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Gamification tools to improve speaking skills in pre-A1 students

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RESUMEN: El proyecto enfocado en el lenguaje el inglés oral de los estudiantes de cuarto año de la educación general, sección “C” del colegio ISM Quito. Se centra principalmente en una considerable falta de dominio léxicos y limitado vocabulario y competencia oral. Estas deficiencias dificultan la comunicación efectiva, lo que afecta la fluidez y precisión del estudiantado. El fin del presente estudio es implementar un sistema de actividades léxicas que ayuden a optimizar lo que son las habilidades orales del alumnado. Dentro de un marco educativo, esta investigación destaca la posición crucial del inglés como una lengua global, vital para lograr no solo objetivos académicos, sino también perspectivas profesionales en un mundo más amplio en el contexto de la internacionalización. Al abordar las	



brechas identificadas, se utilizó un enfoque de métodos mixtos que incluía tanto medidas cuantitativas, como pruebas antes y después, junto con retroalimentación cualitativa de encuestas y entrevistas. Esta metodología ayudó a proporcionar una evaluación holística sobre cuán bien funcionó la intervención.

Los resultados demostraron avances significativos en la fluidez, precisión de la pronunciación, uso del vocabulario y coherencia en el inglés hablado de los estudiantes, lo que confirma la eficacia del conjunto de juegos digitales estructurados en fases progresivas. Estas intervenciones incluyeron una variedad de estrategias pedagógicas atractivas, como juegos interactivos, ejercicios de práctica específicos y uso del lenguaje contextual, todos diseñados para enriquecer el vocabulario de los estudiantes y mejorar sus habilidades orales.

En conclusión, la investigación confirmó que la integración sistemática de juegos digitales en el plan de estudios de inglés mejora significativamente las habilidades del lenguaje oral. El estudio destaca la importancia de este tipo de prácticas educativas que se centran en el desarrollo de una sólida competencia comunicativa, que es esencial para el éxito tanto académico como profesional.

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DEDICATION

To my son Juan José, who, with every smile, has been the motivation and strength to achieve this goal. To my beloved husband, Santiago, who believed in me and has been my support throughout this process. And to my parents, Patricia and Germánico, who have been my inspiration, giving me their unconditional love and support throughout every stage of my life. I love you.

By: María Fernanda González González



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I thank God for giving me the strength, wisdom, and guidance to achieve every goal in my life.

I deeply appreciate and recognize my tutor, Dr. Marisela Jiménez, not only for being my academic mentor but also for her time, patience, and support in my intellectual and professional development.

I want to express my deep gratitude to my family for always being by my side, providing love and support, and being a fundamental pillar in my life. Without you, this achievement would not have been possible.

By: María Fernanda González González



RESUMEN

Con la investigación se buscó optimizar las habilidades orales en inglés del estudiantado pre-A1 mediante la implementación de herramientas de gamificación. Se diseñó un conjunto de juegos digitales estructurados en fases progresivas, orientados a fortalecer la fluidez, coherencia, pronunciación y uso del vocabulario. El estudio adoptó un enfoque experimental con dos grupos homogéneos: uno experimental que participó en actividades gamificadas, y otro de control que siguió una enseñanza tradicional. La metodología fue de tipo mixto, utilizando pruebas pre y post intervención, cuestionarios y hojas de observación para evaluar el impacto pedagógico. Las actividades implementadas incluyeron juegos de rol, torneos de vocabulario, debates con imágenes, descripciones rápidas y encadenamiento de historias, integradas con plataformas digitales como Duolingo, Kahoot y Wordwall. Los resultados permitieron evidenciar una mejora importante en cuanto a la participación, confianza, motivación y desempeño oral de los estudiantes del grupo experimental, superando ampliamente al grupo de control. La triangulación de datos confirmó avances notables en la organización de ideas, pronunciación y uso contextual del vocabulario, así como una mayor disposición a participar en actividades orales. En conclusión, la gamificación demostró ser una estrategia eficaz e innovadora que, al incorporar elementos lúdicos y tecnológicos al proceso de enseñanza, permitió mejorar las habilidades orales del estudiantado en el idioma inglés. El estudio propuso un modelo replicable en contextos educativos similares, contribuyendo al diseño de prácticas pedagógicas más inclusivas, dinámicas y adaptadas a las necesidades del alumnado inicial.

Palabras Claves: Habilidades para hablar, Actividades gamificadas, Enseñanza del inglés, Confianza, Mejora del vocabulario



ABSTRACT

The research sought to optimize the English speaking skills of pre-A1 students through the implementation of gamification tools. A set of digital games structured in progressive phases was designed, aimed at strengthening fluency, coherence, pronunciation, and vocabulary use. The study adopted an experimental approach with two homogeneous groups: an experimental group that participated in gamified activities, and a control group that followed traditional teaching. The methodology was mixed, using pre- and post-intervention tests, questionnaires, and observation sheets to evaluate the pedagogical impact. The implemented activities included role-playing games, vocabulary tournaments, image debates, quick descriptions, and story linking, integrated with digital platforms such as Duolingo, Kahoot, and Wordwall. The results showed a significant improvement in participation, confidence, motivation, and oral performance of students in the experimental group, significantly outperforming the control group. Data triangulation confirmed notable improvements in the organization of ideas, pronunciation, and contextual use of vocabulary, as well as a greater willingness to participate in oral activities. In conclusion, gamification proved to be an effective and innovative strategy that, by incorporating playful and technological elements into the teaching process, led to improved students' oral skills in English. The study proposed a replicable model in similar educational contexts, contributing to the design of more inclusive, dynamic, and early-learning pedagogical practices.

Keywords: Speaking Skills, Gamified Activities, English Teaching, Confidence, Vocabulary Improvement.



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INTRODUCTION

Teaching English in Ecuador has been very difficult, particularly during the early stages with pre-A1 learners, as they have a very basic understanding of the language. Despite improvements in pedagogy, the sad truth is that many learners are unable to acquire basic verbal communication due to the lack of a comprehensive and personalized approach that integrates all the essential elements for their progress. The lack of exposure to the English language exacerbates this situation because students are unable to participate (Marin y Argudo, 2022). Here, it is essential to use methods that foster equitable learning among language learners and motivate them to take charge of their learning.

Moreover, anxiety and low self-esteem hinder progress for pre-A1 learners. Many of these students suffer from a form of English phobia, avoiding situations that require English and consequently stagnating their development. Gamification is put forth as an answer to these kinds of problems, offering a more active and less threatening setting (León & Vega, 2021). Enhancement of learning through the addition of game elements to learning activities promotes a relaxed atmosphere, which helps students use the language without the pressure of judgment or the need for corrections all the time (Annamalai et al., 2022).

The lack of oral expression as a skill can be partially attributed to the absence of gamification techniques within English teaching methods. Even with the availability of new technology and educational strategies in the classroom, the conventional methods used to teach English have not captivated the interest of many students, and particularly of those who find learning a second language difficult (Cabrera et al., 2020). Because there are no practical aids or motivational tools available, learners are reluctant to participate in conversation activities and, as a result, learn very little. This, in turn, negatively impacts their language development.

Some authors as Pérez and Carvajal (2022), refers to how the situation is further aggravated when considering that fluency and confidence in speaking are essential for English proficiency. Students who do not sufficiently practice their English-speaking



skills tend to fall behind, which affects their academic performance and ability to communicate effectively in the future.

Though these scientific outcomes are truly important, it is imperative to investigate how the implementation of gamification tools can improve these skills, providing students with greater exposure and practice in a more motivating and less intimidating environment as reaffirmed by Marin & Argudo (2022).

The educational innovations implemented by the author of this scientific work demonstrate the lack of effectiveness of gamification aimed at English language teaching and how such approaches impede the formation of oral expression skills in pre-A1 level learners. This problem can be described as the following shortcomings:

- Inability of students to acquire adequate self-assurance to speak in English hinders their engagement in class activities leading to stagnation in their language acquisition.
- Lack of effective tools to engage students in speaking practice which significantly reduces learning opportunities and insufficient mastery of English.

The issue that arises from these phenomena is how to enhance speaking skills with the help of gamification tools. There is a possibility that with the application of game elements in the lesson, learners' fluency and confidence in speaking English may improve. It is this possibility that this research aims to investigate. The following hypothesis can be established: motivation in cognitive activities can be enhanced by gamification, and using gamification aids in the proper functioning of speaking skills, resulting in more effective learning.

This study is a part of more extensive institutional research on the application of technology in teaching and nurturing the communicative skills of learners. In this digitally evolving world, the adoption of modern technologies like gamification to capture and sustain learners' attention and participation in lessons is crucial. This research focuses on how these tools can be specifically used to increase students' active



participation in oral production of the English language, an area that has traditionally been difficult to address with conventional methods (Acosta & Cajas, 2018).

Moreover, the implementation of gamification within the framework of English language teaching both adheres to pedagogical technological frameworks and fulfills the requirement of fostering higher-order communicative skills in students from early stages. Being an innovative digital tool, gamification facilitates training that is instrumental for developing a positive attitude towards speaking fluently and expressing oneself confidently in English (Pozdniakova et al., 2023). This approach could serve as a blueprint for subsequent studies and for other educational research and contexts (Saltos & Celia, 2021).

This study investigates the instructional-design of the learning and teaching activities around speaking skills in relation to learners at the pre-A1 level, where learners encounter significant challenges at the initial stages of acquiring English. This level characterizes an educational intervention which addresses the urgent need to learn basic vocabulary alongside fostering a positive disposition to utilize the words in daily interactions (León & Vega, 2021).

Pre-A1 learners' speaking skills difficulties have been pedagogically diagnosed as problems to be solved with gamification; a strategy which Rodríguez et al. (2023) advocates for because it promotes interactive activities, helps in reducing stress, anxiety, as well as cultivating a learning environment where learners can practice and improve their speaking skills without fear of judgement. In this way, the teaching-learning process becomes much more useful, shaped around the students' unique requirements and prioritizes their effective, confident, and fluent expression of ideas in English.

The aim is to design a collection of digital games that enhance the speaking skills of Pre-A-1 learners.

The specific objectives are as follows:

1. To describe the theoretical principles of gamification and speaking.
2. To assess the present condition of learners with speaking skills.



3. To design a digital game collection that targets improvement in speaking skill.
4. To validate the designed set of digital games focused on speaking skills enhancement.

Here, the independent variable focused on the use of gamification tools aimed at stimulating learners' motivation and participation in English and were used within the framework of English as a Second Language (ESL) educational system. These tools are very important in changing the way students learn to interface with the content of the courses by helping them learn languages interactively (Rosyidah et al., 2023). Gamification involves not only the use of games but also incorporates game like features such as prizes, ranks, and challenges which make the process of learning interesting and less stressful even for pre-A1 learners (Basuki, 2023).

In this instance the dependent variable is classified as the English speaking skills and comprises of ESG fluency, pronunciation, sentence formation, and articulate speaking with confidence. Given that learners are presented with gamification tools, their English oral skills are anticipated to improve considerably, enabling better interaction in daily life encounters (Sánchez et al., 2023). The assessment of this variable will enable evaluating the actual influence of gamification on the process of language acquisition or learning and in that respect provide important information concerning its usefulness and factors which require enhancement (Kaldarova et al., 2021).

This particular study will take a mixed approach: qualitative and quantitative concurrently. This is beneficial in examining the impact of gamification tools on the conversational skills development more comprehensively.

The theoretical aspects will consist of analysis-synthesis which will enable the breakdown and examination of the fundamental elements of gamification and its association with language learning, alongside an inductive-deductive approach which will assist in forming working hypotheses and conclusions from the observations and analyses of the gathered data (Dehganzadeh & Dehganzadeh, 2020). These theoretical



perspectives cumulatively will enhance the research design as well as strengthen the validity of the findings (Vallorani et al., 2022).

Every theoretical approach will be supported with practical methods that seek to measure how effective gamification is in teaching English. In this case, English diagnostic tests which include a pre-test and post-test will be performed to evaluate the participants' spoken English compared to the game intervention (Çınar et al., 2022). Another important practical approach is the surveys which help to record the learner's perception of gamification, especially regarding its effects on the learning experience.

This mixed-method approach allows for quantitative measurement while capturing students' experiences and perceptions, thus enriching our understanding of the teaching-learning landscape (Stickler y Hampel, 2019).

Regarding the use of statistical methods, the techniques described will focus on calculating the central tendencies of the data set in order to develop a comprehensive statistical analysis. This is a calculation that requires collecting, classifying, and analyzing data to clearly define the problem and the solution. Then, in the context of this analysis, we will also employ the t-test to justify the research.

The reason for using descriptive analysis while calculating the reliability of the proposed activities through Cronbach's alpha within a given scope of study, was to measure how much the activities designed were effective in relation to speaking skills development. Furthermore, calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficient would provide an indicator of the internal consistency of the components considered relevant within the evaluated activities, thus assisting in determining the validity of the assessment instruments in relation to the activities and the correlation between the assessed skills.

As described in this proposal, English will be taught to 20 students currently at the pre-A1 level. The students are eight years old and attend a private school in Quito that follows a bilingual curriculum incorporating both the national program and the International Baccalaureate. This learning program will concentrate on teaching English using the four basic skills; reading, writing, listening, and speaking. At this age, children can benefit from adequate and appropriate instructional support in



English speaking, technological tools, and strategies to aid their progress in the English language (Hakuta & D'Andrea, 1992).

In addition to students, parents and teachers also benefit indirectly from the proposal. Parents, who highly value quality education, will see their children gain greater confidence and fluency in the use of English, which will better prepare them for future academic and professional challenges. Teachers, for their part, will be able to observe greater participation and motivation on the part of students in activities related to learning English, which will facilitate their teaching work and improve overall academic results. In short, this proposal has the potential to positively impact the entire educational community involved (Zhang & Chen, 2021).

The educational context in which this research will be developed involves 8-year-old students attending a private school in Quito, Ecuador. These students are immersed in a bilingual educational environment that not only prioritizes the development of English skills, but also promotes a comprehensive approach to learning. The institution integrates national standards with those of the International Baccalaureate, granting special focus to educators' language skill instruction in all the areas of knowledge (Arce & Valdivia, 2020).

With respect to the student's language skills, they fall under the pre A1 category in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. This means that they can comprehend very basic phrases and simple daily conversations. This presents the learner with a basic foundation from which to build progressively more complex English skills. The school utilizes modern approaches, such as technology, project-based learning, and other educational systems, which define its pedagogical context. These methods are geared towards improving the teaching of English, rendering it more engaging, customized, and responsive to students' needs, a critical factor owing to today's modern learning context (Topushipambao, 2022).

The proposal to integrate digital games into the teaching of English makes a valuable contribution to practice. First of all, these games foster an informal, learner-centered environment that is highly beneficial for alleviating the tension that



accompanies anxious learners whenever they interact with a new language. This playful approach not only increases students' willingness to participate in oral activities, but also makes learning more engaging and relevant to them (Shakirova et al., 2020).

From the standpoint of social significance, the research responds to the problem of inadequate English skills in a rapidly integrating world. Providing students with speaking skills ensures more than positive academic outcomes; it enables them to succeed in an international context where English dominates as the common means of communication. This proposal meets the described gap by guiding instruction on speaking skills for pre-A1 learners through a playful, more motivating environment (Dehghanzadeh et al., 2019).

My research comprises three chapters. I review the literature on gamification tools and their impact on speaking skills in Chapter 1. In Chapter 2, I give the design and methods of the study, whereas, in Chapter 3, I describe in detail the rationale, aspects, outline, and parts of the digital game suite developed for the study, which is the primary focus of this research.

CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter analyzes issues pertaining to the concepts of oral skills and the application of gamification tools in the educational, linguistic and intercultural contexts. As has been noted, oral skills are regarded as essential for participants in a competitive world in terms of mobility, scholarly achievements, alongside career progression. In addition, comprehensive accounts and analyses of various theories and models explaining the development of oral expression skills are provided with particular emphasis on the positive role of gamification in this process.

1.1. Theoretical foundations on speaking skills

1.1.1. Understanding speaking skills

In modern communication, speaking skills refer to a cluster of abilities required to articulate speech and understand context within many lenses. These include the ability to speech logically and coherently, respond during conversations, and control the voice parameters of pronunciation, stress, and rhythm (Alaudinova, 2022). For learners at pre-A1 levels, developing these capabilities is crucial for beginning productive language learning because these skills create a platform for advanced linguistic and academic growth. Their mastery facilitates minimum interface and maximum output in language communication, ensuring the learners are exposed to simple complex interactions.

In the context of education, speaking skills are important for the all-round development of the students. It not only enhances learners' ability to convey ideas during social and learning engagements, but also aids the expression of personal ideas, emotions, and feelings, thereby enriching one's knowledge as well as socio-emotional development (Espinoza et al., 2022). Guado and Mayorga (2021) also point out that effective communication in a multi culturism characterized world is a must for everyone, hence becomes necessary for people of all ages. That is why the gap makes the aggressive cultivation of oral skills by more modern strategies like games design aimed to enable children to perform in multi culture environments become paramount.



More recent research has validated the use of gamification for developing speaking skills. Ridhon and Daulay (2023), for example, noted substantial increases in speaking fluency and accuracy of Mexican high school students with gamified deliberate practice. Also, Al-Sabbagh (2023) found that Colombian students enrolled in biweekly, gamified role simulations outperformed their peers taught with conventional methods in speaking ability significantly. Correspondingly, Choi et al. (2016) reported that Spanish high school students actively participating in gamified discussions demonstrated marked improvements in fluency, coherence, and accuracy when compared to non-participants. All these studies underscore the strong instructional principle provided by gamification as a means of fostering skillful speaking through purposefully designed active teaching.

1.2. Theories and models of speaking skills development.

1.2.1. Vygotsky's theory of language development (1978)

Vygotsky's approach to language development underscores the importance of social context in the acquisition of language. The utilization of language is enhanced by active participation in culturally meaningful communication. These social and cultural interactions are crucial for the pre-A1 learners because at this stage they need practice rather than gamified language learning. Games can serve as a link between the social context and the language classroom by fostering purposeful and motivating interactions that integrate the development of communicative skills (Alharbi, 2023).

1.2.2. Canale and Swain's (1980) communicative competence model

The model of communicative competence put forth by Canale and Swain encompasses linguistic, sociolinguistic, discursive, and strategic components. This model argues that proficient speakers must not only possess adequate grammar and vocabulary, but also know how to adapt their speech to the context and interlocutor. For younger A1 learners, this adaptation can be aided by the use of gamification tools. Such tools permit the design of numerous contexts where learners must modify their



language use in relation to different scenarios which, in turn, enhances their overall communicative competence(Blanco, 2023).

1.2.3. Long's interactive model of language acquisition (1981)

Long's interactive model highlights the need of negotiating meaning alongside providing comprehensible input in improving speaking skills. Native and non-native speakers contribute to the acquisition of vocabulary through meaningful interactions. For pre-A1 learners, gamification tools encourage engaging interactions on vocabulary and provide comprehensible input in a playful manner. Gamification allows learners to negotiate meaning and practice language in a more dynamic manner, thus accelerating the language acquisition process (Namaziandost et al., 2020).

1.2.4. Hymes' Model of Communicative Competence (1972):

Hymes' model builds upon the concept of communicative competence by considering its application in practical contexts. Mastering a language goes beyond understanding its grammar and lexis: it also involves the appropriate sociocultural etiquette. As an illustration, in gamification, pre-A1 learners can meet these norms via simulation (role-playing) in controlled learning environments. This kind of exposure not only improves competence but also prepares learners for actual communicative engagement (Pérez A. , 2021).

1.3. Pedagogical strategies to foster speaking skills

1.3.1. Digital Language Apps and Games as Pedagogical Strategies to Promote Speaking

Employing digital language games has been shown to improve the speaking skills of pre-A1 learners. These services merge interactive elements and feedback, offering immediate responses and simulations, which render language acquisition achievable and captivating. Applications like Duolingo are most beneficial because they feature audio drills for speech recognition and provide feedback so that learners can modify their pronunciation instantly. Moreover, simulated dialogues enable learners to strengthen their fluency and confidence in dynamic language use (Ahibalova et al., 2023).



Other sources such as Kahoot and Quizlet have a great impact on oral skills as well. Kahoot is mostly meant for formative evaluation, but it can be modified with open questions and other verbal expression games that require English responses. It enhances learner engagement and helps combat the fear of public speaking (Al-Dosakee & Ozdamli, 2021). Quizlet is also known for its flashcards, but offers other interactive games such as “Match” and “Learn,” where learners can speak. Students are prompted to repeat words/phrases, and teachers can track oral skills development in an enjoyable, game-based environment (Elarafi & Agsebat, 2022).

Applications like Mondly and Wordwall offer more advanced levels of immersive and customizable learning. With Mondly, students practice in scenarios such as ordering food or engaging in small talk through virtual person to person interactions with 3D avatars and AI powered-driven systems, bolstering fluency and daily communication skills (Shanmugam et al., 2023). Conversely, Wordwall enables custom tailored oral activities for teachers such as a short talk, a role play, or a vocabulary discussion. Its multifunctionality meets specific speaking objectives so students are motivated to talk frequently in a supportive, game-like setting (Pozdniakova et al., 2023). These tools illustrate technology’s strategic integration as a strong resource toward the goal of fostering early speaking proficiency.

1.3.2. Deliberate Practice

Focused practice entails getting students actively involved with precisely targeted speaking activities like simulations, presentations, and debates. These activities enable phonology, vocabulary, and grammar acquisition which is essential for the growth of speaking skills in pre-A learners. With the use of gamification, these practices can become more engaging and help motivate learners to enhance their competence through active participation and consistent practice within a game-like setting (Ahibalova et al., 2023).

1.3.3. Modeling

Teachers are instrumental in guiding students through effective articulatory models and offering actionable critiques. Such an approach enables learners to



internalize the relevant aspects of communication and to express themselves fluently. Within the framework of gamified learning, instructors can employ avatars or simulation characters that demonstrate appropriate speech, thereby offering an exemplary model for imitation during the gamified tasks. This approach enhances understanding of the language and increases learners' self-efficacy in their ability to reproduce desirable language (Kovalenko y Skvortsova, 2022) e.

1.3.4. Use of Technology

Audio recorders, online video conferencing tools, and other digital technologies provide opportunities to practice speaking skills and receive feedback. Particularly, perceptual technologies can transform the practice of speaking into interactive, real-time virtual scenarios where students receive instant feedback on their performance, thus enabling them to rectify mistakes and subsequently enhance their language proficiency (Shanmugam et al., 2023).

1.3.5. Group Discussion and Collaborative Projects

Active participation in peer conversations and research assignments enhances one's communication skills because of the interaction they promote among collective participants. This atmosphere cultivates collaboration and support, thus helping to improve students' confidence as well as their linguistic abilities. Applying game elements to these tasks can increase motivation and participation as students take part in group contests and gamified activities that demand teamwork and exceptional communication skills to fulfill the set objectives (Annamalai et al., 2022).

1.3.6. Metalinguistic Awareness

Fostering metalinguistic awareness and self-assessment of language usage enhances comprehension and speaking skills. Educators can assist learners in evaluating their self-talk and formulating tailored plans to achieve clear, precise articulation. Reflection-driven elements, such as correcting students' language mistakes or challenging them to provide proper grammar explanations, can be embedded in games (reflected competitively) for self-correction, thus aiding in metalinguistic cognitive development gamification (Al-Sabbagh, 2023).

1.4. Importance of speaking skills in the educational context

1.4.1. Essential role of speaking skills in education

Effective fixation of speaking expression skills is important for the holistic nurturing of students and enhances their academic and personal performance. These skills assist in the effective use of language, idea expression, and foster the ability to create useful relationships in school and beyond. It is essential to emphasize that for pre-A1 learners, building speaking skills helps set the groundwork for English learning which enables participation in education and social activities early on (Espinoza et al., 2022).

To take part in collaborative activities such as opinion sharing, discussions, and giving speeches, a person has to have mastered competent speaking skills. The latter is relevant because they stimulate the interactivity of concepts and thinking, paying attention, as well as understanding peers and their thoughts. In relation to the above, there are features which enhance these interactions, thus making pre-A1 learners more motivated and confident to actively participate in working with language in context (Bsharat y Barahmeh, 2020).

1.4.2. Building self-confidence and reducing anxiety

Students have a better self-image and feel more self-confident when they can express themselves well. Given the vital role public speaking serves during a student's education, being able to express themselves clearly equips them with confidence to address many challenges. For pre-A1 learners, routine practice in speaking within the classroom framework, particularly when accompanied by gamified elements, lowers the anxiety associated with using the language. This enhances the learners' favorable self-assessment of their communication abilities and consequently increases their confidence and readiness to engage in interactions in English (Piasta et al., 2020).

1.4.3. Speaking skills for academic and professional success:

Speaking skills are highly regarded in many academic contexts such as giving feedback in a class, presenting research papers, and defending concepts during oral examinations. Employers tend to place immense value on adept communication,



making skilled verbal articulation pivotal in today's world as well as in academics. Pre-A1 learners are able to refine these skills within the context of a simulated environment through the application of game-based learning, equipping them to tackle future education and career pathways. (Al-Dosakee y Ozdamli, 2021).

1.4.4. Importance in a globalized world:

In the contemporary world characterized by extensive cultural and global relations, the capability of speaking helps in facilitating interactions worldwide. Students can prepare themselves to successfully integrate into the globalized society by acquiring negotiation and communication skills with representatives from other cultures. The process can be simplified by the use of games that replicate real-life contexts permitting pre-A1 learners to hone their communication skills in a safe, non-threatening setting (Pushkina y Krivoshlykova, 2022).

1.4.5. Typology of Gamified Games and Their Impact on the Development of Speaking Skills.

Incorporating games into the language learning process has been found to assist with speaking skills for pre-A1 level students. This is accomplished by providing a motivating, active, and relaxed teaching atmosphere. One of the most successful forms is simulation which consists of performing certain roles like ordering food in a restaurant or checking in at an airport. These controlled environments enable learners to use relevant everyday language, thus enhancing fluency, confidence, and vocabulary. The realistic nature of simulations minimizes anxiety, which allows students to respond more freely in English-speaking environments (Caucheteux et al., 2021). In the same way, some role-playing games focus on conversations where students assume the persona of different participants, such as journalists or customers, thus helping learners develop coherence, improvisation, and situational communication skills. This kind of game improves not only linguistic precision but also fosters imagination and social interaction (Pérez A., 2021).

Other game-like structures also aid in fostering oral skills. Competitions like quiz bowls or speaking in short time intervals promote “on-the-spot” thinking and

spontaneous use of language. These activities not only sharpen fluency and vocabulary retention but also teamwork and self-confidence in high-stakes environments, which is beneficial when gearing learners towards public speaking (Kazazoğlu, 2023). Additionally, storytelling games offer opportunities for students to collaboratively construct narratives, with each learner contributing a sentence aloud. This promotes the use of logical connectors, narrative cohesion, and the structuring of ideas—essential components of effective oral communication (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022). Altogether, this typology of gamified games not only makes learning enjoyable but also strategically supports linguistic and cognitive growth in young English language learners.

1.4.6. Impact on Oral Skills

The types of games mentioned above are very important for honing students' speaking skills because they improve accuracy and fluency through consistent and contextually engaging speaking opportunities. These games reduce the anxiety of making mistakes, thus providing a playful structure that helps students feel more confident when speaking. Furthermore, these games offer opportunities for interaction and cooperation, which are critical for learning a language and developing communication skills. When applied to teaching strategies, gamified games not only improve the quality of instruction but also transform the classroom atmosphere into an active and inspiring environment.

1.5. Assessing the development of speaking skills

1.5.1. Importance of assessing speaking skills:

Evaluating and tracking students' progress in an educational setting requires a comprehensive review of to assess the progress of speaking skills to develop effective educational techniques. Different assessment types, speaking skills assessment criterion provide feedback, refine verbal skills, and communicate more effectively. For pre-A1 learners, referring to the A1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages Gamification aids assessment whilst offering fun, interactive ways to evaluate the progression of speaking skills - enabling educators to adapt instructional strategies based on results analysis(Pozdniakova et al., 2023).



1.5.2. Formative Assessment

Assessment through formative feedback, which includes monitoring and evaluation during conversations, group discussions, and other elementary oral activities, is widespread. With pre-A1 level learners, a teacher can apply comprehensive rubrics or checklists to evaluate the student's speaking concerning their four-coding clear, fluent, accurate, and cohesive. Assessment in this phase can be more dynamic, less frightening, and more encouraging through the use of gamified teaching tools like interactive language games or progress badges, helping students learn and improve with confidence (Vallorani et al., 2022).

1.5.3. Summative Assessment

Summative assessments are used to evaluate and measure speaking skills as well. The construction of formal oral examinations, brief student lectures, and dialogues yields insightful data regarding learners' progress and contributes to informed educational decisions (e.g. determining achievement levels, course grade allocation, etc.). In comparison to traditional approaches, the use of gamification marks a paradigm shift in summative assessment, enabling students to showcase their speaking skills in situ performed through a game, thereby alleviating the stress associated with exams and enhancing relevance (Basuki, 2023).

1.5.4. Self- and Peer-Assessment

Assessing speaking competence on a Pre-A1 level hinges upon self and peer evaluation. Both motivate the learner to reflect on their performance, progress, and provide feedback on the performance of others, thus cultivating metacognition and self- and peer-driven evaluation. Adding elements of gamification can enhance these assessments since students can interact through self and peer evaluation, using personalized rubrics that target foundational competencies of basic pronunciation, phrase usage, and verbal fluency. Overall, the conclusions bolster a collaborative rather than competitive atmosphere in the learning and teaching process (Oviedo y Charpentier, 2023).

1.5.5. Authenticity and Relevance of Assessments



Assessment activities should not only be authentic but relevant as well, this is important in accurately reflecting language use in the real world. Meeting learning objectives and assessment criteria placed aligns with real-life communicative needs enables more effective demonstration of speaking competence by students. In a pre-A1 context, self-introductions and seeking basic information can be practiced in simulated gamified scenarios which helps students feel better prepared to apply classroom learning in the real world (Gutiérrez et al., 2022).

Progress in the speaking skills should be assessed with a range of formative and summative methods. Using diverse strategies paired with relevant feedback improves learners' communication skills and aids teachers in supporting student's ongoing development. Incorporating gamification not only enhances motivation for pre-A1 learners but strengthens the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of assessment processes aimed at developing communicative competencies.

1.6. Theoretical foundations on gamification tools

Incorporating games into FLT enhances learner engagement, transforms the experience into more active and participatory form. It is based on motivational theories of education, active learning, and development of speaking skills (FLT). Gamification translates well into instructional design because it offers authentic contexts for language use, motivating learners to communicate fluently and meaningfully in a natural, low-stress environment. As stated by Kopzhasarova, Ospanova, and Ajtbayeva (2023), the constructivist approach supports active participation by learners to yield personal significance and value.

The English language acquisition can also be supported using gamification because of its relevance in the Information Processing Theory by Rumelhart and the Meaningful Learning Theory by Ausubel. Rumelhart supports the need of thorough learning by showing how knowledge needs to be repeated and deeply processed in context. Gamified language tasks like interactive and feedback-rich vocabulary drills, substantially enhance the mastery and proper articulation of vital vocabulary and structures critical for speaking (Caucheteux et al., 2021). Moreover, Ausubel's theory



explains how new information is more likely to be remembered when related to other information already stored in long-term memory. Kids do remember what was taught in previous lessons long before the assignments were set. Gamified lessons which adjust complexity based on reward systems and progressively deepen challenge fortify vocabulary acquisition (Marinelli et al., 2020).

Additional reasoning for the application of gamification in foreign language teaching is derived from Long-Term Memory Processing Theory by Craik and Lockhart, which argues the more meaningful the semantic processing, the better the information retention. In gamified contexts, learners are required to think about “why” and “how” language structures are used, particularly in during speaking exercises which mimic real-life conversations (Dervić & Bećirović, 2020). Moreover, contextualized gamified debates or simulations and telling stories reinforce the application of skills in communicative situations to enhance motivation and oral skills (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022). Overall, the rationale for the application of FLT gamification not only responds to fundamental pedagogical principles but also enhances interaction in a student-centered setting with effective and natural development of the speaking skills.

1.7. Theories and models on the development of gamification in teaching

The application of gamification pedagogy in teaching has been documented with different theories and models, which testify to the improvement of student involvement and participation. Perhaps most relevant is game based approach which states how games allow students to engage with the ideas and concepts what they are learning. In Foreign Language Teaching (FLT), playful activities help to foster the development of language skills by providing opportunities for practice with instant feedback and experimentation. This is particularly useful for speaking skills since students are able to practice interactive discussion in real world simulations (Kopzhasarova et al., 2023).

Moreover, the constructivist model provides assistance with why gamification is relevant in foreign language teaching, which is why it is taught in primary education



levels. This model posits that students accomplish set learning tasks at a higher level when they have had a hand in the knowledge construction process. With its embedded interactivity and challenges, gamification makes it possible for learners to develop contextualized meaningful language skills. In FLT, gamification is evident when students take part in language games or simulations which challenge them to use grammar, vocabulary, and communicative patterns in “real life” conversations (Barkova & Ponagushina, 2023).

Another essential approach is Deci and Ryan’s theory of the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation which argues the motivation of students is maximized when tasks are perceived as challenging but attainable, and when rewards or positive reinforcement is given. In FLT, gamification can offer these components through the use of levels, challenges and rewards which supports motivation for both types of students: intrinsics who strive to enhance their skills, and extrinsics who engage through badges or points (Shakirzyanova et al., 2021).

Another model that supports the use of gamification is experiential learning by Kolb. He states the optimal conditions for learning is when the students have the opportunity to experience, reflect, and apply what they already know. In the case of FLT gamification, it enables students to experience language by participating in role play or conversation simulations. These activities allow learners to reflect on their output, on the mistakes they have made, thus reinforcing their learning and improving their performance in subsequent interactions, providing great value to (Cruz & Rodríguez, 2023).

Most importantly, Csikszentmihalyi’s flow theory is pivotal when paired with the concepts of gamification concerning how students can be fully immersed in language learning activities. As this theory has shown, the flow state occurs when students are fully focused and engaged with a task that is neither too easy nor too hard which leads to frustration. With the use of gamification, language learners are able to reach this flow state with the use of relevant language tasks developed at appropriate levels to their competencies (Liu and Wei 2020).



The preceding discussion demonstrates that the constructs justifying the gamification of learning—game-based learning, constructivism, certain types of motivation (either intrinsic or extrinsic), experiential learning, and even the flow theory— provide sufficient justification toward the incorporation of gamification in foreign language teaching (FLT). Such skills and tools foster not only the development of oral linguistic competence but also the acquisition of cognitive and social skills, thereby enriching students’ language learning experiences in a holistic way.

1.7.1. Practical Application of Theories and Models in Gamification for Teaching.

The models and theories that underpin gamification in teaching find their application in various platforms and games designed to enhance learning. Here is how some gamified tools analyze their effects on skill development, illustrating some focal theories:

It is seen on platforms like Duolingo and in role-playing games that Constructivism, learning is efficient when the student actively participates in the construction of knowledge, strongly supports. In Duolingo, students interact with practical and repetitive exercises that reinforce the construction of language skills. Role-playing games, on the other hand, invite students to apply previously acquired knowledge in simulated contexts, such as dialogues in everyday situations, promoting active and meaningful language acquisition (Kovalenko y Skvortsova, 2022).

Kahoot and Quizet Live use tools that support Csikszentmihalyi’s flow theories, which state that students are most engaged in activities that are challenging yet within reach. In Kahoot, interactive quizzes and timed dynamics keep students in a state of optimal focus, while Quizlet Live introduces friendly competition, challenging students to collaborate and solve language problems as a team, without feeling overwhelmed (Shakirzyanova et al., 2021).

Deci and Ryan's concepts of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can be applied to Classcraft and Habitica. In Classcraft, speaking activities become a game, and students earn points as well as rewards for engagement and participation. Similarly,



Habitica uses game elements for goal tracking, motivating students to complete language tasks through visual incentives and progress levels (Eremkina et al., 2022).

Kolb's experiential learning model, which emphasizes learning by doing, is embodied in Minecraft: Education Edition. This game allows students to practice speaking skills by collaborating on projects that require constant communication. For example, in a team-building activity, students must describe designs and verbally coordinate to complete tasks, applying language skills in an interactive and realistic environment (Cruz & Rodríguez, 2023).

Information processing theory, which highlights the importance of frequent and meaningful exposure to content, is reflected in Mondly. Through interactive AI-powered dialogues, students receive immediate feedback, reinforcing vocabulary and grammatical structures in real time. This approach ensures the ongoing practice and reinforcement needed to consolidate speaking skills (Marinelli et al., 2020).

These tools in gamified theories and models demonstrate a blend of pedagogy and technology that assists in effective learning. More than simply offering solid theories such as constructivism, motivation, and even experiential learning, platforms and games provide students with the opportunity to hone their expressive skills in vibrant and impactful environments.

1.8. Pedagogical strategies to encourage the use of gamification tools.

Pedagogical Instructors actively shape their students' learning experiences by incorporating game-like tools that encourage better overall retention through active participation. It is important to remember that learners have individual characteristics that must be taken into account when developing plans, particularly in Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) that involves higher-order skills such as speaking.

One approach is to immerse learners in games that replicate "real life" or everyday activities/situations to allow students to communicate using the language in context. In FLT, students can participate in gamified activities where they earn points or rewards for completing specific language tasks, for example, through dialogues or after marked pronunciation sessions. The motivational impact of these elements helps



capture students' interest, in addition to improving learning outcomes as a result of frequent practice (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022).

Another key strategy is the focus on the application and meaning of language use. Rather than limiting activities to mechanical language drills, gamified exercises should emphasize the purpose and relevance of communication. Think about the idea of developing games where learners have to deal with problems and also overcome challenges within the framework of the target language. Such an approach would be beneficial in improving the problem-solving skills as well as critical thinking and their use of the language accurately in real-life situations (Kashefian et al., 2023).

There is also the matter of providing students with recurring chances to participate in language activities within a game format, as such engagement promotes skill acquisition. This may involve multiple language games that aim to develop vocabulary, grammar, and speaking skills, each at varying levels of complexity. Because the learners have different levels of motivation, the wide variety of activities helps to keep every student engaged while ensuring that their learning outcomes are met. Sustained engagement to achieve language proficiency was found to occur when motivation was enhanced through the introduction of temporary rewards or badges for reaching specific milestones (Eremkina et al., 2022).

Furthermore, collaborative activities are a productive method of integrating gamification into foreign language teaching. Not only do skills tournaments in which students perform language tasks as a team aim at developing the language, but also, foster collaboration, communication, and problem solving. As a result of organizing team-based competition structures where students have to work together to earn points or achieve certain goals, social skills are cultivated alongside language skills (Mukhamadiarova & Nizamutdinova, 2023).

Last but not least, direct, or immediate feedback is one of the most important aspects of gamified tasks, activities, or events. Students are able to see their progress through simple digital tools and progress boards which motivates them to improve more, increasing their overall motivation. This method of providing feedback enables



teachers to customize the activities based on individual or group performance, thereby optimizing engagement for every student and ensuring that learning objectives are achieved (Kazazoğlu, 2023).

In closing, the matter of handling foreign language learning through the lens of gamification boils down to addressing learners' needs to sustain their engagement. Students must be provided with a variety of high-quality motivating tasks to meet the objectives of the lesson that promote collaboration. The use of games (as well as group dynamics) which aim at encouraging attendance and enthusiastic participation, alongside consistent constructive feedback on performance, fosters not just the growth of language skills but also essential interpersonal skills, resulting in rich and productive learning environments for language learners.

1.9. Importance of gamification tools in the educational context.

Applying gamification elements within the context of education has far-reaching advantages, as it fosters learner interactivity and motivation. Particularly, in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) programs, gamification helps foster participation and the acquisition of language competencies particularly in oral skills. Furthermore, these activities aid in resolving motivational difficulties by turning some mundane language learning activities into enjoyable, energizing exercises that call for learner and teacher participation.

Motivation is challenging when students are disengaged, perhaps due to traditional vocabulary drills. The introduction of game mechanics—levels, rewards, and leaderboards—spark a transformation of language exercises into something far more compelling. Research demonstrates that students tend to actively participate in language drills when they are designed as games, performing better and having a more positive outlook towards learning (Wulandari et al., 2023)

Considering gamification's effectiveness, overcoming obstacles that hinder participation is essential. Within the FLT framework, some students may have difficulties speaking in front of classmates because they self-categorize as timid, due to the need to express oneself in the target language, or other reasons. With



gamification, learners can participate at different levels that correspond to their fluency, including personalized pacing challenges. Learners are more likely to try activities when they can succeed at different levels (Barkova & Ponagushina, 2023). Adapting to a learner's needs builds their confidence and self-esteem, improving participation, especially in routine language sessions.

Moreover, gamification encourages collaborative and social learning. Via cooperative and communicative problem-solving activities framed as language games, students learn to work together. This engagement is essential in Foreign Language Teaching (FLT), as cross-group interaction enhances language competence and social skills simultaneously. Sotlikova (2023) notes that through the application of gamified tools, the fulfillment of personal objectives shifts toward collective goals, which nurtures community spirit and support in the classroom.

Game-based tools foster long-term retention of content. Students are more likely to assimilate concepts and skills when engaging in meaningful communication challenges and playful language activities due to repetition and exposure. The immediate feedback featured in many gamified tools enables students to correct errors in real time, which accelerates improvement and promotes sustained linguistic development (Elarafi y Agsebat, 2022).

1.10. Assessing skill development using gamification tools.

Evaluating skill acquisition via gamification tools offers a novel perspective that is both flexible and student-centered in the scope of Foreign Language Teaching (FLT), especially concerning speaking skills. The evaluation may be gamified using a combination of formative and summative approaches based on a language game. Formative evaluations happen concurrently with the class, for example, during the conversational simulation games, which are inherently gamified. Through these activities, learners receive feedback immediately during the activity, often in the form of visual rewards such as points, badges, or level-ups which motivate learners and provide instant feedback regarding their performance. As Barkova and Ponagushina



(2023) point out, this feedback greatly influences participation, and motivates students to improve their pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency in small gradual steps.

The summative assessment in gamified contexts is enhanced by the assessment evolving over time and the collection of data over time. Fluency rates, task completion times, successful interactions, and other metrics from student's performance from language learning platforms can be recorded, and subsequently analyzed to paint a more comprehensive picture of every individual's speaking progress. This analysis combats the anxiety associated with standardized assessments by reframing the process of learning and enduring evaluation as evolving, enjoyable progression (Kartika, 2023). Furthermore, personalized pathways and differentiated instruction are made possible through gamification. Students at varying levels of proficiency are met with speaking challenges, ranging from basic conversational exchanges to complex dialogues. This adaptability ensures equitable assessments, enhances learner confidence, and honors diverse paces of learning (Alam, 2023).

In addition, self-assessment and teacher-led assessment both benefit from self-directed evaluation. Each of the teacher's gamification features with measurement and evaluation tools gives him or her powerful useful analytics in verbal participation pragmatics, speech segmentation practice, conversational turn-taking maintenance, as well as holistic and formative aspects of each child's oral language development (Handig et al., 2023). At the same time, with self-directed learning, students are allowed to self-evaluate and reflect on their performance. Progress indicators—achievements, levels, scores—make measurable outcomes, hence provide visualized progress and motivate prospective learners to learn the self-directed way. This is shown by Sotlikova (2023), who discusses how in this reflective element, students are able to autonomously set targets achieving ever higher standards, thereby developing long-term speaking proficiency in FLT.



CHAPTER 2 METHODOLOGY FOR INITIAL RESEARCH AND DIAGNOSIS

This chapter has gamification's impact on learners' speaking skills and its assessment strategies as the tools, techniques, and frameworks defined in the mix. As the chapter progresses, some key principles and ideas will be defined and explained so as to establish a systematic groundwork for the gathering, analyzing, and interpreting of the data. Also, in this chapter, the rationale for the chosen research design is provided and analyzed concerning the respondents' views from qualitative and quantitative angles.

As for the instruments that the study used such as the questionnaire and the observation sheet, these are discussed in terms of their relevance in tracking the learners' motivation, participation, and achievement levels in the speaking activities. Before that, the criteria for the target groups for the intervention and the boundaries for the method of processing the information collected are detailed to demonstrate how the reliability and validity of the findings are ensured.

2.1. Conceptualization and operationalization of the categories.

The areas of gamification and speaking skills were thoroughly defined and structured in this research in order to develop a solid theoretical and methodological foundation to analyze their effect on pre-A1 students. The study takes a novel approach to English teaching by integrating English language learning with playful elements at the minimal proficiency level. Important motivation, participation, and verbal expression were formulated to determine the effect of the level of gamification applied. These definitional constructs guided the creation of collection instruments such as questionnaires and observation sheets which were filled before and after the intervention ensuring that all aspects of the intervention and the resultant learning were captured (See Annex 1).

2.2. Statement and justification of the research approach.

This study uses both qualitative and quantitative approaches to assess the effects of gamification on students' speaking skills by implementing a mixed-methods



framework. Pre- and post-intervention questionnaires, filled out by participants, capture objective data pertinent to their fluency, accuracy, confidence, and self-assessment which provides baselines for measurement over time, allowing for comparison of progress within the learning continuum. Informing these findings, qualitative data from observation sheets offers description of student behaviors, including motivation, engagement, and interaction with the tasks, that are relevant in the context of gamified learning. This amalgamation permits comprehensive appraisal of the intervention, including documenting the process of change over time, not only what change occurred, but how and why it happened.

2.3. Methods used and their purposes in the context of the proposal.

This study applies a descriptive and analytical methods combined approach to examine the influence of gamification on students' speaking skills. In this case, a motivation and disposition towards the English language, as well as fluency were initially identified using a descriptive approach. This approach helped gather essential background information to assist in the development of gamified activities that aligned with the expectations of pre-A1 learners. Pre-intervention feedback from participants helped the research establish a baseline against which changes could be measured.

The analytical technique, unlike others, was essential to describe the information that the intervention recovered over time. It facilitated a detailed examination of trends and variations in students' performance and engagement, particularly through the analysis of pre- and post-intervention questionnaires and observation sheets. This method allowed the researcher to explore not just the outcomes, but also the dynamics behind improvements in fluency, confidence, and motivation. Together, the descriptive and analytical methods provided a solid framework for drawing meaningful conclusions, revealing both the measurable progress in speaking skills and the behavioral responses that contributed to students' language development.

2.4. Instruments derived from the selected methodology.



This study's tools were selected considering the mixed-methods approach, especially to obtain accuracy and detail on the impact of gamification tools on learners' speaking skills and their motivation levels. For the study, two primary instruments were identified; these were questionnaires and observation sheets (See Appendices 2, 3 and 4). The questionnaires aimed at collecting both qualitative and quantitative information from the learners, capturing the critical components of their speaking level, confidence, vocabulary, as well as their attitude towards learning through games. Using these instruments, students were assessed before and after the intervention, which provided data not only on progression, but also on the impact of the gamified intervention on the targeted speaking skills development.

Simultaneously, the observation sheets provided insight into the qualitative aspects of the students' engagement and interaction during the gamified activities. The observation sheets had specific segments that captured data on tool usage, verbal contributions, general class participation, and feedback from the instructor. With these sheets, it was feasible to observe the students' actions and interactions in the class milieu throughout the intervention. The utilization of both instruments, the questionnaires and the observation sheets, allowed the research to explore the phenomenon more comprehensively. The surveys captured numerical information related to the students' academic achievements. On the other hand, the observational data motivated and concerned participation, which helped strengthen the analysis and evaluation of gamification and its impact on interpreting the speaking skills development.

2.5. Delimitation of the intervention target groups.

The pre-A1 has 20 students in the monitored participant group and they're just beginning the journey of an English speaking child. These students possess a low level of language capability, scant lexicon, deficient vocabulary, and lack of oral skills. There is also disregard for motivation amongst the learners which is one of the great challenges. Providing motivation courses that go beyond mere skill attainment becomes imperative for these students. In light of these specifications, the intervention



seeks to provide playful activities that have motivational factors and at the same time, create a safe atmosphere for practice so as to increase proficiency along with motivation.

For controlled multifaceted evaluation of the gamified intervention, participants will be split into two groups - one experimental group will take part in the activities while the other will follow traditional instructions. All fourth graders have been chosen for both groups to ensure consistency of the learning environment and minimize extraneous variable concerns like the child's age, academic skills, or school experiences prior to the intervention. The gamified elements tailored to the experimental group will include immediate feedback, level-based progression monitoring, and team-based progress challenges designed to improve engagement while reducing anxiety associated with speaking.

The control group will retain a more conventional structure with defined prompts and limited interactivity. This approach allows an assessment of the effects of gamification on speaking level fluency, accuracy, and motivation.

The intentional creation of these groups is useful to the study in that it allows measuring the impact of gamification within a methodological framework. This research concentrates on the learning outcome on the intervened class while contrasting two teaching approaches within the same grade level. This design guarantees that all quantitative and qualitative data captured would student performance and their attitude toward learning English as a subject significantly exceeded expectations. In summary, this research seeks to establish whether gamification is a successful strategy in responding to the typical challenges experienced by pre A1 learners in developing oral communication skills.

2.6. Data processing and interpretation for initial diagnosis.

Accurately processing and interpreting the preliminary diagnostic data set was essential in creating a robust benchmark for assessing the impact of the gamified intervention. The study collected quantitative data regarding students' motivation, satisfaction, and the self-rated English speaking skills, alongside qualitative data on

classroom conduct with the help of tailored observation and questionnaire forms. The assessment of engagement and speaking performance prior to the intervention was measured through mean comparisons alongside other quantitative approaches. This assessment highlighted numerous issues such as grammar and expression gaps, a sparse range of vocabulary, pronunciation issues, pervasive low self-esteem, lack of motivation, and significantly, avoidance of oral activities in the presence of peers.

The students' speaking task participation and use of English during group work was dominated by vernacular use, which confirmed the findings. The students demonstrated English reluctance through disjointed and discomfort-laden fragmented speech, signifying an urgent need for more effective teaching approaches. Such diagnostic data reinforced the need to cultivate an environment geared towards targeted active participation, context-driven vocabulary work, real-time corrective feedback, and tailored to the specific challenges of pre-A1 learners. In this way, gamified interventions could be constructed from baseline data analysis, which enriches understanding beyond primary conditions, capturing diverse nuances to guide targeted aids for developmental progression.

2.6.1. Initial diagnosis - Questionnaire

Table 1 Frequency of responses for Question 1 (pre-test)

Question 1: How comfortable do you feel participating in English-speaking activities in class?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Uncomfortable	7	35.0
Somewhat comfortable	7	35.0
Comfortable	6	30.0

From the evaluation of the pre-test data, it was noted that a discomfort rate of 35%, equating to 7 out of 20 participants, was noted among students in regards to English speaking activities in class. An additional 35% also felt somewhat comfortable, and 30% reported being comfortable during these activities.



The data indicates that a large number of students, approximately 70%, experience some form of discomfort when participating in English speaking tasks. The statistics indicate that just one out of three students feels at ease during these activities; this reflects a more profound unwillingness or lack of self-confidence to speak English during class. Students not feeling comfortable speaking English in class could stem from several factors, such as fear of embarrassment, poor self-esteem related to their language skills, or insufficient opportunities to speak.

With 70% of students feeling uneasy with English speaking activities, there is an immediate need for strategies aimed at creating more positive experiences. Introducing some gamification elements is likely to help, as it could decrease anxiety by reducing the formality of the learning environment. By integrating more engaging activities, students will gradually feel more comfortable practicing English in lower-pressure situations.

Table 2 Frequency of responses for Question 2 (pre-test)

Question 2: How motivated are you to participate in English-speaking activities?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Not motivated	7	35.0
Somewhat motivated	7	35.0
Motivated	6	30.0

The data indicates that 35% of the students reported feeling not motivated to participate in English-speaking activities, while an additional 35% felt somewhat motivated. In contrast, only 30% of the students expressed that they were motivated to engage in these activities. This shows a notable split in student motivation levels, with a significant portion of the class demonstrating low or moderate levels of enthusiasm for participating in speaking tasks.

These findings indicate that most students did not appear sufficiently engaged or motivated to actively participate in speaking activities. This decline in motivation could be caused by several different factors, including fear of making mistakes, low self-esteem, or simply considering learning English again too challenging. Therefore, applying highly motivational and engaging techniques such as gamification could improve students' motivation and engagement by making learning fun and rewarding. Gamifying activities is likely to increase motivation and engagement with lessons and, therefore, increase participation in speaking tasks.

Table 3 Frequency of responses for Question 3 (pre-test)

Question 3: Do you think class activities help you improve your fluency in speaking English?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sometimes	8	40.0
Never	6	30.0
Always	6	30.0

The data reveals that 40% of students believe that class activities sometimes help them improve their fluency in speaking English, while 30% of the students reported that these activities never contribute to improving their fluency. Additionally, 30% of the students indicated that class activities always help enhance their fluency. From the given data, it can be interpreted that most of the students are getting some advantage from the activities, however, a significant number of students perceive these activities as inconsistently improving, or entirely failing to improve, their fluency skills.

These findings suggest that while a portion of students recognizes the positive impact of class activities on their fluency, there is a significant number who either do not see consistent improvement or feel that the activities do not help at all. This could imply a need for more tailored or engaging methods, such as gamification, to ensure that all students benefit from the activities. By incorporating more interactive, fluency-



focused tasks, teachers could potentially increase the effectiveness of the activities for students who currently perceive limited benefits, making learning more engaging and impactful for everyone.

Table 4 Frequency of responses for Question 4 (pre-test)

Question 4: How confident do you feel speaking English in front of your classmates?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Not confident	7	35.0
Somewhat confident	7	35.0
Confident	6	30.0

From the information gathered, 35% of students reported having no confidence at all speaking English in class, with another 35% saying they were somewhat confident. In addition, 30% of students claimed that they feel confident in those situations. This indicates that a considerable segment of the class lacks confidence speaking English in front of their classmates, and only a small segment expresses a high level of confidence. These findings indicate a significant gap in students' adequate preparation and confidence to participate in spoken English, considering that 70% of students, combined, exhibit some form of hesitation, discomfort, or uncertainty when speaking. This confidence gap can be due to fear of making mistakes, anxiety, or inadequate practice. To address this, implementing appropriate strategies, such as confidence-building activities or gamified speaking tasks, can allow students to become more comfortable and confident over time when speaking English. This can be achieved by fundamentally restructuring teaching methods, which would allow for greater ease and stronger support in the classroom; this would make it easier for students to participate more actively and without feeling anxious.

Table 5 Frequency of responses for Question 5 (pre-test)



Question 5: How often do you use the vocabulary you've learned in class when speaking English?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sometimes	9	45.0
Never	6	30.0
Always	5	25.0

The data indicates that 45% of students state they use the vocabulary taught in class “some of the time” during English conversations, while 30% say they never use it at all. Moreover, just 25% of students reported that they “always” utilize the vocabulary practiced in class during their speaking drills. This shows that a large number of students do not use the vocabulary meaningfully, and a large number do not use it at all.

These findings imply that there may be a gap between the vocabulary being taught and how effectively students are incorporating it into their speaking practices. This inconsistency in vocabulary use could be due to a lack of opportunities to practice, hesitation to apply new terms, or insufficient reinforcement of vocabulary in practical contexts. To improve this, incorporating more interactive or gamified activities could encourage students to use the vocabulary more regularly, making language use more engaging and less intimidating, and thereby helping students to better integrate what they've learned into their spoken communication.

Table 6 Frequency of responses for Question 6 (pre-test)

Question 6: How helpful do you find the feedback you receive when speaking English in class?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Not helpful	7	35.0
Somewhat helpful	7	35.0
Helpful	6	30.0

The data reveals that 35% of students find the feedback they receive in class not helpful, while another 35% consider it somewhat helpful. Additionally, 30% of the students indicated that the feedback they receive is helpful. This suggests that while a portion of students benefits from feedback, a significant proportion either finds it of limited value or unhelpful altogether.

This distribution implies that feedback, as currently provided, may not be fully effective for a large number of students. The mixed responses suggest that some students might not be receiving the type of feedback that supports their learning or encourages improvement. To address this, more tailored or immediate feedback mechanisms, such as those integrated into gamified activities, could be introduced. These methods may provide more relevant, actionable, and engaging feedback, helping students to better understand their mistakes and make quicker improvements in their speaking abilities.

Table 7 Frequency of responses for Question 7 (pre-test)

Question 7: How well do you organize your ideas when speaking English?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Hard to organize	7	35.0
Sometimes organize	7	35.0
Always organize	6	30.0

The data shows that 35% of students find it hard to organize their ideas when speaking English, while another 35% reported that they sometimes organize their ideas. In contrast, only 30% of the students indicated that they always organize their thoughts well when speaking. This distribution highlights that a significant majority of students struggle with consistently organizing their ideas during English-speaking tasks, with only a small portion feeling confident in their ability to do so effectively.

These results indicate that most learners require further assistance with regard to organizing their thoughts while speaking in English. The challenges with idea



organization could be due to insufficient practice, low self-esteem, or a combination of all language skills. In this case, assisting the students with structured speaking activities or game-like tasks which focus on improvement of the students' coherence and logical organization in speech may be of assistance. These efforts may change the attitude of the students towards clearer and logical thinking when it comes to planning and using English.

Table 8 Frequency of responses for Question 8 (pre-test)

Question 8: How comfortable do you feel practicing pronunciation during class activities?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Uncomfortable	7	35.0
Somewhat comfortable	7	35.0
Comfortable	6	30.0

Results indicate that 35% of students experience discomfort practicing pronunciation during class activities, with another 35% reporting a rating of somewhat comfortable. In contrast, only 30% of students reported feeling comfortable practicing pronunciation. From this data, we can ascertain that the majority of learners experience a range of discomfort—rather than comfort—while practicing pronunciation, and only a small fraction report comfort.

From these observations it seems a considerable number of students face the challenge of anxiety and lack of self-confidence when it comes to practicing pronunciation in the context of a lesson. This form of discomfort could arise from a fear of making errors, or from limited practice opportunities in a nurturing environment. Addressing this concern with innovative, low-stress activities that focus on "gamified" pronunciation tasks could allow students to feel more at ease and encourage their participation. Furthermore, fostering an environment that encourages



making mistakes during the learning process could reduce students' anxiety, thereby increasing their confidence in practicing pronunciation.

2.7. Results from Observation Sheet

2.7.1. Pre-Intervention Results: Identifying Challenges

The classroom still relied heavily on conventional lecture-based instruction and rote learning prior to the intervention, and there was little to no use of gamification tools. Engagement and participation in speaking sessions were inconsistent and, in most cases, quite low. According to observational data, 40% of students actively participated, while the other 60% displayed disinterest and reluctance during speaking activities. Most of this reluctance stemmed from a lack of a confident self-image, accompanied by a strong fear of failure, which diminished voluntary participation and minimized the usefulness of group dynamics. Students were unresponsive to questions, and their low participation in interactions with their peers indicated a considerable obstacle to the acquisition of communication skills.

Moreover, interaction during speaking tasks was notably low, with only 30% of students engaging in peer-to-peer exchanges. Many preferred to use their native language in role-playing exercises due to discomfort with their vocabulary and pronunciation skills in English. Feedback, when provided, was often delayed and focused on correction rather than encouragement, which contributed to heightened anxiety and reinforced students' reluctance to speak. Specific challenges were identified in areas such as fluency—where 70% of students frequently paused or hesitated—pronunciation, with 65% struggling to articulate common English sounds like /th/ and /r/, and coherence, as 60% of students failed to construct logically organized responses. Additionally, the practical use of vocabulary was limited, with only 35% consistently applying newly learned terms in their speech, further underscoring the need for more interactive, motivating, and supportive teaching strategies.



To address these challenges, the research was structured into a methodological procedure consisting of three key stages. The first stage involved the diagnostic assessment of students' speaking abilities and motivational levels, which provided the foundation for designing a tailored intervention. The second stage of the proposal consisted of five gamified grid-like elements, such as levels, challenges, and rewards, in an attempt to foster motivation to use speaking skills and also improve fluency and accuracy in a stress-free environment. Finally, the focus of the third stage is to evaluate the proposal's effectiveness. One group will receive the intervention as an experiment, while the other group will observe the traditional control method. For theoretical validation, experts will be invited to evaluate the educational quality and logic of the designed intervention, while they will interact to analyze the overall impact on students' speaking skills, describing the rigor and relevance of the findings.

2.8. Research limitations.

The research identifies several issues that could compromise the validity, reliability, and generalizability of the findings. The most prominent problem is the sample size and situation because the participants were confined to a narrow group of pre-A1 learners within a certain age bracket and educational level. This limited range is problematic because it is impossible to extrapolate the results to other groups which hinders efforts to make overarching generalizations about learners at different levels of education or even across various kinds of academic institutions. Also, despite the lack of external influences on the experiment, the uniformity of the sample diminishes the applicability of the results which might not represent the reality of students from diverse cultures, socioeconomic statuses, or languages.

Problems pertaining to the methodology are also notable, including an overreliance on quantitative tools like questionnaires and standardized tests. Although these methods accomplished measuring students' development in speaking skills, they overlooked students' emotional responses, motivation, and subjective views concerning the gamified learning approach. In the absence of focus groups or interviews, there was no means of understanding how students went through the



intervention. Additionally, the duration of the study—eight weeks—further limits the potential analysis of the enduring impact or the long-term sustainability of fluent, confident speech. In the absence of follow-up assessments after the intervention, it is uncertain if the benefits would fade without ongoing support.

These restrictions are compounded by the reliance on digital platforms like Duolingo or Kahoot, which could pose technological problems in low-device availability or unstable internet hotspots. These factors may have contributed to inactive engagement, resulting in outcome bias. In addition, the researcher did not address the critical contextual factors such as the learners' culture, ethnicity, or socio-economic status, which are likely to affect their interaction with gamification. This gap in the literature did not examine the impact of teachers in the application and implementation of game-based strategies, yet this would have been a crucial factor regarding the impact of the constructive systematic shift on the students.

CHAPTER 3: THE PROPOSAL AND ITS VALIDATION

This chapter describes a gamified intervention designed to improve the speaking skills of pre-A1 learners, detailing its rationale, aims, methods, and corresponding intervention stages. It outlines particular assignments along with their anticipated impacts, in addition to the outcome verification using both theoretical and practical approaches. Justifying the proposal with relevant theories, the described gamification is intended to motivationally and academically engage students while cultivating language skills, arguing for its flexible application as a game changer for sharp, innovative changes in age-old instructional practices.

3.1. Theoretical basis of the proposal

The This proposal incorporates optimally theagara siknomigab ed uarsaned atanik and gamifictaion tethreth cunneil pre-a1 speanigning skills from diverse fields which nos on english. It draws upon technology, psychology, linguistics, neuroscience, and didactics. Ofuta scajari technology, kahoot and duolingo offer answering challenges instantly providing instant feedback which is greatly appreciated by learners. At'donsoluh stikcent. Self-determination theory on need satisfaction posits autonomy and satiation in competence benefits the undertaking with heightened motivation and confidence Kaplan et al 2020. Linguistic theory regcarind social interaction put forward by vygotsky and goodman alongside meaning negotiation is largely present in gamified group tasks.

From a neuroscience perspective, skills acquisition is underpinned by brain plasticity with repetition and real-time feedback Michaud 2019. Didactically, introducing play elements transforms the learning environment into a lively space fostering active participation to mediate ownership of the learning process and meaningful learning. The proposal is organized into three overarching phases: initiation, development, and evaluation, all aimed at maintaining continuous participation and progressive vocabulary development. The focus on activities is on interactivity, adaptability to the students, motivation through rewards, challenges, and constructive feedback, and building confidence. The proposal describes inclusivity



through providing accessible activities that cater to varying degrees of proficiency to support all learners in active participation and collaboration.

In the introductory phase, students learn the Using the Learning Tools Objectives, while the development phase concentrates on interactive activities such as role-plays and vocabulary games. The last phase focuses on progress evaluation through questionnaires, observation, and self-reflection. In combination, these components strengthen the learner-centered approach and create a wholistic, flexible framework for early language education.

Phase	Objective	Activities	Expected Outcomes
Initial Introduction to Gamification	Familiarize students with the gamified tools and methodologies to reduce anxiety and encourage engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Conduct an introductory session on the purpose and use of gamification.- Demonstrate tools like Kahoot, Duolingo, and Wordwall.- Engage students in a low-pressure game activity to explore the platform.	Students feel at ease and are even motivated to take part fully in gamified activities.
Development of speaking skills	Enhance speaking skills through interactive and engaging activities tailored to individual and group needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Role-playing Games: Students enact real-life scenarios (e.g., ordering food or asking for directions).- Vocabulary Challenges: Introduce vocabulary tournaments with collaborative and competitive dynamics.- Simulations: Students practice dialogues in digital scenarios like virtual stores or restaurants.	Students develop fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary retention. Increased confidence during speaking tasks.
Evaluation -Feedback Integration	Provide timely and constructive feedback to support progress and correct errors effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Use progress trackers on platforms like Quizlet.- Deliver verbal affirmations and written suggestions post-activity.- Highlight improvements and set personalized goals for students.	Students gain clarity on areas of improvement and demonstrate incremental progress.



<p>- Collaborative Projects</p>	<p>Foster teamwork and social interaction to reinforce language skills.</p>	<p>- Group storytelling activities where students contribute sequentially to a narrative. - Debates on simple topics to practice logical organization and argumentation.</p>	<p>Enhanced collaboration and application of language skills in peer-to-peer interactions.</p>
<p>-Evaluation and Reflection</p>	<p>Measure learning outcomes and allow students to reflect on their progress.</p>	<p>- Administer post-tests to assess fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary usage. - Conduct self-assessment and peer reviews with guided rubrics. - Celebrate achievements through rewards like certificates or badges.</p>	<p>Students and teachers gain insights into progress, fostering motivation for continued learning.</p>

This structured proposal ensures that students experience a progressive and supportive environment to develop their speaking skills. The proposal is characterized by being:

- Integrative: the integration of interactive and reflective activities addresses both cognitive and emotional aspects of learning to benefit the students’ willingness to ask and talk.
- Collaborative: collaboration and application of language skills in peer-to-peer interactions enhance teamwork and social interaction.

3.2. Digital games to develop speaking skills in pre A-1 students

General objective: To enhance pre-A1 level students’ English conversational abilities using motivational strategies that promote engagement and active participation in the learning process through gamified techniques. This approach seeks to motivate and help students solve personalized problems and overcome challenges identified during the initial assessment.

Specific objectives: to enhance fluency alongside accuracy in speaking through focused and repetitive practice; to motivate the use of previously encountered



vocabulary in authentic and role-played communicative situations to foster better retention of knowledge and its application; in a guided learner-friendly environment, to enable students to in speak English more confidently in front of their peers using strategies aimed at minimizing anxiety and maximizing participation, and to foster an appealing, interactive and inclusive classroom culture which would better students' development in a socially-responsive and collaborative learning environment.

Here are some prerequisites for implementing them in the classroom. For these digital games, some fundamental requirements must be met. Educators must have appropriately selected devices with internet access, be familiar with the selected platforms, and possess the necessary skills to support learners. In addition, it is important to build a constructive and participative environment which promotes collaboration. A defined set of specific objectives to be achieved is equally important and should take into consideration the learners' language skills, speech skills, motivation regarding improvement, and an, competitive yet manageable, level of difficulty.

3.3. Games to work on cognitive levels and develop fluency, coherence and vocabulary.

Fluency, coherence, and vocabulary mastery can be developed through purposeful speaking exercises and through cognitive skill-educational games. Each game is created to achieve specific objectives in language learning and makes sure that every intent is met holistically and in an engaging manner, which is as follows

3.3.1. Role-Playing Challenges

Role-playing challenges are quite useful when it comes to developing speaking skills, especially fluency and coherence, because they foster active engagement. While working with pre-A1 learners, situational contexts such as interviews, shopping, and booking at a hotel can be incorporated so that students can apply the language in authentic contexts and enhance their self-esteem and communicative skills. The use of role cards containing essential vocabulary and expressions alongside digital tools such as Wordwall support greatly aid within lower level learner engagement. These bounded



forms help to reduce anxiety and provide freely available scaffolding so that even the most reserved speakers can actively participate in every meaningful task.

Regular immersive class setups with practice, active participation, and routine assignments reinforce vocabulary and pronunciation, as well as sentence formation. Structured peer and self-reflection feedback sessions encourage learner motivation. The role-playing challenges can be tailored to suit any proficiency and facilitate pre-kinder soft skills alongside active listening and taking in turn speaking respectfully within contextual frames. Hence utilizing and tailoring aids aids in targeting the dominant gap aurally is an effective approach to incorporating and addressing learners in their diversities.

3.3.2. The Story Chain game

The Story Chain game is a systematic approach to collaborative storytelling that fosters spoken English coherence and the use of logical connectors. In this activity, students realize a complete narrative using keywords assigned to them. This exercise aids in bolstering vocabulary integration as well as sequencing skills. The activity starts with a specific theme basis, and students respond within a given timeframe that facilitates fluency, spontaneity, and real-time mental processing, all critical for effective communication. The story is recorded on a whiteboard or digital platform which documents the unfolding narrative visually. This allows learners to analyze the story for coherence and reflect on the logical connections between ideas.

The game has multiple variation streams to cater to different proficiencies. In light of the contributions that learners are required to make, it is clear that this game goes beyond only developing speaking skills; active listening, collaboration, creativity, and imagination are also developed. For students to actively participate, they have to follow the plot, make relevant contributions, and ensure the narrative is consistent. In summary, the Story Chain game fosters not only language skills but also important cognitive and communicative skills, thus enhancing oral expression in a dynamic and inclusive context.

3.3.3. Vocabulary Tournament



Vocabulary Tournament is an innovative game centered on teamwork that boosts vocabulary and phonetics skill acquisition improvement through healthy competition. Prior to the game, students are equipped with sholastic prompts in the vcbz-boarding system based on their individual proficiency with flashcards or Quizlet to enable full participation. During the course of the game, students are rewarded for the pronunciation and phrase construction to further improve language accuracy through sequential word identification and increasingly complex sentence production.

Cooperation among participants is vital for the success of the activity as students are allocated specific roles that have defined scope and promote group responsibility, leadership, and cooperative individual learning. The provision of scorecards with instant feedback facilitates formative assessment and motivates self, peer, and outcome evaluation which fosters a positive feedback culture. The game is adaptable to fit different classroom needs while ensuring high levels of engagement for all learners, making it suitable for diverse proficiency levels. Vocabulary Tournament is thus effective, enjoyable and rigorous as it fosters active vocabulary and social skill development alongside holistic language acquisition in a nurturing frame.

3.3.4. The Picture Prompt Debates game

Using visual stimuli, Picture Prompt Debates helps develop students' fluency and argumentative skills. In high school and university, students of all ages can benefit from this lesson. The most characterized benefit is increased spontaneity stemming from the real-life or abstract scenarios posed by the images. The self-expressing fluency learners are able to achieve through pair or group debate settings leads not only to better articulation of the intended message but also the hone the present content motivational speaking skills, which far exceeds everyday eloquence.

The provided images allow every student, whether a novice or a skilled speaker, to inclusively engage with the content regardless of personal barriers. As students attempt to deliver their thoughts using the vocabulary and guides offered, they begin assembling ideas guided by discussion scaffolds all while being subjected to timed challenges, propelling eloquence and precision—hallmarks of effective real-world



writing and speech. Through insightful feedback, clarity, pronunciation, and argumentative resonance, students master a whole new set of skills. Image Prompt Debates help learners using language theories that foster the growth of soft skills like collaboration, active listening, and layered discussion far beyond mastery of mere words.

3.3.5. Speed Descriptions game

Briefing is a quick description related speaking exercise aimed at improving learners' fluency and self-assurance while simultaneously developing their ability to describe. This is done by having learners speak about a person, object, or place within a 1 minute time limit. Briefing replicates real-life interactions enabling learners to describe the topic spontaneously and in a cohesive manner. Keywords on prompt cards scaffold speech for low-vocab learners. The energizing countdown motivates low-activity learners to speak uninterrupted. Pronunciation, vocabulary use, and fluency are assessed with rubrics along peer evaluation which promotes guided reflection.

Shifting from broad to precise detail fosters critical thinking and information hierarchy thus improving descriptive skill. This exercise promotes advanced brain functions in critical thinking and is useful in academic and work settings. The template is highly customizable which allows teachers to select topics based on student ability from basic descriptions of people and objects for beginners to abstract ideas for advanced learners. The all-inclusive format is designed to engage learners and reduce anxiety while improving overall speaking skills. Speed Descriptions demonstrate usefulness in a dynamic encouraging environment and teach learners to be precise and self-assured.

3.4. Application of the set of digital games

The games were implemented within a timeframe of eight weeks, allowing for the slow development of the student's speaking skills. One to two gamified activities concentrating on diverse topics such as fluency, coherence, and vocabulary were introduced every week. With time, students became comfortable with the game mechanics, enabling them to build confidence in speaking English. The rest of the class



was conducted in English, thus ensuring a comfortable space filled with encouragement that made learners active, cooperative, and fearless to experiment with the language.

To appraise change, learners' interactions during the sessions were recorded, and along with self-evaluation questionnaires, teacher evaluations, and task analyses, they were assessed through appropriate metrics. It was monitored that within the continuum of this dynamic assessment, enhancement in fluency and vocabulary deficits was noted along with some other areas that needed more attention. Appropriate strategies were modified in real-time to make the activities more relevant to learners. It is anticipated that at the end of the intervention, there would be clear traces of change in the targeted speaking skills, indicating the effectiveness of the gamified approach and informing until further refinements were warranted.

3.4.1. Validation and Analysis of Results

The implementation of game elements within an instructional framework as integration of 'gamification' principles has enhanced motivation, engagement, and educational results of pre A1 learners, thus positively impacting their speaking skills. With the inclusion of traditional game elements such as levels, rewards, challenges, and instant feedback, tasks became more dynamic and participatory. These tasks fostered a spontaneous low-anxiety speech environment that reduced error-related fear, enhanced emotional engagement with the content, and increased the desire to learn. Students built confidence and engagement while improving fluency as a result of meeting clear learning goals, calibrated appropriately to a gradual increase in complexity.

Both theoretical and empirical justification was provided for the proposal. From a pedagogical standpoint, the activities adopted relevant flexibility, inclusivity, and were focused on clear, measurable goals. Moreover, the evaluation of pre and post intervention data for both the experimental and control group showed the intervention's impact effectiveness. Focusing on gamified sessions resulted in increased gains in fluency, confidence, and motivation. Storytelling and collaborative tasks also supported the active use of vocabulary and communication. The evidence strongly



suggests that the application of gamification enhances the development of oral language skills while providing a flexible and adaptable structure for diverse educational settings.

3.4.2. Experiment Description.

The intervention was conducted using an experimental design framework on two groups of pre-A1 level learners, one of which had traditional instruction while the other underwent gamified learning. Throughout a period of eight weeks, the experimental group partook in interactive role-playing sessions and vocabulary tournaments which incorporated reward-feedback systems along with other collaboration-based challenges designed to enhance their fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary. The control group learned using unmodified traditional methods which included no elements of gamification. In the course of the study, both groups completed pre and post testing. The primary outcome measures for the study indicated that the conversational skills improvement for the gamified group was significantly higher.

3.4.3. Applied methodology.

This study examined the effect of a gamified intervention on students' oral skills using both qualitative and quantitative methods. It recorded observable academic progress and behavioral-emotional responses through pre-and post-intervention questionnaires, as well as through qualitative observations. The questionnaires gauged crucial linguistic milestones including fluency, clear pronunciation, appropriate vocabulary, ideation and also assessed confidence and motivation. Students' active participation, peer engagement, and emotional involvement to the gamified stimuli were recorded in real-time. Collecting data in this manner offered in-depth understanding of the impact of gamification on language learning and strengthened the analysis by illustrating exposure to multi-faceted factors: cognitive-emotional social domains.

3.5. Analysis of post-test results

Table 9 Frequency of responses for Question 1 (Pre-test and Post-test)

Question 1: How comfortable do you feel participating in English-speaking activities in class?

Response	Pre-Test Frequency	Pre-Test Percentage (%)	Post-Test Frequency	Post-Test Percentage (%)
Comfortable	6	30.0	8	40.0
Very Comfortable	0	0.0	7	35.0
Somewhat Comfortable	7	35.0	5	25.0
Uncomfortable	7	35.0	0	0.0

Reflecting on the emotional and motivational impact of the intervention, its gamified features underscored the shift in students' comfort levels when engaging with English speaking activities. Only 30% of students claiming to feel "comfortable" and none "very comfortable" at the outset, now gradually increased to 40% and 35% respectively post intervention. This is indicative of the boost in confidence that students experienced. At the same time, the "somewhat comfortable" category dropped from 35% to 25%, and the "uncomfortable" group, which used to constitute 35% of the class, was completely eliminated. These changes suggest that anxiety was alleviated by the constructive and responsive atmosphere fostered by the rewarding, challenging, and feedback-laden gamified practices on speaking. Through these, students were gradually willing to take part and linguistic risks, demonstrating the efficacy of emotionally-informed, student-driven pedagogical techniques within language acquisition frameworks support skill acquisition and emotional health.

Table 10 Frequency of responses for Question 2 (Pre-test and Post-test)

Question 2: How motivated are you to participate in English-speaking activities?

Response	Pre-Test Frequency	Pre-Test Percentage (%)	Post-Test Frequency	Post-Test Percentage (%)
Not Motivated	7	35.0	0	0.0
Somewhat Motivated	7	35.0	6	30.0
Motivated	6	30.0	7	35.0
Very Motivated	0	0.0	7	35.0

Reviewing the results of the pre-test and post-test, it is evident that the application of the gamified intervention enhanced the students' willingness to engage in English speaking activities considerably. Initially, 35% of students indicated feeling "not motivated at all," highlighting a clear disengagement with oral participation; however, this category was entirely eliminated in the post-test, evidencing a profound positive shift in attitudes. At the same time, the percentage of students who felt "somewhat motivated" decreased from 35% to 30%, while those identifying as "motivated" rose from 30% to 35%, and a new "very motivated" category emerged, accounting for 35% of responses. The enhancements noted underscore the impact gamified elements like incentives, clocked sessions, as well as group activities, have towards stimulating learning contexts that optimized students' engagement and cultivated enduring motivation and enthusiasm towards English dialog. The findings highlight the value of integrating innovative and student-centered methodologies to support both emotional engagement and language skill development.

Table 11 Frequency of responses for Question 3 (Pre-Test and Post-Test)

Question 3: Do you think class activities help you improve your fluency in speaking English?

Response	Pre-Test Frequency	Pre-Test Percentage (%)	Post-Test Frequency	Post-Test Percentage (%)
Always	6	30.0	14	70.0
Sometimes	8	40.0	6	30.0
Never	6	30.0	0	0.0

Analysis of the pre-test and post-test results reveals that there is a strong enhancement in students' perceptions regarding the contribution of classroom activities towards their English fluency, which emphasizes the impact of the gamified intervention. At first, 30 percent of students accepted the proposition that class activities supported the development of their fluency in English without exception; this increased to 70 percent after the intervention, more than doubling which indicates a marked change in students' perceptions. The introduction of engaging tasks—such as



role-playing, vocabulary tournaments, and timed challenges—provided students with repeated, meaningful opportunities to practice speaking in supportive contexts. This consistent exposure helped students recognize the tangible benefits of their participation. Supporting this trend, the "sometimes" category decreased from 40% to 30%, and the "never" category was entirely eliminated (previously at 30%), reflecting a universal acknowledgment of progress. This confirms the effectiveness of gamification in language pedagogy and reinforces the significance of organized, interactive methods in improving speaking fluency and positively shifting learners' attitudes.

Table 12 Frequency of responses for Question 4 (Pre-Test and Post-Test)

Question 4: How confident do you feel speaking English in front of your classmates?

Response	Pre-Test Frequency	Pre-Test Percentage (%)	Post-Test Frequency	Post-Test Percentage (%)
Not Confident	7	35.0	0	0.0
Somewhat Confident	7	35.0	7	35.0
Confident	6	30.0	6	30.0
Very Confident	0	0.0	7	35.0

Looking at both the pre and post assessment results, i notice that there is an observable improvement in the student's self esteem when it comes to speaking English with their classmates along with the proficiency in English skills that they have. It shows the emotional benefits stemming from the gamified intervention. At first, a total of 35% of the students experienced self-reported levels of “not confident”. However, this category was entirely erased post intervention which signifies the shift that was achieved after the intervention that was administered. The stability of the "somewhat confident" (35%) and "confident" (30%) categories, along with the emergence of a new "very confident" category representing 35% of students, reflects notable progress in students' comfort levels. This change comes from participating in supportive and rewarding gamified activities—role-playing, vocabulary challenges, and collaborative

tasks—within a safe space that supported risk-taking and lowered anxiety. These results validate that the use of gamification not only improves the level of proficiency in speaking but also enhances the learner's emotional resiliency, strengthening the gamified classroom atmosphere.

Table 13 Frequency of responses for Question 5 (Pre-Test and Post-Test)

Question 5: How often do you use the vocabulary you've learned in class when speaking English?

Response	Pre-Test	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Post-Test
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Always	5	25.0	14	70.0
Sometimes	9	45.0	6	30.0
Never	6	30.0	0	0.0

Data collected from the pre-tests and post-tests indicate students have significantly made progress towards using vocabulary learned in class during English speaking tasks. This affirms the effectiveness of the gamified approach in promoting vocabulary usage. At first, 25% of students said they “always” used the vocabulary, while 30% confessed to “never” using it; however, following the intervention, the “always” response increased to 70% while “never” was entirely absent. This shift indicates that all students began integrating vocabulary to some extent, transforming passive knowledge into practical communication skills. Moreover, the “sometimes” category dropping from 45% to 30% marks improvement in consistency and confidence in vocabulary usage. Focused, interactive techniques like vocabulary contests and role play facilitated motivating, repetitive chances to reinforce and apply newly learned terms. In closing, the results underscore the impact of gamification on vocabulary retention and its use, reinforcing the value of active, learner-centered approaches to teaching.

Table 14 Frequency of responses for Question 6 (Pre-Test and Post-Test)

Question 6: How helpful do you find the feedback you receive when speaking English in class?



Response	Pre-Test Frequency	Pre-Test Percentage (%)	Post-Test Frequency	Post-Test Percentage (%)
Not Helpful	7	35.0	0	0.0
Somewhat Helpful	7	35.0	5	25.0
Helpful	6	30.0	8	40.0
Very Helpful	0	0.0	7	35.0

As seen in the comparison of the pre-test and post-test analyses, there is a deep improvement in learners' views regarding the feedback in English speaking activities, proving that the gamified adaptation worked well for the feedback system. Initially, 35% of students found feedback "not helpful," indicating widespread dissatisfaction; however, this category was completely eliminated post-intervention, signaling a major shift in how students valued the support from teachers and peers. This change is largely attributed to the integration of gamified and interactive strategies that offered immediate, constructive, and contextually relevant feedback, allowing students to understand and correct their mistakes in real time. Additionally, the "helpful" category rose from 30% to 40%, while a new "very helpful" category emerged at 35%, and the "somewhat helpful" group decreased from 35% to 25%, suggesting a reclassification of perception toward more positive experiences. These results affirm the importance of providing timely and meaningful feedback through engaging methodologies, reinforcing students' confidence, self-awareness, and active involvement in their learning process.

Table 15 Frequency of responses for Question 7 (Pre-Test and Post-Test)

Question 7: How well do you organize your ideas when speaking English?

Response	Pre-Test Frequency	Pre-Test Percentage (%)	Post-Test Frequency	Post-Test Percentage (%)
Hard to Organize	7	35.0	0	0.0
Sometimes Organize	7	35.0	6	30.0
Always Organize	6	30.0	14	70.0



The analysis of the pre-test and post-test results indicates that there were marked improvements in students' skills during spontaneous English speech, highlighting the value of the gamified intervention in boosting communicative competence. An initially problematic portion where 35% of students unable to formulate a response was completely removed after the intervention. This suggests that the controlled, collaborative exercises—in the form of debates, simulations, and role-plays—provided ample opportunity for students to master automatic structural processing during speech. Furthermore, the percentage of students who "sometimes" organized their ideas decreased from 35% to 30%, while those who reported "always" doing so rose dramatically from 30% to 70%. This cognitive-altering change underscores the advantages arising from the gamified, student-centered approaches to teaching, which offer aid in ensuring accuracy of the language and enhances clarity and cohesion in verbal expressions. To sum up, these findings substantiate the effectiveness of adopting purposeful and captivating techniques to cultivate crucial speaking competencies which facilitates learners to articulate with assurance and logical consistency.

Table 16 Frequency of responses for Question 8 (Pre-Test and Post-Test)

Question 8: How comfortable do you feel practicing pronunciation during class activities?

Response	Pre-Test Frequency	Pre-Test Percentage (%)	Post-Test Frequency	Post-Test Percentage (%)
Uncomfortable	7	35.0	0	0.0
Somewhat Comfortable	7	35.0	5	25.0
Comfortable	6	30.0	8	40.0
Very Comfortable	0	0.0	7	35.0

The change in pre-test and post-test results indicates that the participants in the study mainly practiced and were comfortable practicing during class activities,

evidencing the effectiveness of the anxiety-reducing supportive environment created by the gamified intervention. At first, one third of learners responded that it was “uncomfortable.” That selected response was removed with the post-intervention measurement, indicating that student-driven and responsive instructional approaches eliminated emotional barriers. The proportion of respondents selecting “somewhat comfortable” dropped from 35% to 25%. In contrast, those identifying as “comfortable” increased from 30% to 40%, and a new category, “very comfortable,” emerged to account for 35% of the population. These changes take place as learners engage with pronunciation practice, exemplified by vocabulary tournaments and various timed drills where students are given ample opportunity for low-stakes repetition and immediate feedback. To summarize, the findings emphasize the need for creative and stimulating pedagogy tailored towards building self-confidence, fostering active participation, and developing critical skills for effective verbal interactions.

3.6. Results from Observation Sheet

3.6.1. Post-Intervention Results: Addressing Challenges and Improvements

Table 17 Summary of Observational Improvements (Pre-Test and Post-Test)

Dimension	Pre-Test (%)	Observation	Post-Test (%)	Observation
Active Participation	40		85	
Peer-to-Peer Interaction	30		75	
English Usage in Groups	50		80	
Immediate Feedback Usage	20		90	
Fluency (Fewer Pauses)	30		75	
Correct Pronunciation	35		70	
Coherence in Responses	40		65	
Vocabulary Application	35		80	

After applying gamified approaches in the classroom, there were noteworthy enhancements in student engagement and performance in English speaking. Through the use of Duolingo, Kahoot, and Wordwall, students could engage in purposeful



activities which motivated both self-directed and collaborative participation in an environment that encouraged students to talk and share. Consequently, the participation rate in oral tasks surged from 40% to 85%. In addition, the level of peer-to-peer interaction reached 75%, with 80% of the learners using English during group activities. These developments resulted from the gamified features of the course which included class participation, scoring systems, rewards, and group tasks that eased tension and promoted investment. Additionally, immediate and constructive feedback improved students' fluency, pronunciation, and willingness to tackle complex speaking tasks, with 75% showing smoother speech and 70% correctly pronouncing difficult phonemes. Language organization and vocabulary usage also advanced, with 65% achieving coherent speech and 80% actively applying learned vocabulary. In summary, the intervention confirmed the effectiveness of gamification as an impactful and inclusively constructive technique for enhancing speaking skills using engaging, feedback-driven, and learner-centric approaches.

3.7. Triangulation of the results

The triangulation technique uses both quantitative data obtained from pre and post-test questionnaires with qualitative data from observation forms. It helps in understanding comprehensively and in diverse ways the extent to which gamification affects the development of conversational skills in learners at the pre A1 level. The amalgamation of quantitative trends with qualitative observations deepens the analysis within rich layers of context, facilitating multi-dimensional cross-validation from numerous perspectives and angles, thoroughly examining the consequences of the intervention.

Quantitative Analysis: Pre- and Post-Test Comparisons

The transformative effects of gamification on the classroom environment and educational achievements were quantitatively evident through pre-and post-test questionnaires. No doubt, this approach synthesized motivation and participation for self-driven learning. For example, in the pre-test 35% of students said they were “not



motivated” to engage in speaking activities. After the intervention, this number was eliminated. Instead, 70% were “motivated” or “very motivated”. This change, especially in such a short time, clearly emphasizes the effectiveness of the gamified approaches in stimulating students’ interest and participation.

The results from my pre-test confirmed enjoyment in class aids relaxation and comfort. 35% of students reported finding these exercises uncomfortable. This group merged with all those who ranged from “uncomfortable” to “neutral” in the post-test. In its place emerged the responses of 40% reporting “comfortable” and 35% “very comfortable.” These results illustrate that stress and anxiety felt in the classroom combined with the interactive gamified methods utilized greatly improved students’ feelings of safety and self-efficacy.

Fluency surfaced as another important growth area. At first, only 30% of the students thought that class activities contributed to their fluency development. After the intervention, this number jumped to 70%, which indicates how much functioning activities that required free and sustained speech positively influenced reflexive practices. Similarly, pronunciation, coherence, and vocabulary usage exhibited parallel patterns of improvement. As an example, students exhibited improvement in the integration of vocabulary into their speech with 80% using new terminology by the post-test compared to 35% during the pre-test. The ability to organize ideas also demonstrated a significant improvement, with the category “always organize” increasing from 30% in the pre-test to 70% post-intervention.

Qualitative Insights: Observation Sheet Findings

The qualitative data collected through observation sheets provided deeper insights into students’ behavioral and attitudinal shifts, complementing the quantitative results. Prior to the intervention, traditional teaching methods dominated the classroom, leading to limited engagement and participation. Only 40% of students actively engaged in speaking activities, while 60% displayed disinterest or reluctance. Observers noted behaviors such as avoiding speaking tasks, hesitating during open-ended questions, and reverting to their native language during role-playing exercises.



Peer-to-peer interaction was also minimal, with just 30% of students actively participating in collaborative speaking tasks.

Following the gamified intervention, classroom dynamics experienced a significant transformation. Active participation levels surged to 85%, with students demonstrating greater enthusiasm and willingness to contribute during discussions and activities. Peer-to-peer interaction improved markedly, with 75% of students engaging in collaborative tasks and using English as the primary language of communication. Observers noted improvements in fluency as students began to speak with less pausing and hesitating. Pronunciation accuracy also improved, as 70% of students successfully produced challenging phonemes such as /th/ and /r/ compared to 35% in the pre-intervention phase.

Feedback became an important element through which students could improve. In the pre-intervention phase, feedback was almost exclusively corrective and lagged, which worsened students' anxiety and willingness to engage. After intervention, feedback became immediate, constructive, focused, and non-corrective with 90% of students embracing this change. Observers noted students are more willing and able to attempt difficult speaking challenges, showing improved confidence and the gamified feedback including points, badges, and real-time progress tracking motivated them.

Integration of Findings

The amalgamation of both quantitative and qualitative data reveals a coherent yet powerful story: the gamified intervention resolved the most critical issues uncovered in the pre-intervention assessment. Improvements noted quantitatively in motivation, confidence, fluency and vocabulary usage all reinforce the claim that the intervention was successful. Qualitative feedback of increased attendance, improved interactions with classmates, and less use of the first language corroborate these improvements.

To illustrate, the absence of the 'uncomfortable' category within the pronunciation practice framework corresponds with students' increased willingness and enthusiasm to speak. The increase in "always organize" responses is also matched



with students being noted in class as able to give connected and coherent responses in role-play and storytelling. The additional support that qualitative analyses provide to quantitative trends strengthens the confidence one can place in these findings.

Implications for Learning and Teaching

The triangulated results emphasize the importance of gamification in cultivating a warm and interactive class environment. The evidence indicates that games with rewards, contests, and instant feedback mechanisms improve academic achievement along with emotional and psychological factors like anxiety and low self-esteem. Through the alleviation of stress, gamification proves highly effective in promoting active participation, enjoyment, and skill development, especially regarding speaking proficiency for learners of the language.

The intervention's effectiveness demonstrates the constructed placement of students within a classroom as a mobilization strategy requiring engagement that is tailored specifically to their needs. It is especially notable that gamification is perhaps the most flexible approach to skilled and learning objectives across varying levels of education. This approach fosters meaningful educational engagement because all students, regardless of their skill levels, are provided with the opportunity to participate in activities that are motivating and interactive. The mixed methods approach to the conversation skills for pre-A1 level learners showcases the power of combining quantitative and qualitative data in illustrating the compelling nature of gamification. Applying these methods gave attention to all aspects of an intervention, capturing the changes—not just increases in motivation, but also in confidence, fluency, and vocabulary usage alongside traditional techniques impacts learning. Such insights highlight the power of creativity in language learning, while calling for a shift to more effective strategies from the outdated approaches that dominate contemporary education.

3.8. Analysis of teacher interviews

Quantitative research is useful in developing an understanding of the problem at hand, however in addressing the impacts of gamified activities on students' speaking



skills, fluency in particular, it was crucial to first conduct interviews with the three teachers who bore the brunt of the intervention. The aim of the interviews was to collect participants narratives on what they thought were the most important factors within the fully enrolling syllabus, with primary care given to students participation in the activities, their level of fluency, the obstacles encountered, and the systemic changes that ensued owing to the adoption of the given tactics. Below is a table summarizing the responses given by the three teachers—Diego Herrera, Sandra Caicedo, and Santiago Encalada—based on their classroom and teaching observations during the implementation period.

Aspect	Diego Herrera	Sandra Caicedo	Santiago Encalada
Student Engagement	High motivation and cooperation; students eager to participate.	Excited and focused; even shy students participated more.	Students fully engaged; actively involved in role plays.
Fluency Improvements	Improved sentence formation without using Spanish; grammar still developing.	Clear progress in sentence length and confidence; used new vocabulary.	Improvements in fluency, pronunciation, coherence, and intonation.
Challenges Observed	Limited vocabulary; some students overly competitive and distracted.	Initial confusion with rules; nervousness, but improved with practice.	Activities needed adaptation for students with special needs.
Most Effective Activity	Vocabulary tournament with Quizlet; promoted active use of vocabulary.	Story Chain Game; encouraged full sentences, creativity, and confidence.	Role-playing games; real-life context enhanced communication skills.
Suggestions for Improvement	Provide individual feedback on pronunciation, grammar, fluency; emphasize collaboration over competition.	Use visuals, repeat games, give clear instructions and rewards; ensure a safe space for mistakes.	Know student profiles before applying activities; adapt content to varied needs.



From the review of the interviews with the teacher participants, there appears to be a shared view regarding the benefits of gamified strategies for student engagement and the improvement of English speaking skills. Teachers highlighted that the digital games deeply motivated students, which in turn resulted in a higher level of participation in communicative activities. Even students who were previously hesitant and shy began to engage more actively and spontaneously. Such changes in attitudes toward speaking in English indicate that the playful aspects of the activities not only improved participation but also created an emotional environment where the apprehension of making mistakes was largely absent.

All teachers reported positive changes for the development of speaking fluency. Students were able to produce complete sentences effortlessly and with less reliance on scaffolding in Spanish. There was also progress in the accuracy of word pronunciation, the use of rising and falling intonation within sentences, and the cohesion and context of the practiced vocabulary, which was taught in context during the lessons. These changes were noticeable not only in participation rates but also in the achievement of more fluent and less reserved speech, indicating greater confidence. This multitude of sustained improvements was made possible by immediate feedback and exposure to activities that helped students genuinely internalize language structures.

Nonetheless, some comments were made which, if acted upon, could modify future implementations. Specific students encountered problems resulting from limited vocabulary, grasping the instructions of the game, and tailoring the game's content—especially regarding students with special educational needs. Moreover, in some instances, the excessive focus on competition became a source of tension for some students, which caused them to focus on competing instead of the skillful execution of the game. Such evidence reinforces the point regarding the unsatisfactory blend of educational use and play, which in these cases tended toward the competitive nature.



Deemed effective by all teachers, activities that required creativity and active participation alongside real-world simulations were very effective in triggering oral production. Students were enabled to imaginatively listen and cooperate while using the language through vocabulary tournaments, story chains, and role plays. In this manner, students became active participants in a communicative process that helped them learn beyond memorization.

Using data-gamification strategies during English lessons sparked insightful and evidence-based decisions stemming from the interviews conducted. Some of the most striking insights highlight understanding student profiles before instruction, establishing specific guidelines for each activity, providing personalized feedback, and leveraging visuals to enhance comprehension. They highlighted the need to foster a classroom culture where mistakes are accepted and participation is achieved through collective, non-competitive efforts. The integrated suggestions aim to strengthen the relationship between learning through games and education, enhancing the holistic and formative nature of the experience.

The interviews showed that gamification could be effective in improving young learners' speaking skills, provided that appropriate pedagogy supports its application and group characteristics and dynamics are considered. From the interviews with educators, it was clear that they supported the approach and further developed its use by employing adaptive, responsive, and authentic English teaching and learning strategies.

3.9. Results and interpretations of the interview results

The findings and reflections obtained from the conversations held with educators highlighted the effects of gamified interventions on the students' speaking abilities. Analyzing the data from both a qualitative and quantitative perspective and collecting and examining all the data allowed for thorough assessment of the results and enhanced understanding about the impact and outcome. Such an approach was instrumental in clarifying the many constructive remarks offered by the teachers which



are helpful in grasping the impact the activities have on the students as well as those which require refinement.

Based on the analyses carried out on the excerpts of interviews with teachers, students showed improvement in fluency and coherence with several concepts during their lessons. As reported by the teachers, students are capable of processing information in English and can express ideas effortlessly and without much delay. A good number of teachers brought to attention individual cases of pupils who had difficulty formulating sentences but as a result of their continued participation in the gamified activities, began to express their thoughts confidently and logically. Moreover, the fact that the activities were lively was often mentioned as one of the major causes to the reduction of students' hesitation to speak which allowed and encouraged them to attempt and use the language freely.

The quantitative data confirmed the initial observations, showing an increase in the measurement and the quality of student participation during the activities. Teachers reported that, in comparison with the beginning of the intervention period, students spoke for longer periods of time and exhibited greater lexical diversity. The use of logical connectors and cohesive devices improved significantly, which showed that some level of structured communication was taught through the gamified tasks. Graphical representations of these data, including bar and line graphs, captured the students' speaking performance over time and showed, quite unambiguously, a growing construct of improvement which strengthened the assertion of the positive impact of the proposal.

Interviews provided additional insights about the pedagogy associated with the gamified approach. They noted how in all cases the activities were not only directed to the linguistic aims of the program, but also provided other beneficial learning outcomes like fostering collaboration and critical thinking. For example, interviewees noted that role-playing games and debates motivated students to articulate purposefully, listen to their peers, and respond in a meaningful way. What was interesting for the educators



was that these skills, as pointed out by them, were not limited to academic skills, but could be applied to social situations.

Nonetheless, the comments received also highlighted some changes that need to be made in order to improve the efficacy of the proposal. In regard to the students, teachers highlighted that some students faced difficulty with the technological components of the activities, specifically with interfacing and troubleshooting. Furthermore, a small portion of students had difficulty sustaining attention during complex and lengthy tasks, indicating a need for a broader range in pacing as well as more diversity in structure. All these suggestions, when taken into consideration, are extremely useful to improve the proposal in such a way that it caters to all learners.

The results obtained from the interviews were placed in a context with the aid of a summary table (Annex 5) which helps in clearer interpretation of the findings. This table captures the most important information from the teacher's interviews, noting the reported improvements in fluency, coherence, vocabulary, and overall descriptive language. The thorough depiction of the data not only enhances comprehension regarding the effects of the game-based intervention, but also reveals the aspects that need continuous sustained support or fine-tuned targeted attention.

The information gathered from the teacher interview contained a rich narrative of how the proposal had an impact on the students' speaking skills. The qualitative and quantitative blend balanced the perspective, revealing both the successes and difficulties which arose in relation to the implementation of the gamified activities. The data highlights important insights regarding the use of the approach for effective language development while offering guidance for design improvements. The evidence not only supports the value of the proposal, but also emphasizes its promise as a sustainable and replicable model for enhancing language proficiency across varying educational contexts.

This document is intended to emphasize how the English learning difficulties that were observed before the pre-test have been dealt with in this proposal regarding the pre-A1 level learners' English-speaking skills development in a very motivational,



effective, and inclusive manner. The proposal also enhanced students' academic achievements while helping to build their confidence and willingness to communicate in English. The proposal's effectiveness stems from the incorporation of step-by-step progression, tangible incentives, instant evaluation, and learning within a meaningful context which, in stark contrast to conventional language teaching, turned teaching into a stimulating and emancipating process. This approach is very effective as students not only acquire the required linguistic skills, but they also learn to value and believe in their ability to be active participants in language learning.



CONCLUSIONS

The literature review focused on previously conducted studies that integrated gamification into an educational context, capturing convincing strategies and rationales that shaped the development of this study. By analyzing relevant teaching, psychology, language, and technology, the review justified the selection of games and their use for aiding pre-A1 learners in speaking milestones acquisition. This previous work instilled assurance that the proposal was crafted in alignment with accepted educational frameworks.

Concerning the results, it can be concluded that gamification is an effective approach to advance English speaking competencies for pre-A1 learners. The use of organized, systematic, interactive, and engaging activities reduced language anxiety, enhanced participation, and improved fluency, vocabulary, and pronunciation. The experimental group outperformed the control group on every benchmark which supports the idea that emotional engagement with gamified rewards and immediate feedback was provided, and language learning took place.

The study indicated that through the application of some gamified activities like role play, simulation, and vocabulary games, students demonstrated improved speaking fluency and accuracy as well as increased confidence.

With digital platforms such as Duolingo and Kahoot, students were able to practice the language in a less formal and more enjoyable setting. Students' results from the post-test indicated a greater participation in the speaking exercises. This goes to show the effectiveness of gamification in accelerating the change of the learning experience from passive and robotic towards active and situational.

The results gained from the questionnaires in combination with the observations made show that the application of techniques of gamification has resulted in positive changes to both forms of motivation in the students. As with other teaching strategies, gamification has its own unique features that appeal to students. Awarding rewards, levels, and supplementary feedback seemed to greatly encourage the students in these activities. This further demonstrates that the emotional and psychological burdens that



tend to coexist with any form of learning are effectively removed through gamification. Hence, learners are able to appreciate the entire process of learning.

By means of vocabulary tournaments and various simulations, students started to learn new words by incorporating them into real-life situations. Consequently, not only did their comprehension of vocabulary improve, but their usage became more consistent and smoother. This greatly aided in the development of lifelong learning.

Through the design and pace of the gamified activities, every individual student was able to engage meaningfully and meaningfully acquire new competencies. Fostering engagement was crucial towards the motivation and interest of students with lower starting levels. This fostered all students feeling included within the learning framework.

The evaluation criteria encompassed various data types such as questionnaire responses, observational checklists, and even interviews with the instructors. This information was sufficient to evaluate the overall impact gamification has on other aspects of the lesson. The collected data pointed to considerable gains in learners' speaking fluency alongside coherence and accuracy, confidence, and even motivation. However, there were some gaps due to the pacing of certain activities as well as some of the technical issues with the use of digital tools. Taken together, the findings provide compelling support for the projected changes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For A1 learners, role-play and simulation techniques should be sustained as part of English teaching since they enhance speaking skills improvement to the desired levels of fluency, accuracy and self-confidence. The students are provided with opportunities to use language in context through real life communicative situations, which helps practice the language in an encouraging and non-threatening environment. This supports lowering anxiety, enabling willing and unpremeditated participation as well as fostering favorable attitudes towards the use of the language, thus making learning more useful and enjoyable.



Custom goals combining points, ranks, badges, and immediate feedback as described at SETTES help to boost students engagement and motivation. These aspects change traditional learning activities to engaging and interactive ones that capture learners' attention and actively involve them. Stratified narrative pedagogies alongside progressive gamified tasks invigorate both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation while fostering a collaborative, innovative, and persistent environment conducive for collective effort.

To contextualize gamified activities such as vocabulary tournaments and thematic simulations for allowing students to use new vocabulary in real-life scenarios, which reinforces retention and encourages consistent, fluent application.

It is recommended that educators continue to implement the set of digital games proposed for increasing student motivation, reinforcing vocabulary use, and enhancing speaking confidence. Incorporating digital tools and immediate feedback mechanisms teachers can create a dynamic and student-centered classroom environment. Furthermore, the flexibility of gamified tasks allows them to be adapted to diverse proficiency levels and learning needs, supporting inclusion and equitable participation.

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ANNEX

Annex 1

Operationalization of variables matrix

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION	DIMENSIONS	INDICATORS	ITEMS
Gamification	Gamification is defined as the use of game elements in non-game contexts, such as education, to enhance student motivation, engagement, and learning. Gamification can be implemented through activities that include challenges, rewards, and immediate feedback (Richards, 2006).	Methodology of application	- Frequency of using gamification tools in class	1. How often do you use gamification in your lessons?
		Motivation in learning	- Level of student interest and participation in gamified activities	2. How engaged do students seem during gamified speaking tasks?
		Impact on student participation	- Degree of student interaction	3. How do students interact



DEPENDENT VARIABLE	CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION	DIMENSIONS	INDICATORS	ITEMS	SCALES
				during gamified tasks	during gamified speaking activities?
		Method of feedback		- Types of feedback provided during gamified activities	4. How often do you provide immediate feedback in gamified tasks?
Speaking Skills	Speaking skills refer to the ability to communicate orally in a coherent, fluent, and accurate manner. This includes both the production of spoken language and the confidence to express ideas in everyday situations. (Barrionuevo, Vanegas, & Otavalo, 2020)	Fluency	- Ability to speak without pauses or interruptions	1. How often do you speak fluently without pauses?	Always, Sometimes, Never
		Pronunciation	- Ability to pronounce English sounds correctly	2. How accurate is your pronunciation during speaking activities?	Very accurate, Moderately, Poor
		Coherence	- Ability to organize ideas clearly	3. How often do you	Always, Sometimes, Never



	when speaking	organize your ideas clearly when speaking?
Vocabulary use	- Use of learned vocabulary in oral communication	4. How often do you use new vocabulary in your speech?
		Always, Sometimes, Never



Annex 2

Observation Sheet (Qualitative)

Objective: To document and evaluate student behavior, engagement, and progress in speaking activities during the application of gamified strategies, based on the responses and observations made by the instructor.

Class Information:

- **Date:** _____
- **Class Level:** _____
- **Number of Students:** _____
- **Activity Observed:** _____

Observation Questions:

1. Frequency of Gamification Tools:

- Instructor's response regarding the frequency of gamification tools used in class:

2. Student Motivation:

- Instructor's observations about student interest and participation levels:

3. Peer Interaction:

- Description of how students interact with each other during speaking activities:

4. Feedback Methodology:

- Details on the type and frequency of feedback provided to students:

5. Fluency Challenges:

- Instructor's comments on observed pauses, hesitations, or difficulties during speaking tasks:

6. Pronunciation Observations:

- Specific issues or progress noted in students' articulation of challenging phonemes:



7. Coherence in Speaking:

- Feedback on students' ability to organize and express their thoughts clearly:

8. Vocabulary Use:

- Instructor's insights on how often students integrate learned vocabulary into their speech:
-
-

Annex 3

Questionnaire Format for Annexes

Objective: To evaluate the impact of gamified activities on the development of speaking skills among pre-A1 students, capturing their perceptions, confidence levels, and engagement before and after the intervention.

Instructions for Respondents:

- Please answer the following questions honestly based on your experiences in class.
- Select the option that best represents your opinion or experience.

Part 1: Demographic Information

1. Age: _____
2. Gender: _____
3. Frequency of attending English classes:

Part 2: Evaluation of Speaking Skills Development

Pre- and Post-Test Questionnaire for Assessing Speaking Skills and Gamification

1. **How comfortable do you feel participating in English-speaking activities in class?**



- Very comfortable
 - Somewhat comfortable
 - Uncomfortable
2. **How motivated are you to participate in English-speaking activities?**
- Very motivated
 - Somewhat motivated
 - Not motivated
3. **Do you think the class activities help you improve your fluency in speaking English?**
- Always
 - Sometimes
 - Never
4. **How confident do you feel speaking English in front of your classmates?**
- Very confident
 - Somewhat confident
 - Not confident at all
5. **How often do you use the vocabulary you've learned in class when speaking English?**
- Always
 - Sometimes
 - Never
6. **How helpful do you find the feedback (correction of errors) you receive when speaking English in class?**
- Very helpful
 - Somewhat helpful
 - Not helpful
7. **How well do you organize your ideas when speaking English?**



- I always organize my ideas well
- I sometimes organize my ideas well
- I find it hard to organize my ideas

8. How comfortable do you feel practicing pronunciation during class activities?

- Very comfortable
- Somewhat comfortable
- Uncomfortable

9. Do you feel that class activities help you improve your confidence in speaking English?

- Yes, a lot
- Somewhat
- Not at all

10. Overall, how do you evaluate your progress in speaking since starting the class activities?

- I've improved a lot
- I've improved a little
- I haven't improved

Annex 4

Teacher Interview Questions

Objective: Gather information about the progress observed in students, the challenges faced, and the effectiveness of the gamified activities implemented during the research project.

Instructions:

Please answer the following questions based on your experience during the implementation of the gamified activities. Provide detailed and specific answers. The



information collected will be used exclusively for research purposes and will remain confidential.

Interview Questions:

1. How would you describe the students' level of engagement and participation during the gamified activities?
2. In your observation, did the students demonstrate improvements in their speaking fluency? Can you provide specific examples or situations that illustrate these changes?
3. What challenges or difficulties did the students encounter while engaging in the gamified activities?
4. Which of the gamified activities or games do you think were the most effective in developing the students' speaking skills? Why?
5. Based on your experience, what suggestions or recommendations would you make to enhance the effectiveness of gamified strategies in teaching speaking skills?

Annex 5

Results and Interpretations of Teacher Interviews

Theme	Findings	Interpretation
Fluency Improvement	Teachers observed that students articulated thoughts with greater fluidity and fewer pauses. Some initially struggled with complete sentences but gained confidence and improved sentence construction over time.	The gamified activities encouraged consistent practice, reducing hesitation and fostering a more natural speaking flow.
Coherence and Logical Progression	Use of logical connectors and structured responses improved. Students demonstrated better	The structured nature of gamified tasks helped students develop logical speech patterns and



	organization of ideas in spoken tasks.	improved their ability to express thoughts coherently.
Vocabulary Expansion	Students used a broader range of vocabulary in their speech and incorporated new words learned during activities.	Interactive and gamified activities provided exposure to diverse vocabulary, reinforcing retention and usage.
Increased Participation	Teachers reported longer speaking durations per student and a higher frequency of voluntary contributions.	The engaging and rewarding nature of gamification motivated students to participate more actively.
Confidence and Risk-Taking	Students showed reduced fear of making mistakes and were more willing to speak without prompting.	A low-pressure, supportive environment encouraged students to take linguistic risks and experiment with new language structures.
Engagement in Role-Playing and Debates	Role-playing and debates were identified as particularly effective in fostering student interaction, listening skills, and critical thinking.	These activities not only improved speaking skills but also contributed to broader cognitive and social development.
Challenges with Technology	Some students struggled with navigating digital platforms and managing technical issues.	Training and gradual introduction to technology may be needed to ensure all students benefit equally from the activities.
Attention Span and Task Complexity	A minority of students lost focus during extended or complex tasks.	More variation in task length and complexity could improve sustained engagement and



		accommodate different learning needs.
Pedagogical Implications	Teachers highlighted the transferability of skills acquired through gamification to other academic and social contexts.	Gamified learning not only enhances language proficiency but also fosters essential soft skills, making it a valuable educational strategy.
Overall Effectiveness	Teachers agreed that the gamified approach improved students' motivation, fluency, coherence, and vocabulary usage.	The results validate gamification as an effective methodology for developing speaking skills in pre-A1 students.

Annex 6

Authorization to conduct research at the institution, ISM Quito



Quito, jueves 31 de octubre de 2024

Lda. María Fernanda González González

Ci: 171774904-6

Presente. -

Es un placer para mí extenderle la autorización correspondiente para que pueda realizar su investigación "Gamification tools to develop speaking skills in pre-A1 students" en nuestra institución, ISM Quito. A través de este estudio, que busca promover el uso de la gamificación para mejorar las habilidades de expresión oral en los estudiantes, consideramos que su enfoque contribuirá al desarrollo académico de los alumnos.

De igual manera, se le otorga el permiso para aplicar encuestas, entrevistas y otras herramientas que considere necesarias con los miembros de nuestra comunidad | el consentimiento de los padres para la toma de fotografías y grabación de videos como parte de la investigación.

Le deseo mucho éxito en este proyecto, confiando en que los resultados serán de gran valor tanto para usted como para los estudiantes.

Lda. María Fernanda Naranjo Russo
Rectora encargada ISM Quito

Acreditados por:



Certificados por:



Miembros de:



ISM QUITO y ISM KIDS: San Miguel de Anageas y Avigiras (Amagasi del Inca). ISM NORTH y ISM ONLINE: Calle Unión N5-79 y Av. Giovanni Calles (Calderón). ISM WEST: Diego Vásquez de Cepeda N77-157 y Albert Einstein (Carcelén) www.ism.edu.ec

Annex 7

Authorization of parents and students



Quito, 14 de diciembre de 2024

Estimados representantes:

Reciban un cordial saludo y el deseo de bendiciones en sus actividades.

Mi nombre es María Fernanda González González, maestra de inglés de cuarto de básica "C" en el ISM Quito. Actualmente, me encuentro cursando la Maestría en Pedagogía del Inglés como Lengua Extranjera en la Universidad Bolivariana del Ecuador, y como parte de mi formación académica, estoy realizando una investigación titulada "Gamification tools to develop speaking skills in pre-A1 students" que tiene como objetivo ayudar a los estudiantes de nivel pre-A1 a desarrollar sus habilidades para hablar en inglés a través de herramientas de gamificación.

Para ello, solicito su autorización para aplicar encuestas, conversaciones, pruebas, tomar fotografías, grabar videos y otros instrumentos que me permitirán obtener la información y evidencia requerida para completar mi estudio. Los datos recolectados se utilizarán únicamente con fines académicos y serán tratados con la máxima confidencialidad.

Es importante tomar en cuenta lo siguiente:

- La investigación se llevará a cabo durante las clases regulares y no interferirá con el proceso educativo habitual. Tampoco repercutirá en las calificaciones.
- En todo momento, procuraré que el ambiente sea cómodo, seguro y respetuoso para los estudiantes. No correrán ningún riesgo ni perjuicio.
- Su participación es completamente voluntaria, y en cualquier momento podrá decidir retirarse del estudio sin que ello implique alguna repercusión en la relación educativa.
- Si tienen alguna duda o desean obtener más información sobre el estudio, no duden en ponerse en contacto conmigo.

Les agradezco de antemano por su colaboración y comprensión. A continuación, les incluyo un espacio para que firmen su autorización y consientan la participación de su hijo/a en esta investigación.

Atentamente,

María Fernanda González
Maestra de Inglés
171774904-6

Yo, Coria Charón Álvarez SI () NO () autorizo que mi representado/a participe en la investigación mencionada en este documento.

Jean Pierre Larrea
Nombre del estudiante

Coria Charón Álvarez
Firma del representante
C.I. 100369984-8