques.

3. **Improving Interaction Capabilities:** In most cases, gamification ensures teamwork which helps in developing the interpersonal communication skills of the students as well as giving them a chance to practice talking and listening in real situations.

4. **Promotion of Healthy Competition:** Competition can be an exceptional way of encouraging the learners to work towards their goals for instance through achievements and results, which heightens the interest and performance.

Implementing Gamification Strategies

- **Establishing Well Defined Learning Outcomes:** This is the most important step in which the instructor should outline the general and specific language related skills to be achieved through gamified actions. This makes it very clear to learners why each activity is conducted.

- **Provide Options, Enrichment And Different Choices:** In view of Febriadi et al., adopting various types of games and different platforms is effective since learners' styles vary. This is to prevent boredom in the lessons and to encourage active participation from the onset to the end.

- **Promote Metacognitive Processes:** In this case, the emphasis is on encouraging reflection upon the participants of gamified sessions. Such pause is important for reinforcing results of participants' gamified sessions and demonstrating the purpose of designed game activities in learning a foreign language.

- **Include Students in Gaming:** Allowing students access to or ask them to design their own quizzes or study sets enhances their involvement and ownership of the process.

- **Maintain Content Regularly:** To maintain the interest of students one should make regular modifications to the quizzes and flashcards used in teaching.

In conclusion, the use of games in the classroom, which is possible through platforms such as Kahoot and Quizlet, can significantly improve the ESL/EFL class experience. It is possible to motivate students and develop their language skills by engaging them in activities helping the instructor make the environment more pleasing, effective and moving. This new technique does not only ease the process of learning a language, it also builds the confidence of learners and their verbal self-expression as well.

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