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Teachers' Perceptions Towards Vocabulary Acquisition Through Gamification

Case of the Fifth Year Primary School Pupils in Mila

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirement of the Master Degree in
Didactics of Foreign Languages

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Dedication

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, I thank God, who granted me health and wellness. By his grace, I was able to present this valuable research.

To those with whom I share this joyful day-to my beloved mother (Hanan) and father (Boubeker), my sisters (Rania and Assil) and brother (Mehdi), to my support fiancé (Nadjib), and my dearest aunt (Fayza), whose unwavering support has always been a source of strength and comfort to me

I dedicate this work to you

To all those who encouraged and motivated me throughout this journey

I dedicate this work to you.

Asma

Dedication

First and foremost, I thank Allah for his guidance and strength.

I dedicate this work to my beautiful grandmother who I miss the most

*I also dedicate it to my father, my mother and to my siblings for their endless
support and encouragement.*

*Finally, I dedicate it to everyone who supported me throughout the
journey of completing this dissertation.*

Fatma Zohra

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Abstract

Increasing interest in improving vocabulary learning among young learners has led educators to explore innovative teaching strategies. One such approach is gamification, which involves the use of game elements to make learning more engaging and enjoyable. The integration of gamification in education has gained considerable attention for its potential to improve student engagement and learning outcomes. Nonetheless, the primary school teachers' views might differ based on their previous experiences, which affected how gamification was implemented and its effectiveness as a teaching strategy. This study aims to investigate and understand teachers' perceptions of using gamification as a tool for vocabulary acquisition among fifth-year primary school pupils in Mila. It seeks also to uncover Teacher' attitudes towards the effectiveness of gamification in enhancing vocabulary acquisition and the possible challenges they face when implementing such a technique with fifth year primary School pupils. To meet those aims, the following research questions were raised: What are teachers' perceptions towards vocabulary acquisition through gamification? And what are the challenges they face when implementing language games to teach vocabulary? To answer those questions, a mixed-methods approach was adopted. A questionnaire was distributed to 33 primary school teachers, and a semi-structured interview was conducted with 2 teachers to collect more in depth perspectives. The results indicated that most teachers view gamification positively, recognizing its role in enhancing motivation, participation, and vocabulary retention. However, some teachers expressed concerns regarding time constraints, the need for proper training, and the availability of resources. Overall, the study highlights the promising role of gamification in supporting vocabulary learning, provided that it is implemented thoughtfully and with sufficient support.

Key words: Vocabulary acquisition, gamification, teachers' perceptions, gamified lessons, primary school pupils.

List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as Foreign Language

BEST: Bogor English Student and Teacher

ZPD: Zone of Proximal Development

SRS: Spaced Repetition Software

VLS: Vocabulary Learning Strategies

VR: Virtual Reality

AR: Augmented Reality

TPR: Total Physical Response

PBL: Project-Based Learning

NBL: Narrative-Based Learning

SDT: Self-Determination Theory

FT: Flow Theory

BT: Behaviorism Theory

GBL: Game-Based Learning

VA: Vocabulary Acquisition

LCA: Learner-Centered Approach

PL: Points and Levels

PB: Progress Bar

RBA: Reward-Based Activities

HBt: Home-Based Tasks

Apps: Applications

LMD: License–Master–Doctorate system

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General Introduction

1. Statement of the Problem

Teaching methods have changed through time as new techniques and methodologies have been designed to satisfy changing learner demands. Each style has its strength and weakness, thereby challenging instructors to introspect and modify their pedagogical approach. Although previous generations of learners have been successfully taught using older methods, these can be found lacking for the present day's learners who are technology natives. These learners are used to short learning experiences and interactive activities in line with the way they process information. To be in line with the requirements of today's learner-led times, it is vital to come on board with methods of learning close to what learners want. In this context, gamification has come out in the limelight as an innovative approach to learning as it makes the process interactive and fun. The integration of gamification for learning has been widely acclaimed for its power to maximize learning and engagement for pupils. However, the effectiveness of gamification in the classroom does not depend solely on the method itself; it is also shaped by how teachers perceive and implement it. Teachers' perceptions may differ based on their experiences, beliefs, and understanding of the approach, and these differences can significantly influence how gamification is applied and how effective it becomes as a teaching strategy.

2. Literature Review

Nowadays, learning English as a foreign language has become increasingly important, particularly with the growing role of technology in education. As advancements continue to shape various aspects of life, education is no exception. To keep up with these rapid changes, it is essential to adapt and improve both teaching and learning methods. This means not only updating traditional strategies but also exploring and integrating new tools and approaches to make the educational experience more effective and engaging. Learners' attention is often

easier than fostering deep cognitive engagement. This challenge becomes more pronounced in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to learners, who often require more interactive and motivational approaches compared to other pupil groups. Vocabulary acquisition, in particular, is a critical foundation in learning a new language, as it serves as the first step toward effective communication. As highlighted in a study by Bogor English Student and Teacher (BEST) (2021), vocabulary is the essential starting point for language learners, and teachers must adopt strategies that make learning both enjoyable and engaging to prevent boredom and create an active classroom environment. They should focus more on the right use of the motivational approach to simplify things for the pupils of the primary school in general and fifth year in particular, as they are new learners in the English language since their environment does not give them a chance to practice it. One such approach is gamification, which involves integrating game elements into educational contexts.

Gamification, according to NPRachman et al. (2023), has become a promising methodology in language learning, which offers the learner a safe and engaging learning environment to practice vocabulary, grammar, and usage through interactive tasks. The method encourages collaborative learning and allows learners to experiment with the language in new forms that may be impossible with traditional means. This is echoed by Karim Sadeghi, Ece Saglik, et al. (2022), who compared the effectiveness of gamified and non-gamified instruction on vocabulary learning and motivation among students. According to their findings, students believed that gamified learning was an improved and more interesting way to learn and practice new vocabulary. Similarly, Benjamin Panmei and Budi Waluyo (2022) showed the way the use of a digital gamification tool such as Quizizz highly improved learning outcomes as well as promoted learner autonomy in learning vocabulary. In addition to this, Deterding et al. (2011) also described gamification as "the use of game design elements in non-game contexts," (p.09) referring to its potential to maximize user

engagement and motivation. Briefly, integrating game-like mechanisms in learning can make it more productive and enjoyable, especially for kids who need to be stimulated. As gratifying as the outcomes are, not everyone welcomes gamification. Others hold back out of fear of compromised academic performance and moral issues like cheating. This aversion is reflected in Clauvin Almeida, Marco Skalinowski, and others' (2021) research on the obstacles hindering greater integration of gamified approaches into classrooms. The aim of this study is to determine teachers' attitudes toward the use of gamification as an effective strategy in learning vocabulary among fifth-year primary school pupils, and the possible challenges they face when implementing such a technique with their pupils.

3. Aims of the Study

This study aims to explore the different perceptions of teachers towards vocabulary acquisition through gamification at the primary schools in Mila.

It seeks also to uncover teachers' attitudes towards the effectiveness of gamification in enhancing vocabulary acquisition and the possible challenges they face when implementing such a technique with fifth year primary school pupils.

4. Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the teachers' perceptions towards the effectiveness of gamification in teaching vocabulary to fifth year primary school pupils?
2. What are the challenges teachers face when implementing language games to teach vocabulary?

5. Population and Sampling

The study was conducted with primary school teachers who taught English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to fifth-year pupils in Mila. The chief data collection instrument, a

teacher questionnaire, was initially to be completed by a population of 83 teachers. Only 33 teachers completed the questionnaire. Interviewing two trainers from the same sample, in addition to the conducted questionnaire. This dual-method approach of matching quantitative and qualitative tools was deemed appropriate for obtaining rich and reliable data to fulfill the research objectives.

6. Research Methodology

To meet the demands of the current study and answer the research questions, the mixed methods research approach, which integrated qualitative and quantitative styles, was utilized. The study was conducted with primary school teachers who taught English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to fifth-year pupils. The data collection instrument, a teacher questionnaire, was initially to be completed by a population of 83 teachers. 33 teachers were randomly selected to complete the online questionnaire. With the help of this design, the researcher managed to gain deeper insight into teachers' attitudes toward learning vocabulary through gamification. In the quantitative phase, 33 fifth-year primary school teachers contributed to this study. The questionnaire was designed to obtain measurable information about teachers' opinions concerning the use, and difficulties of using gamified techniques in teaching vocabulary. Besides the quantitative information, the qualitative aspect involved semi structured interviews with two EFL instructors. The interviews provided rich personal experiences concerning adopting gamification in teaching. Both quantitative and qualitative data were combined to allow for powerful analysis, giving a comprehensive view of the use of gamification within the learning of vocabulary in the primary school environment.

7. Structure of the Thesis

The structure of the dissertation is based on two chapters. The first chapter is the theoretical framework, consisting of two sections. The first section addresses vocabulary development in an English learning context, observing its importance, definitions, and the

ways it is improved for the primary school pupils. It further discusses the role of vocabulary in language proficiency and major theories related to its acquisition. The second section talks of the notion of gamification in education, its definitions and history, its key elements, empirical findings, and benefits of its use in educational contexts. The second chapter was devoted to the field of investigation. It included the research methodology, a detailed presentation and discussion of the data gathered, and an interpretation of the results. Additionally, it prescribes the implications drawn from the results and presents recommendations based on the study outcomes.

Chapter 1: Vocabulary Acquisition and Gamification

1.1. Section one: Vocabulary Acquisition in Education

Introduction

Vocabulary is one of the important aspects of language learning and academic success, especially in primary school when pupils start developing the basic skills they need to communicate. Appropriate vocabulary enables pupils to read and understand oral and written words, communicate, and participate actively in the classroom. Without knowledge of vocabulary, pupils will be unable to read, construct sentences, or understand instructions, hence this affects their language ability and academic performance. Acquiring vocabulary is therefore viewed as a crucial element of early language learning that affects a pupil's reading, writing, speaking, and listening. This section looks at how pupils acquire vocabulary during primary school. It begins by defining vocabulary and why it is important to language learning, before proceeding to outline the difference between receptive and productive vocabulary. The section also investigates the place of vocabulary in setting the four most important language skills, and the stages learners move through as they learn new words. It then addresses various factors influencing vocabulary acquisition and presents strategies and techniques most frequently used to enhance vocabulary learning in young learners. It further addresses how vocabulary acquisition is assessed and looks into significant theories that explain how learners learn vocabulary in the long run. All these combined provide a clear image of vocabulary learning within primary education.

1.1.1. Definition of Vocabulary

Different scholars have presented different definitions of vocabulary based on its structure, function, and position in language learning. Linse (2005) has defined vocabulary as a collection of words that one comprehends and uses for communication. Ur (2012) has defined vocabulary as a collection of words that are taught to learners in a foreign language

which could include single words and multi word items like idioms and collocations. This means that vocabulary includes meaningful word combinations that act together in communication as opposed to words individually. Hatch and Brown (1995) describe vocabulary as a collection of terms which are specific to a language or a collection of words which users of the language could utilize. This definition highlights the role of vocabulary in production and comprehension, as a person's vocabulary size affects their ability to understand and express ideas. To the same purpose, Richards and Renandya (2002) highlight that vocabulary plays a determining role in language ability, affecting the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Without a solid vocabulary base, students might not be able to convey messages effectively. Also, Diamond and Gutlohn (2006) Define it as the knowing of words and meanings. In addition, Diamond and Gutlohn (2006) also explain vocabulary as word and meaning information. In their view, it is not just more than having the word but involves knowing how a word works in different contexts. This backs Nation's (2001) argument, which stresses that knowledge of vocabulary involves knowledge of the meaning, form, and usage of a word in a range of linguistic contexts.

1.1.2. Importance of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is the foundation and a key element of language learning. It plays an important role in both first and second language learning, enabling the learning of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. As Wilkins (1972) stated, "Without grammar very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (p. 111). This highlights its role in effective communication. Nation (2001) also claims that learners with broader vocabulary speak more fluently, read and understand better, and communicate more easily. Vocabulary size is also linked to reading and academic success (Schmitt, 2000). According to Coady and Huckin (1997), early vocabulary growth helps learners gain meaning and confidence in expression. Stahl (2005) points out that strong vocabulary boosts thinking skills like making

word connections and remembering meaning. This is especially important in primary education, where vocabulary builds literacy. Laufer and Nation (1999) argued that vocabulary knowledge is a predictor of language proficiency, and Richards and Renandya (2002) further stated that it is at the center of academic, professional, and everyday communication. Students might not be capable of comprehending or communicating orally or in writing with enough vocabulary.

1.1.3. Difference between Receptive and Productive Vocabulary

One of the major areas in language acquisition is vocabulary, and scholars usually distinguish between two general categories: receptive vocabulary and productive vocabulary. These distinctions enable the description of how learners store, process, and use words in communication.

Receptive vocabularies are the words that the student recognizes and understands upon hearing or reading but might not use upon speaking or writing. According to Nation (2001), receptive vocabulary involves words one can understand through hearing or reading but does not use in production. Similarly, Schmitt (2000) defined receptive vocabulary as passive knowledge for comprehension in contrast with speaking or writing.

On the other hand, productive vocabulary refers to the words that one can recall actively and apply in speech and writing. Read (2000) defines productive vocabulary as the inventory of words that can be retrieved and applied by a speaker in appropriate contexts. Hatch and Brown (1995) emphasized that productive vocabulary entails not just knowledge of the word but also its correct pronunciation, spelling, and application in different grammatical structures.

The contrast between these two groups is significant when it comes to learning a language. Research indicates that receptive vocabulary exceeds productive vocabulary, and students generally comprehend more words than they can produce (Laufer, 1998). This is due

to the fact That word retrieval for speaking or writing requires more cognitive processing and retrieval skills. Stahl (2005) argued that as students' progress in proficiency, some receptive vocabulary does become productive through practice and exposure over time. Pedagogically, knowledge about the distinction between receptive and productive vocabulary aids in effective language instruction planning. Although receptive vocabulary may be practiced using reading and listening tasks, productive vocabulary must be cultivated by actively working through tasks such as speaking activities, writing activities, and communicative language practice (Nation, 2001).

In short, receptive and productive vocabulary are two aspects of word knowledge, both of which are essential to language learning. Receptive vocabulary makes understanding possible, while productive vocabulary makes expression possible. Effective vocabulary instruction must therefore seek to narrow the gap between the two forms by providing the learner with the opportunity to apply new words actively in usable contexts.

1.1.4. The Role of Vocabulary in Language Proficiency

Vocabulary is an important part of assessing a learner's overall level of language proficiency. It is usually one of the most important parts of language learning because it will directly affect how well someone understands, expresses ideas, and interacts with others. Several researchers have also indicated that vocabulary is the secret to achieving linguistic competence and fluency. Nation (2001) argues that vocabulary is at the center of language ability because it impacts the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Without enough vocabulary, learners are unable to understand spoken and written messages, thereby lacking the ability to communicate. Additionally, He explains the strong link between vocabulary size, reading skills, and overall academic success. As Wilkins (1972) so succinctly put it, "Very little can be communicated without grammar; nothing can be communicated without vocabulary." This highlights just how crucial vocabulary is to

communication by definition. Grammar gives form, but vocabulary gives meaning, so it is an Essential part in fluency and comprehension. Schmitt (2000) explains that vocabulary knowledge is more than a sense of words. It is having knowledge of meaning, form, function, and different contexts of use. It is at this level of general knowledge that learners can use the language correctly and appropriately. He assumes that learning vocabulary has to be repeated, since language learners are constantly exposed to new words and growing familiarity with current words. Richards and Renandya (2002) highlight that the knowledge of vocabulary is the strongest indicator of language ability. They state that the students who possess broader vocabulary are more assertive communicators as they will be able to say ideas with better accuracy and comprehend language with ease. This particularly holds in the case of reading and listening where broader vocabulary makes it convenient to be in a position to comprehend complex text and speech on a deeper level. In addition, Webb and Nation (2017) observe the differentiation between productive vocabulary and receptive vocabulary in terms of proficiency. Though receptive vocabulary accounts for understanding, productive vocabulary will ascertain how competent learners are when it comes to expressing their thoughts and ideas. The shift from word knowledge towards actually producing the words is the most important feature in achieving higher levels of language proficiency. Typically, vocabulary is part of language proficiency. It enhances comprehension, facilitates appropriate communication, and enhances fluency. Acquisition of vocabulary should therefore be accorded a lot of priority when learning a language so that one would be in a position to appropriately cover academic and everyday communication.

1.1.5. Impact of Vocabulary Learning on the Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening

Skill

The development of reading, writing, speaking, and listening is closely tied to vocabulary acquisition. Vocabulary acquisition facilitates comprehension and communication

while also being a key component of overall language proficiency. Researchers have consistently highlighted its impact on communication and academic success in all language modalities

1.1.5.1. Vocabulary and Reading. Reading comprehension is closely connected to vocabulary knowledge. Nation (2001) claims that a learner's vocabulary is a primary determiner of reading success. Unknown words challenge comprehension. As Stahl and Nagy (2006) emphasize, knowing a word requires knowledge of what it means in a specific context. In order to improve reading ability, students need to develop their vocabulary continually. Laufer (1997) states that a certain level of vocabulary knowledge is necessary for reading effectively. Students who are unable to understand a significant portion of a text are likely to become disheartened, which makes reading more challenging than accessing comprehension. In academic contexts texts often use more sophisticated vocabulary.

1.1.5.2. Vocabulary and Writing. Additionally, vocabulary is another crucial aspect of writing. Writers with a large vocabulary can express ideas more accurately and creatively, which is of utmost importance in writing. Schmitt (2000) states that the larger a person's vocabulary, the higher the quality of their writing because it enables them to express ideas clearly and accurately. Richards and Renandya (2002) discuss vocabulary knowledge as a contributing factor towards writing fluency. Writers with well-developed vocabulary can access higher-quality word and structure choices, creating more sophisticated texts. On the other hand, students with smaller vocabularies have to rely on basic vocabulary and structure, which contribute to a lack of depth and fluency in their writing

1.1.5.3. Vocabulary and Speaking. Speaking proficiency relies substantially on vocabulary. When learners have developed vocabulary knowledge, it will allow them to be able to speak fluently and confidently. Nation (2001), for example, argues that productive vocabulary knowledge is the vocabulary we can actively use in oral communication. In

discussing learning vocabulary, Webb (2005) states that vocabulary should relate to meaning and should be used often rather than just memorized. Contextualized usage of vocabulary assists students in retaining that vocabulary in subsequent speech-discourse and contributing to words being more easily available for speech "production". Also, knowledge of pronunciation, for example, being able to produce the vocabularies' respective sounds, and situationally appropriate usage of vocabulary also contribute to oral fluency and fluency in general.

1.1.5.4. Vocabulary and Listening. Listening comprehension is influenced by the listener's vocabulary knowledge. A student who does not know a number of keywords may simply find it difficult to follow a conversation or a lecture. Vandergrift and Goh (2012) maintain that the larger the vocabulary a listener possesses, the more quickly he or she can recognize and process words when listening. Furthermore, Buck (2001) says that vocabulary knowledge facilitates inferencing skills in conversations that we have outside of school, where language is informal and idioms, phrasal verbs, and complex structures are frequent. As students' vocabulary knowledge is limited, they may be confused or misconstrue the communication.

In summary, vocabulary is central to all four skill areas. Vocabulary comprehension allows for understanding, vocabulary production enables clear expression, and vocabulary knowledge plays a pivotal role in communication. For this reason, vocabulary should be the focus of language instruction, as vocabulary instruction should be incorporated into activities that support receptive and productive language use.

1.1.6. Vocabulary Acquisition Theories

There are several linguistic and cognitive theories of vocabulary acquisition that provide explanations of effective teaching and learning strategies. These theories recognize

the interaction between social interaction, exposure, and memory in the acquisition of vocabulary.

1.1.6.1. Behaviorist Theory. The Behaviorist Theory (Skinner, 1957) holds that vocabulary is acquired through repetition, reinforcement, and conditioning. In this perspective, repeated frequency of exposure to words and positive reinforcement in the form of praise or reward leads to vocabulary retention. The theory is amenable to the idea of rote learning, where students memorize word lists and their meanings. Critics hold the view that behaviorism cannot explain the use of meaningful context and higher order cognitive processes in vocabulary learning (Ellis, 1994).

1.1.6.2. Cognitive Theory. Cognitive Theory (Piaget, 1952) deals with the aspect of cognitive processing and schema construction of learning words. The students relate words to available conceptual frameworks based on the pre-experience knowledge of the students. From this point of view, there is active word acquisition because learners are exposed to new knowledge and integrate it into their overall knowledge structures (Anderson, 1984). Contextual learning, in which the word is placed in proper situations rather than in isolation, has top priority by this theory.

1.1.6.3. The Lexical Input Hypothesis. Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1985) suggests that one learns words from comprehensible input, i.e., learners need to be exposed to somewhat difficult language input which they can listen to or read with struggle. He explains that words are learned incidentally through communicative interaction, reading, and listening rather than deliberate memorization. Krashen's hypothesis provides room for much reading and natural language exposure during word acquisition.

1.1.6.4. Sociocultural Theory. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) focuses on social interaction playing a significant role in the acquisition of words. Vygotsky developed the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which is a theory that believes that students

acquire words more effectively when supported by teachers or peers. The theory forms the basis of cooperative learning, where words are developed through shared conversation, story, and collaboration.

1.1.6.5. The Dual-Coding Theory. Paivio's Dual-Coding Theory of 1971 does state that one is better able to learn words through verbal and pictorial coding. Words are conveniently remembered by students if they are imagery, movement, or multimedia related. These are the foundations for multisensory word teaching such as flashcards, videos, and interactive learning games to supplement the meanings of the words.

1.1.7. Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Vocabulary learning is the core of language learning, and learners employ various strategies to enhance their retention and recall of new vocabulary. Effective vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) can enhance the learning process by enhancing greater cognitive engagement and long-term memory. Schmitt (1997) classifies vocabulary learning strategies into discovery strategies that assist learners in finding out the meaning of new words and consolidation strategies that assist in storing and using vocabulary. This section explains most of the well-known vocabulary learning strategies used by language learners.

1.1.7.1. Discovery Strategies. Discovery strategies assist the learners in finding out and knowing the meaning of new words. Discovery strategies are most effective while reading or listening to new words.

1.1.7.1.1. Guessing from Context. Is among the most common techniques in which students guess word meaning from contextual cues (Nation, 2001). Students utilize surrounding words, sentence patterns, and topic recognition to guess meanings. It improves comprehension and facilitates incidental vocabulary learning.

1.1.7.1.2. Use of Dictionaries. Students usually consult monolingual or bilingual dictionaries for precise definitions, pronunciation, and example sentences (Schmitt, 2000).

The introduction of electronic dictionaries and translation programs have only facilitated this with quick and efficient word search.

1.1.7.1.3. Morphological Analysis (Word Part Analysis). Breaking a word into its roots, prefixes, and suffixes help students to recognize meaning and word families. For example, if "un-" is an opposing prefix, then students can read unhappy or unpredictable (Nation, 2013).

1.1.7.1.4. Asking Peers and Teachers. Asking other fluent speakers, teachers, or peers to explain can give immediate and accurate word meanings and help social learning (Oxford, 1990).

1.1.7.2. Consolidation Strategies. Once the learners acquire new words, they then must consolidate and memorize the words for future use. Consolidation activities are intended to strengthen retrieval and active use.

1.1.7.2.1. Repetition and Memorization. Students will likely use repetition techniques, such as flashcards, word lists, and computer versions of spaced repetition software (SRS), to achieve maximum retention (Nation, 2001). SRS, used in software such as Anki or Quizlet, is very successful because it presents words at increasingly longer intervals to reinforce long-term memory (Schmitt, 2010).

1.1.7.2.2. Using Mnemonics. Mnemonics such as acronyms, rhyming, or imagery help learners encode and recall words. For example, to recall mandatory words, a learner can utilize the sentence "one collar, two sleeves" to assist in recalling its spelling. The keyword technique, in which learners associate a new word with a familiar image or sentence, is another effective mnemonic strategy (Ellis, 1997).

1.1.7.2.3. Word Association. Pairing new words with their antonyms, synonyms, or words that are similar to them in meaning helps learners create vocabulary networks (Nation, 2013). Pairing plentiful and lots of, for example, re-strengthens the two words in memory.

1.1.7.2.4. Grouping and Categorization. Grouping vocabulary in thematically labeled sets (e.g., foods, feelings, words used in academia) facilitates learning and organized recall (Schmitt, 2000). Students memorize words easily when categorized along shared features.

1.1.7.2.5. Using Vocabulary in Context (Productive Strategies). Spelling and writing new words fixes words in memory. Students are helped by using new words to create sentences, narration, conversation, and journal writing (Swain, 1995). The output hypothesis confirms that the production of language helps students process words at a higher level of cognition, increasing memory.

1.1.7.3. Social and Interactive Strategies. Sociocultural interaction encourages word learning from exposure to genuine language usage. They embrace communicative and collaborative learning practices.

1.1.7.3.1. Language Exposure through Media. Exposure to text readings, listening to audio-podcastings, and watching motion pictures in the target language immerses the students in the words with higher frequencies in context situations (Krashen, 1985). Extensive reading particularly has a crucial task to aid the improvement of vocabularies.

1.1.7.3.2. Conversational Practice. Students work actively and build vocabulary through conversation with fluent or native speakers (Dörnyei, 2005). Conversation clubs, language exchange, and online discussion forums are perfect venues for practicing.

1.1.7.3.3. Peer Group Work and Collaboration. Vocabulary gained through interactive tasks like roleplaying, debating, and narration improves retention and contextualization (Vygotsky, 1978).

1.1.7.4. Digital and Gamified Learning Strategies The intersection of gamification and technology has revolutionized vocabulary acquisition. Engaging apps and tools provide active and adaptive learning.

1.1.7.4.1. Mobile Apps and Online Platforms. Vocabulary learning applications like Duolingo, Memrise, and Anki employ gamification features like tracking progress, rewards, and adaptive learning to strengthen vocabulary (Stockwell, 2013).

1.1.7.4.2. Gamification and word games. On the other hand, online/offline games crosswords, association word games, and vocab quizzes are utilized to get students to learn in enjoyable but effective modes (Gee, 2007). Interest and motivation are increased in gamified competitive aspects.

1.1.7.4.3. VR and AR. New technologies allow for immersive spaces where students can touch words in real life situations leading to enhanced retention of vocabulary learned (Godwin-Jones, 2016).

In the end vocabulary learning strategies vary significantly in their orientation, from cognitive and memory-based to social and technology-based. Successful learners employ a combination of discovery and consolidation methods, engaging in new words in various modes. Through the application of explicit learning strategies, interactive practice, and technology augmentation, language learners can possibly optimize their vocabulary learning and long-term retention.

1.1.8. Techniques for Enhancing Vocabulary Acquisition in Primary Education

Vocabulary teaching is an essential component of language learning, especially in the early years at primary school when students are learning the basic skills to become proficient communicators and academically successful. teaching vocabulary may assume several different forms and may include explicit instruction, meaningful exposure, and active involvement of the student in learning. Young learner vocabulary acquisition is more effective when it is intentional and salient. Contextual learning, multisensory approaches, story, game-based learning, and computerized programs are all great options for supporting vocabulary learning and teaching in the classroom.

1.1.10.1. Explicit Vocabulary Instruction. Explicit vocabulary instruction is a teaching approach in which words are taught directly with the meaning, usage, and pronunciation explained. This approach works well for teaching high-frequency vocabulary and academic vocabulary that students are likely to see frequently in their reading (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2013). Teachers might introduce a word using word maps to prompt student thinking about definitions, synonyms, antonyms, and model sentences. Similarly, teaching students about morphology (such as prefixes, suffixes, and root words) can help them to both decode words that are unfamiliar and implement strategies for learning new vocabulary (Biemiller, 2005). For example, once children understand that "un-" means "not," they can understand the meaning of "unhappy" or "uncertain" without memorizing the meanings of each word.

1.1.10.2. Contextual Learning and Incidental Exposure. When children learn new words in context, they will remember them more easily than if they copied them. Studies confirm that vocabulary is best acquired in naturally occurring, print rich environments, in which students are immersed in language through written text, stories, and discussion (Nagy & Scott, 2000). Another method by which teachers can create such environments for vocabulary acquisition is through reading aloud, in which teachers are afforded the time to pause and explain unfamiliar vocabulary, prediction potential, and class discussion to facilitate greater comprehension. Incidental learning from being immersed in language-full contexts (e.g., peer discussion, peer talk, and multimedia) offer natural exposure to words (Krashen, 1989). Wherever necessary, asking students to use words in writing and speaking exercises/activities will aid their learning and memory.

1.1.10.3. Multisensory and Kinesthetic Approaches. Children learn through multisensory strategies that address visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning profiles. For instance, teachers could implement a word wall that includes pictures of the item as well as

real-world images to reinforce the vocabulary item visually. Another strategy includes the use of Total Physical Response (TPR), where children engage with the vocabulary by associating it with a gesture/movement that helps to support memory (Asher, 2009). When children engage with the vocabulary item "jump" they, "jump," support the meaning more than just the vocabulary. With music, children can internalize vocabulary items through repetitive lyrics that can be fun and engaging strategies for learning new words (Paquette & Rieg, 2008). Nursery rhymes, chants, and phonemic awareness games can support vocabulary recognition and pronunciation as well.

1.1.10.4. Storytelling and Narrative-Based Learning (NBL). One of the most potent strategies for vocabulary development is storytelling. Stories provide authentic language use in context (Cameron, 2001,) enabling children to grasp words from the action of the story, the characters, and the context. When teachers use entertaining stories and get students to retell the story in their own words, it deepens understanding and word retention. Dialogic reading goes a level deeper; it is when the teacher and students read an interactive read-aloud story together. A question like, “What do you think ‘gigantic’ means in this sentence?” promotes a child's thinking process to remember a vocabulary word (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1988).

1.1.10.5. Gamification and Play-Based Learning (PBL). Gamification is also a common capability in learning for the purpose of building initial vocabulary because it evokes motivation and curiosity (Deterding et al., 2011). Memory, Bingo, and crossword puzzles are some games that improve meaning, spelling, contextual knowledge and more. Role-play activities also support more retention by immersing the learners in real-life experiences. Digital tools such as Kahoot! Quizlet, and Duolingo can provide interactive quizzes, flashcards, and stories, all of which can meet the needs of the learner (Stockwell, 2013). Applications and other multimedia can provide visual and auditory support, while

tools such as Lingokids utilize speech recognition in support of pronunciation and fluency development (Godwin-Jones, 2016).

1.1.10.6. Digital Tools and Multimedia Resources. Use of digital resources in vocabulary teaching has changed learning from less interactive and personalized to more interactive and personalized. Digital learning applications, animated videos, and e-books provide children with visual and auditory aid, thus making them learn words more effectively (Godwin-Jones, 2016). For example, story-based language learning apps situate vocabulary use in authentic experiences, allowing children to see skilled use of words and phrases in their own experience, hearing and seeing the vocabulary used in natural discourse. Moreover, speech recognition tools such as Lingokids provide children with opportunities to practice pronunciation of words or phrases and receive instant feedback on whether they pronounced the words or phrases correctly, which may lead to increased pronunciation, comprehension, and spoken fluency.

1.1.10.7. Collaborative and Social Learning. The vocabulary can grow through social interaction as students apply and use new words in situational contexts. For example, peer conversations, group work, and ThinkPairShare will nurture authentic vocabulary, and promote a deeper understanding of words (Vygotsky, 1978). Project-Based Learning (PBL) is also one way in which vocabulary can be learned, as students can be assigned a creative project like a class magazine or a short play in which students naturally use vocabulary to develop more retention and usage of vocabulary.

Strengthening vocabulary acquisition in primary school will involve the implementation of an assortment of methods that blend direct instruction, contextual instruction, multisensory instruction, narrative, game-based learning, and technology. Educators can utilize meaningful, language-rich experiences and methods that are fun, engaging, and interactive to provide a vocabulary learning experience that is both effective

and enjoyable. Not only do these strategies enhance retention of vocabulary, but they work towards the development of proficiency in the learning of language for life.

Conclusion

In conclusion, vocabulary acquisition plays an important role in building primary school pupils' ability to use language effectively. It influences not only how pupils communicate but also how they succeed across different subjects in school. When vocabulary is taught with attention to young learners' needs, using suitable strategies and techniques, it can greatly enhance their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Understanding the difference between receptive and productive vocabulary, along with the stages of learning new words and the factors that impact this process, allows teachers to better support their pupils. With the help of assessment and theoretical insights, educators can guide children through a more engaging and successful vocabulary learning journey.

1.2. Section two: Gamification in Education

Introduction

Gamification is a relatively new concept that applies some game-design principles to learning with the idea of motivation, engagement, and learning. From the (SDT), (FT), and Behaviorism points of view, gamification exists to sustain behavior and learner engagement. Within the EFL domain, it would serve as an instrument for instructional differentiation, active learning, and learner-centered instruction. Game elements include points, badges, levels, leaderboards, and progress bars, some of which have been gamified to promote learning without altering the content, as opposed to game-based learning, which uses actual games in the learning process. Properly applied, this gamification should then align the teachers in maintaining the constant effort and motivation on behalf of young learners through setting achievable goals, thus experiencing some learning. It helps to acquire vocabulary adequately through stimulation in engagement, memory, and right interaction with words.

1.2.1. *Definitions of Gamification*

Deterding et al. (2011) described gamification can improve learning outcomes by motivating learners to work more, learn new skills, and adapt to new behaviors. Simões et al. (2013) suggest maintaining motivation and encouraging certain actions. Gamification involves implementing activities and processes to overcome barriers in teaching and learning, utilizing game concepts (Al_ Dosakee & Ozdamli, 2021, p. 56). James and Bound (2019) found that gamification improves linguistic skills.

Gamification is a concept that first appeared around 2008, according to Karimi and Nickpayam (2017), but it started to gain more attention around 2010. One of the most well-known definitions comes from Deterding, Khaled and others (2011), who explained gamification as using game-like features in situations outside of games (Naji, 2020). Kapp

(2012) also described it as the use of game mechanics, visuals, and thinking to engage people, encourage learning, and help solve problems. Similarly, Anderson and colleagues (2017), as mentioned in Arunsirot (2021), noted that gamification can motivate students to take part in learning activities, solve problems, and use what they learn in real-life situations, which can lead to better performance. Al-Dosakee and Ozdamli (2021) added that gamification involves using certain actions and processes based on game elements to overcome challenges in education. Alfulaih (2019) also pointed out that gamification is used in different areas such as business, healthcare, and education to catch people's attention and make tasks more interesting. Simply put, gamification means using parts of games in non-game settings to make tasks more fun and engaging. This approach helps people stay motivated, enjoy what they are doing, and reach their goals more effectively.

1.2.2. A Brief History of Gamification

Although gamification is often viewed as a modern concept, its origins go back to several decades. Pavlova (2019) explains that gamification existed well before it expanded beyond the field of technology and became a term used in multiple disciplines. She also notes that the concept grew alongside the development of the video game industry, which is designed to capture people's attention and encourage active participation. In essence, gamification is not entirely new. People have always played games in one way or another. However, its popularity increased with the rise of video games, which made regular gameplay more appealing. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) highlighted that people often enjoy certain experiences so much that they engage in them repeatedly, simply for the pleasure they bring. This suggests that enjoyable activities tend to draw people in and motivate them to continue. Similarly, Pavlova (2019) points out that games are designed to focus a player's attention so deeply that other distractions fade away, often causing players to lose track of

time. In short, games are created to be engaging and motivating, which helps explain their powerful influence.

Many researchers (such as Gonzalez et al., 2016; Attali & Arieli-Attali, 2015; Dale, 2014; and Deterding, 2012) describe gamification as using parts of games like rules, points, and rewards in real-world situations, such as education. Zichermann and Cunningham (2011). That is to say, it means using game elements to get people involved and help solve problems (p. xiv). Simões, Redondo, and Vilas (2013) also define it as bringing game systems into non-game areas. They focus on how it encourages social interaction, such as working together. In this context, collaboration means that students support and learn from each other while playing educational games.

1.2.3. Theories of Gamification

In order to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the notion of gamification, three prominent theories have been proposed.

1.2.3.1. Self-Determination Theory (SDT). This theory suggests that optimal prosperity requires meeting three basic mental needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. These principles are explained as follows (Seaborn & Fels, 2015). According to Rayan et al. (2006), autonomy is the need for individuals to have control over their own life and decisions. Second, Competence refers to learners' desire for mastery and competence in their activities and behaviors (Kapp, 2012). Finally, relatedness relates to students' feelings of admiration and appreciation for their professor. If a learner feels disengaged or ignored by their instructor, they tend to abandon and respond more to external situations (Niemi & Rayan, 2009). According to Deci and Rayan, gamification can enhance learning by providing learners with autonomy, opportunities to showcase their skills, and foster a feeling of community.

1.2.3.2. Flow Theory (FT). According to this theory, individuals are most motivated when they are totally engaged in a demanding but manageable activity. Gamification may promote flow by assigning challenging tasks and offering instant feedback (Csikszentmihalyi, 1994). According to Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi (2009), flow theory explores the experience of fully immersing oneself in the present moment. To achieve it, three key goals must be met, the most important is maintaining balance between capacity and difficulty (Witt, 2011). Therefore, the work should be neither too easy nor so complex. To avoid boredom and anxiety, it is important to keep a balance between task complexity and student ability.

1.2.3.3. Behaviorism Theory (BT). Folmar (2015) saw gamification's actual strength in its capacity to generate desired behavior change. According to Reiners and Wood (2015), gamification is a behaviorist approach that uses entertaining encounters to influence behavior. Gonzalez et al. (2016) found that gamification may significantly impact behavior at a young age through game dynamics. According to Dale (2014), gamification relies on motivation, ability and triggers, making it a natural fit with behavioral studies. Gamification includes behavioral features like rewarding and punishing through points and badges, as well as upgrading and demoting with a game context.

Skinner (1984) identified how several of the components of the basic video game Pac-Man, particularly the play and reward system, are related to behaviorist concepts. He believed that successful teaching involves motivating pupils to complete tasks through effective instructional methods. Skinner (1937) introduced the concept of operant conditioning, which involves rewarding and punishing behavior for learning purposes. Staddon (2003) defines operant conditioning as "the study of reversible behavior maintained by reinforcement schemes" (p.14).

Chou (2013) said that gamification design makes use of both set and flexible reward schedules. However, the changeable reward schedule, which he dubbed the "mystery box", is more interesting than the constant reward, which he labeled as "earned lunch"(p. 1). The variable reinforcement schedule, which introduces the element of surprise, has produced higher engagement levels in the gamified context compared to the fixed reinforcement schedule, which has led to low engagement levels immediately following the reward or penalty (Raymer, 2011).

1.2.4. Gamification in Education

Learning benefits much from games; they also become a mechanism for knowledge distribution. According to Hamari et al. (2014) and Seaborn & Fels (2015), gamification has become increasingly popular in education. Marti-parreno and Segui-Mas (2016) conducted research on teachers' attitudes towards incorporating games into their instruction. Sanchez-Mena, and Marti-Passeno (2017) interviewed teachers who found that using games in teaching improves students' thinking, raises awareness and motivation, and facilitates information transfer compared to traditional teaching methods, gamification shifts classroom roles from teacher-centered to student-centered, with teachers taking more responsibility for student conduct (Johnson et al., 2013). Additionally, Lee and Hammer advocated for using games in education to foster autonomy and experience among learners. Gamification was deemed beneficial for improving student motivation and engagement (2011). However, De-Marcos et al. (2017) noted that gamification is important across all learning levels, from primary to university. According to another research, using games as a teaching tool instead of more conventional ones boosts students' self-efficacy in acquiring advanced language abilities, foster classroom engagement and communication, and improves academic performance (Zicherman & Linder, 2013). In order to address student's disengagement and demotivation, Chapman and Rich stressed the need of gleaning the lesson's key elements

from the game that was played. As a result, games are utilized for amusement as well as education (2018).

1.2.4.1. The Integration of Gamification in Education. Gamification in education lets the teacher gamify a task at a certain competency level. According to Kingsley and Grabner (2015), it integrates game aspects and reward systems into their lectures to engage learners and foster a good competitive environment. Gamification allows learners to involve in a game-like experience whereas learning and applying their skills. This creates an enjoyable and difficult academic path that encourages learners to persevere (Vassileva, 2018). Integrating gamification aims to improve learners' engagement and productivity (Figueroe, 2015). “In order to supervise instructors to the road, they can gamify their instruction, a series of gamification actions must be pursued” (Flores, 2015, p.43). To put it another way, Huang and Soman (2013) provided a five-step strategy for implementing gamified training. Each stage is explained below (Figure 01) :

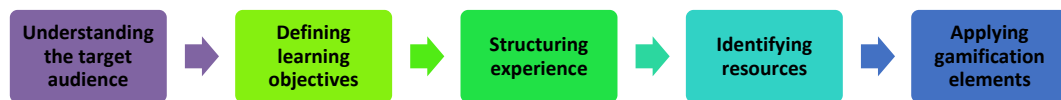


Figure 01: Shows the Five (05) Stages Model of Educational Games (Adapted from Huang & Soman, 2013).

1.2.4.1.1. Stage 1. Understanding the target audience and the situation, this fundamental component ensures the success of the educational plan; hence, teachers have to know their students are , so improving the learning environment in which they operate (Huang & Soman, 2013, p.3).

1.2.4.1.2. Stage 2. To ensure effective gamification instruction, it is important to outline clear and specific learning goals. This determines that the educational program and

tasks are remembered and that the best game elements and approaches are used (Kiryakova et al., 2014).

1.2.4.1.3. Stage 3. Planning the learning journey, the teacher designs a sequence of activities and assesses the necessary learning outcomes for each stage. To maintain learners' interest and motivation, teachers should gradually go from simple to more complex instructional programs (Flores, 2016).

1.2.4.1.4. Stage 4. After identifying the items, teachers will be able to confirm whether or not they can be gamified. Teachers need to consider several elements including levels, incentives, advancement, and circumstances (Huang & Soman, 2013, p.11).

1.2.4.1.5. Stage 5. Incorporating gamification features during this phase, the instructor chooses which gamification elements to employ. It might be personal (badges, points) or social (cooperation, competition) (Figueroe, 2015).

1.2.4.2. Gamification VS Game-based Learning (GBL). There are two methods for incorporating game components into education: gamification and game-based learning. According to Arnab et al. (2012), game-based learning is the use of games as the main teaching medium, with the games themselves being created to impart certain knowledge and abilities. On the other hand, gamification is the process of motivation and involving students in a non-gaming environment by utilizing game components such as leaderboards, badges, and points (Dicheva et al., 2015). Gamification focuses on improving learning via the use of game-like incentives and rewards, whereas game-based learning emphasizes teaching through play. Though their degrees of game integration and focus vary, both strategies have been demonstrated to enhance learning outcomes and boost student engagement.

1.2.4.3. The Impact of Game-Based Learning on Vocabulary Acquisition (VA). Games can play a powerful role in helping students learn new vocabulary. Traditional methods like memorization often feel repetitive and dull, but using games in the classroom

makes learning more enjoyable and engaging (Ackdogan, 2017). According to Jaaska and Altonen (2022), vocabulary games also help bring real-world situations into the learning environment. These activities encourage students to think critically and collaborate with others through challenges and interactive play. By offering vocabulary in a fun and meaningful context, game-based learning (GBL) makes it easier for students to stay motivated and retain new words more effectively.

1.2.5. Gamification and Vocabulary

Many studies have shown that using gamification in education boosts students' interest, reduces anxiety, increases motivation, and helps them perform better in learning. Because of these benefits, games have been introduced into learning to make the process more enjoyable and engaging. When students learn through games, they are more likely to stay focused and complete tasks not just to win, but because the learning feels fun. They are especially motivated when they receive rewards or recognition at the end of a game. Using games to teach vocabulary helps students understand new words and phrases in an enjoyable way.

Students have responded positively to gamified vocabulary lessons, finding them more fun, exciting, and motivating (Waluyo, 2021). It is important to keep students engaged and involved during lessons to support their motivation and satisfaction with learning (Dehghanzadeh et al., 2019). As Zou (2019) noted, gamification has helped improve students' listening, reading, and vocabulary skills in English. It also encourages useful skills like critical thinking, teamwork, and independent learning (Kapp, 2012). These tools are especially helpful for learners who struggle with English, often due to limited exposure to the language. For that reason, language classes should be fun, easy to follow, and engaging so students want to participate and enjoy learning. After all, it is hard to master a language without knowing its vocabulary, as vocabulary knowledge plays a key role in overall language ability.

1.2.5.1. Efficiency of Using Gamification to Promote Vocabulary Acquisition

(VA). Previous studies have looked into how gamification can help language learners improve their vocabulary (Abrams & Walsh, 2014; Hasegawa et al., 2015; Korkealehto & Siklander, 2018; Medina & Hurtado, 2017). Tools like Seppo, Kahoot, Padlet, and Quizlet have proven useful in making learning more engaging and in helping students get instant feedback. Gamification brings several benefits to the classroom. Simply because it allows students to feel more in control of their learning. It also keeps them motivated by offering clear goals to work towards and lets them track their progress in measurable ways.

However, to use gamification effectively, it is important to choose the right game elements that will actually encourage students to participate (Werbach & Hunter, 2012). Niman (2014) explained that gamification supports students' inner drive to learn by making the experience enjoyable and fulfilling. It also promotes autonomy by letting students learn through play. Games often use rewards and allow room for failure, which is part of the learning experience (Decker & Lawley, 2013). Fleischman and Ariel (2016) pointed out that gamification is especially effective in higher education, as it encourages students to stay engaged even when they face challenges. In short, gamification can be a powerful approach when used appropriately (Ozkan & Samur, 2017; Bogost, 2014). It is worth noting that traditional schooling already includes elements similar to games, like grades and awards. Still, these do not always motivate all students in the same way (Lee & Hammer, 2012). Motivation itself varies from person to person and depends on the situation (Werbach & Hunter, 2012). Based on Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), motivation can be split into two types: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation comes from within a genuine interest or enjoyment in the activity while extrinsic motivation is driven by external rewards like praise or grades (Gagné & Deci, 2005). To boost motivation, it helps to support students' sense of choice and involvement in the learning process (Deci et al., 2001). External motivators like

deadlines, rewards, and positive feedback also play a role (Deci et al., 2001; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

When using gamification, it is important to blend both types of motivation. External elements like badges, points, and levels can go hand-in-hand with internal drivers like a sense of achievement, belonging, and independence (Muntean, 2011). Kotob and Ibrahim (2019) stressed the need to consider both internal and external motivation when designing gamified language activities. Kapp (2012) also noted that these activities should be planned carefully, step by step, and tailored to suit learners' needs. Likewise, Glover (2013) suggested that some key points should be kept in mind when applying gamification in education. Tracking progress is important to keep learners motivated (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Werbach & Hunter, 2012). Therefore, game features like leaderboards and badges are useful; they give students clear and encouraging feedback (Caglar & Arkun Kocadere, 2015; Glover, 2013; Nicholson, 2013; Werbach & Hunter, 2012).

1.2.6. The Teacher's Role in Implementing Gamification

Even though there is a strong focus on learner autonomy and learner-centered approaches (LCA), the teacher still plays a key role in the teaching and learning process. Their presence in the classroom remains essential to guide and support students. According to Vygotsky, when learners face a difficult task, they often need the teacher's support or "scaffolding" to complete it successfully, which leads to real learning (Molin, 2017). Uticsak and Williamson (2010) also highlight the importance of the teacher in helping simplify games so that students can benefit from them. Moreover, teachers are responsible for linking the goals of a game to specific learning outcomes, making sure the game serves a clear educational purpose (Hinkhoj & Brund, 2010). In short, the teacher's role in guiding, supporting, and overseeing gamified learning activities is essential to achieving the intended teaching goals.

1.2.7. Elements of Gamification

Gamification is a powerful tool used to increase engagement and motivation by incorporating game-like elements into various contexts. Here are some of the key elements that make gamification effective:

1.2.7.1. Badges. Digital badges are visual representations of a learner's achievements, interests, or group affiliations. They appear online as graphic icons and include metadata that helps explain their purpose within a gamified system such as the context, task sequence, and outcomes (Gibson et al., 2013).

Pirker et al. (2014) observed that while badges used in various case studies did not significantly impact students' academic performance, they were mainly effective in boosting motivation through competition. This suggests that badges can play a motivational role even if they do not directly improve grades.

Malone (1981), along with Butler and Bodnar (2017) and Balci et al. (2018), found that badges help motivate students during learning because they include visual appeal, clear objectives, steps to earn each badge, and often storytelling elements or task sequences. These features make learning more engaging and goal-oriented.

Badges also reflect a student's participation and accomplishments (Simões et al., 2013). As their design becomes more advanced, badges are increasingly used to promote positive learning behavior, help learners monitor their progress, and officially represent their engagement and performance (Gibson et al., 2013; Hakulinen et al., 2013; Denny et al., 2018; Rincon-Flores et al., 2019). For example, earning badges may boost students' confidence, making them more likely to take part in class activities, which in turn can lead to better academic results (Huang & Hew, 2018).

In addition, badges help develop personal qualities such as competence and self-efficacy either on an individual or social level. One of their main strengths is how they support the player's identity and status within the game environment (Richter et al.).

1.2.7.2. Leaderboards. Leaderboards, as described by McNamara et al. (2010), are systems that show players' scores and rankings, often displaying either all participants or just a selected number, and can be compared based on factors like location, level, or age group. In educational settings, leaderboards have become a popular gamification tool, helping to foster positive learning behaviors by encouraging friendly competition among students (Alomari et al., 2019). This competitive element can help maintain students' motivation throughout the learning process (Schreuders & Butterfield, 2016).

Silva (2010) also pointed out that leaderboards act as a social gaming feature that boosts motivation by encouraging classroom interaction. Other studies have supported this view, suggesting that when leaderboards are used as part of a rewards system, they can drive students to stay engaged and strive for better results through competition (Domínguez et al., 2013; Kuo & Chuang, 2016). This competition helps students assess their own progress and motivates them to become more involved in classroom activities (Hew et al., 2016; Khaleel et al., 2016). Additionally, research has shown that leaderboards can significantly enhance student participation during lessons (Coetzee et al., 2014, as cited in Hew et al., 2016; Ding et al., 2018), especially when students aim to achieve a higher rank (Mese & Dursun, 2019). As a result, this can lead to better engagement with the learning material and encourage students to take a more active role in their education (Suh et al., 2018).

1.2.7.3. Points and Levels (PL). Points are essentially numbers that represent a learner's progress and performance (Seaborn, 2015). They reflect how well a student has completed a specific task or challenge. When a points-based system is added to a learning environment, it can boost students' motivation by making the learning experience more

engaging (Thamvichai & Supanakorn-Davila, 2012). This is because earning points often taps into students' intrinsic motivation, giving them a sense of achievement and offering clear feedback on their efforts and performance (Von Ahn & Dabbish, 2008; Xi & Hamari, 2019). Richter et al. (2015) noted that points can strengthen motivation by appealing to social and psychological needs, as well as reward-driven behavior. Similarly, Asiksoy (2018) pointed out that using points in gamified learning settings, such as flipped classrooms, can help students stay motivated and improve how they learn.

Kuo and Chuang (2016) found that a point system can help teachers encourage students to develop a more positive attitude toward learning and spark healthy competition among them. This sense of competition often leads to changes in students' rankings, which can further drive engagement (Leemkuil et al., 2000; Fu, 2011; Liu et al., 2011). Points can also act as a reward, offering recognition that motivates students to aim higher and achieve better results (Alomari et al., 2019). When students see their progress through points, it can boost their confidence and self-efficacy, helping them stay involved in the learning process and strive for improvement (Gnauk et al., 2012). Lastly, points make learning more enjoyable and stimulating by increasing attention, curiosity, and excitement, creating a fun and engaging classroom experience (Davis et al., 2018; Alomari et al., 2019).

1.2.7.4. Progress Bar (PB). According to Toda et al. (2019), a progress bar acts as a visual tool that helps users see how far they have come in completing a task. It gives them a sense of direction and place within a game. In educational settings, tracking progress is important because it helps students understand what tasks are left to complete (Glover, 2013). This can keep them motivated to move forward with their learning (Denden et al., 2017). Progress bars also allow learners to monitor their own growth and achievements, encouraging them to keep going based on how much they have already done. Ding et al. (2017) found that seeing their progress helped students stay focused and improved their thinking and learning

skills through self-regulation (Appleton et al., 2008). Similarly, Kiryakova et al. (2014) emphasized that tracking student progress is essential for meeting learning goals and improving performance. When used with systems like experience points, progress bars can also boost a student's confidence and sense of achievement (Ryan et al., 2016, as cited in Ding et al., 2017).

1.2.8. Empirical findings on the Effectiveness of Gamification in Education

Araújo and Carvalho (2017) observed that while gamification can be introduced in classrooms, doing so requires significant effort. This often leads to mixed student reactions and can make consistent use of the method difficult, sometimes requiring adjustments. Meanwhile, Sánchez-Rivas and Ruiz-Palmero (2019) noted that teachers generally feel more satisfied when using gamified approaches. When games are used in the classroom, they can make learning more enjoyable for students and change how they perceive school activities (Sanchez et al., 2017).

Gamified assessments can also extend learning beyond the classroom. Students often continue challenges at home, even involving family members in the process, which shows increased motivation (Sánchez-Rivas & Ruiz-Palmero, 2019). Teachers in that same study mentioned that students were more engaged and often revised their work, which supported learning through repetition and correction. Similarly, Nebel et al. (2016) found that letting students fix their mistakes and try again reduced negative feelings and boosted enjoyment. Ismail and Ibrahim (2018) suggested that gamification works best when students can access game elements at home, with parental involvement and supervision of digital use.

Gamified tools have also proven useful in developing writing skills. For example, Lam et al. (2018) found that game mechanics motivated students to write more, while Bal (2019) noted that gamification improved classroom behavior by keeping all students focused. Nand et al. (2019) discovered that customizing educational tools based on student preferences like

including feedback and visuals led to better learning outcomes. Saridaki and Shopland (2016), working with young adults with intellectual disabilities, found that game-based learning helped simplify the learning process and kept students motivated.

Hamari (2018) explored whether gamification leads to real, lasting motivation. He found that some students are driven by rewards such as badges and recognition, which raises questions about whether this type of motivation is deep or superficial. Aldemir et al. (2018) identified subcategories within gamification elements such as storylines, badges, points, and team-based rewards that helped keep students engaged. These elements also encouraged skills like teamwork, decision-making, and collaboration (Idek, 2019).

Failure within a game-based system isn't seen as a setback, but rather as a chance to reflect and try again, helping students grow more resilient (Alsawaier, 2018). However, Tomcho et al. (2019) cautioned that to gain these benefits, teachers need to carefully plan the gamified experience. Studies have shown that reward-based activities (RBA) can be effective, especially when they align well with educational goals (de-Marcos et al., 2016). Teachers also benefit from using a consistent story or narrative structure to tie gamified elements together (Pujolà & Argüello, 2019).

Carrillo et al. (2019) found that students were initially drawn to how the game looked and how it made them feel. But once engaged, they became interested in deeper tasks like critical thinking and teamwork. Gooch et al. (2016) highlighted the importance of both teacher and student input when creating badges, which can improve students' awareness of their own learning. Hsu and Wang (2018) pointed out a potential downside: some students might choose easier tasks just to earn more points though they also found benefits like improved algorithmic thinking.

Hew et al. (2016) showed that using game mechanics led students to create better-quality work compared to those who did not use them. Sánchez-Rivas and Ruiz-Palmero

(2019) also found that including competitive elements in home-based tasks helped students practice more with family and friends. According to de-Marcos et al. (2016), combining gamification with social networks enhanced learning outcomes. Interestingly, Nebel et al. (2016) found that leaderboards did not significantly affect gameplay, though letting students choose tasks increased motivation. In contrast, Furdu et al. (2017) saw that leaderboards sometimes lowered motivation. Carrillo et al. (2019) found that students enjoyed using the quiz tool Kahoot due to its competitive nature, and Wang and Tahir (2020) confirmed in their review that Kahoot improved learning, reduced anxiety, and boosted motivation for both students and teachers.

Palomino, Toda, and Rodrigues et al. (2019) explored narrative-based learning elements and found that students preferred stories with clear goals, cooperative activities, personal choice, and emotionally engaging content. They also liked collecting rewards, tracking progress, and working within meaningful and well-organized environments. In general, gamification uses elements from games to boost student interest, motivation, and learning (Hamari et al., 2014; Kingsley & Grabner-Hagen, 2015). Becker and Nicholson (2016) divided gamification into two types: meaningful (which deepens learning) and reward-based (which replaces or supplements grades). By applying fun game features to school tasks (Simões et al., 2013), gamification adds new meaning to traditional activities (Çeker & Özdamlı, 2017). Successful gamification keeps learners engaged, entertained, and challenged while teaching (Furdu et al., 2017). It often involves game dynamics like quizzes, fast feedback, badges, levels, and points (Garcias & Marin, 2016; Hamari et al., 2014). Social gamification also adds features like virtual currency and social networks to encourage collaboration (Simões et al., 2013).

1.2.9. Advantages of Gamification in Education

Using gamification in education can bring many positive effects that improve how students learn and stay involved in their studies.

First, adding game features like scores, rewards, and rankings can help capture students' attention and encourage them to take part more actively in lessons (Dicheva et al., 2015).

Second, it can motivate learners by giving them a sense of progress and success. It also makes use of their natural interest in playing games and competing with others (Hamari et al., 2014).

Third, gamification can improve learning by helping students remember what they have learned, strengthen their skills, and think more critically (Sailer et al., 2017).

In addition, as noted by Connolly et al. (2012), gamified activities can be tailored to match each student's preferences and learning needs. This can make the subject more interesting and help create a more enjoyable and positive learning experience (Alvarez et al., 2016).

In short, gamification has the ability to reshape the traditional classroom by making learning more fun, personalized, and engaging.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, gamification is much more than just a fun addition to language lessons; it is a thoughtful method for enhancing teaching effectiveness and improving pupil outcomes. By aligning the dynamics of a game with certain objectives and the interests of the students, they create an immersive learning environment that is enjoyable, motivational, and inclusive. This approach not only supports vocabulary development but also develops key skills such as creativity, collaboration, and independence from the pupils. Moreover, gamification strengthens teacher-student relationships and fosters a classroom culture rooted in interest

and cooperation. Ultimately, it allows pupils to become more confident and self-sufficient in language learning, which makes gamification an invaluable asset in EFL teaching today.

Chapter 2: Analysis and Interpretation of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter introduces the analysis and interpretation of the findings of the current research. The chapter seeks to explore the effect of gamification in enabling the learning of vocabulary by fifth-year primary school pupils learning a foreign language. Specifically, the research inquires about how teachers understand the function performed by game-like elements in vocabulary learning. The main objective is not only to find out the potential benefits of gamification but also to explore its usability and applicability in real classroom settings. Using a mixed-method approach, this research tries to provide more insight into how gamified learning practices influence language acquisition. This study is discussing the validity of gamification techniques in improving foreign language proficiency of elementary school pupils in Mila.

2.1. Teachers' Questionnaire

2.1.1. Administration Of Teachers' Questionnaire

The online survey via Google Forms was done from the 14th to 25rd of April, 2025. We circulated it among the intended participants by sharing it on the Facebook group 'English in Primary' (facebook.com/groups/EnglishinPrimary), which we personally found to be very active and relevant to primary school English teachers all over Algeria, including Mila. In the other hand, 33 teachers belonging to the area of Mila took part in the survey. The responses were automatically saved within the platform, easing the data analysis process and making it more effective.

2.1.2. Population and Sampling

The study was conducted with primary school teachers who taught English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to fifth-year pupils in Mila. The chief data collection instrument, a

teacher questionnaire, was initially to be completed by a population of 83 teachers. Only 33 teachers completed the questionnaire. Interviewing two trainers from the same sample, in addition to the conducted questionnaire. This dual-method approach of matching quantitative and qualitative tools was deemed appropriate for obtaining rich and reliable data to fulfill the research objectives.

2.1.3. Description of Teachers' Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a research tool that is used in an attempt to gather information from respondents through a set of organized questions. It helps to gather data necessary to explore the research issues and helps to achieve the study goals through the provision of informative details from the respondents. As MacDonald & Headlam (2008) verify, the questionnaire is understood to be a powerful tool which is used extensively to gather information and provide numerical data, by asking questions (p. 11). That is, it involves a series of questions that are required to ask the population sample in order to gather information required for analysis and obtaining knowledge by the researcher. The questionnaire applied in this research (see appendix 01) had twenty-two (22) questions that ranged from closed-ended questions to open-ended questions. It comprised five major sections and were progressively organized to begin from general questions and lead into specific items that address the research questions of this research. The questions focused on teachers' attitudes toward applying gamification as an approach to enhancing vocabulary acquisition, as well as the challenges they face when implementing language games to teach vocabulary to fifth-year primary school pupils.

2.1.4. Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire

Section 01: Personal Information

Q1: How old are you?

Table 1: Age Distribution of Participants

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Under 25	18	54.5%
25 – 34	8	24.2%
35 – 44	6	18.2%
More than 45	1	3.0%
Total	33	100%

This question aims to ascertain if age has any influence on gamification in classroom teaching of vocabulary. The result shows that most teachers are below the age of 25 years, representing 54.5% (18) of the respondents. Teachers aged 25 to 34 makeup 24.2% (8) and 18.2% (6) are aged 35 to 44. One teacher (3%) is over 45 years old. This helps in studying whether younger or older teachers are more likely to use gamification while teaching and the role that age can play in shaping their teaching vocabulary activities

Q2: What is the name of the primary school where you currently teach?

The aim of asking this question is to identify the schools involved in the study and to see if the use of gamification varies from one school to another. The following are the names

of the primary schools where the teachers currently teach. This information helps provide context about the teaching environments.

1. Zouaghi Abdallah Primary School
2. El Anamel Primary School
3. Ben Khalifa Abdelmajid Primary School
4. Abdelhamid Ben Badis Primary School
5. Omar Naim Primary School
6. Ben Chihab Abderrahmane Primary School
7. Chetel Mohamed Ettaher Primary School
8. El Chahid Bendjeddou Abdelkarim Primary School
9. Zahraa Primary School
10. Abdelmadjid Benkhelifa Primary School
11. Bachir Ben Dhiâf Primary School
12. Regaï Ayache Primary School
13. Chatouf Abdelfattah Primary School
14. Loucif Mohamed Primary School
15. Bendjeddou Abdelkarim Primary School
16. Makrani Ahmed Primary School
17. Ras El Ain Abdelkader Primary School
18. Khelalfa Abdelmadjid Primary School
19. 20 August 1955 Primary School
20. Salah Eddine Al Ayyoubi Primary School
21. El Bachir El Ibrahimi Primary School

22. Khenniou Ahmed Primary School

Q3: What degree do you hold?*Table 2: Academic Qualifications of Participants*

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Bachelor's Degree (Four-year license)	7	21.2%
Bachelor's Degree (LMD license)	10	30.3%
Master's Degree	16	48.5%
Total	33	100%

The reason for asking this question is to understand the educational qualifications of the teachers and if their level of education has an impact on the use of gamification when teaching vocabulary. The table shows the degree levels of the respondent teachers. Most of the teachers hold a master's degree at 48.5% (16) of the responses. The second most common degree is the bachelor's degree (LMD license) at 30.3% (10), followed by 21.2% (7) who have a bachelor's degree (Four-year license).

Q4: How many years of teaching experience do you have?

Table 3: Teaching Experience of Participants

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 5 years	26	78.8%
5 – 10 years	5	15.2%
More than 10 years	2	6.1%
Total	33	100%

Understanding how long teachers have been in the profession can help us examine whether teaching experience influences the use of gamification in vocabulary lessons. The table illustrates the years of teaching experience among the respondents. The majority of teachers, 78.8% (26), have from 5 to 10 years of experience. Teachers with less than 5 years of experience represent 15.2% (5), while only 6.1% (2) have more than 10 years of teaching experience. This information allows us to consider whether more experienced teachers use gamification differently than those newer to the profession.

- **Section 02: Vocabulary Acquisition**

Q5: Which method do you mainly use to teach new vocabulary?

Table 4: Main Methods Used by Teachers to Teach New Vocabulary

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Repetition and memorization	15	45.5%
Using vocabulary in context	6	18.2%
Flashcards or visual aids	15	45.5%
Songs	10	30.3%
Stories	2	6.1%
Games	16	48.5%

According to this table, games received a rate of 48.5% of teachers' choices.

Repetition and memory are used by 45.5% (15), while flashcards or other visual aids are used by another 45.5% (15). Songs received 30.3%. Also, 18.2% (6) taught new words using context-based vocabulary. Lastly, only 6.1% (2) selected stories as their preferred option. Overall, the findings show that primary teachers use both interactive and conventional methods incorporating a combination of all the techniques mentioned earlier to teach vocabulary.

Q6: Can fun activities help pupils remember new vocabulary better?*Table 5: Teachers' Views on the Effectiveness of Fun Activities in Vocabulary Retention*

Option	Frequency	Percentage
YES	33	100%
NO	00	0.0%
Total	33	100%

Surveying instructors' belief about enjoyable activities can determine their perceived value for learning vocabulary. The results indicate that 100% of the teachers answered "Yes" to the question, indicating complete agreement on the value of enjoyable activities. This is an indication that teachers believe a lot in fun and interactive methods having a strong influence on vocabulary retention in primary school pupils.

Q7: What do you think helps pupils remember new vocabulary best?*Table 6: Factors That Help Pupils Remember New Vocabulary Best*

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Seeing the words used in different situations	16	39.4%
Being interested in the topic	11	33.3%
Using real-life examples or things they know	22	66.7%
Learning at the right pace	2	6.1%

Such a question considers an opinion teachers hold as to what they consider the best ways to help pupils retain new vocabulary. Knowing these preferences can give an idea of which methods teachers value most when preparing vocabulary lessons. The table gives the results of 66.7% for the option using real-life examples of things already familiar. Another 39.4% thought retention was supported by seeing words used in different situations. Some 33.3% felt pupils retained better if they were interested in the topic, and only 6.1% considered learning at the right pace as the best retention method. These findings reveal that teachers consider context and engagement as two chief principles strengthening vocabulary retention.

Q8: How do you assess vocabulary acquisition in your classroom?

Table 7: Methods Used by Teachers to Assess Vocabulary Acquisition

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Quizzes and written tests	6	18.2%
Oral activities	8	24.2%
Games and interactive tools	12	34.4%
Observation during lessons	7	21.2%

This question aims to identify the most common strategies teachers use to evaluate vocabulary learning and to see whether these methods align with gamified or interactive approaches. The table shows that the most popular method is using games and interactive tools, chosen by 34.4% (12) of teachers. Oral activities follow with 24.2% (8), while 21.2% (7) assess vocabulary through observation during lessons. The least common method is

quizzes and written tests, used by 18.2% (6). These results reflect a tendency toward dynamic, engaging assessment practices over traditional testing.

Q9: What challenges do you face when teaching vocabulary to fifth year primary pupils?

Table 8: Challenges Faced in Teaching Vocabulary to Fifth Year Primary Pupils

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of pupils' interest or motivation	10	30.3%
Limited vocabulary knowledge	10	30.3%
Classroom management issues	6	18.2%
Lack of teaching materials or resources	9	27.3%
Pupils forget words quickly	11	33.3%
Mixed ability levels in the classroom	6	18.2%
Time constraints	10	30.3%

This question is used to identify the main challenges of teaching vocabulary to fifth year primary pupils. The identification can provide information for the development of more effective teaching approaches and support systems. According to this table above, pupils who forget words quickly got a percentage of 33,3%(11). Lack of motivation or interest of pupils, poor lexical knowledge, and time limitations were all selected by 30.3% (10). In addition, 27,3%(9) faced difficulty in lack of materials or resources. Finally, classroom management and mixed ability levels were less frequent, each being selected by 18.2% (6).

Q10: What can teachers do to address these challenges?

Table 9: Solutions to Vocabulary Teaching Challenges

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Use games and fun activities to teach vocabulary	18	54.5%
Give more practice through homework and exercises	9	27.3%
Use pictures, videos, and technology to support learning	12	36.4%
Connect vocabulary to pupils' interests	10	30.3%
Use group work or pair activities	4	12.1%
Encourage pupils to use new words in speaking and writing	7	21.2%

The aim of this question is to explore the strategies teachers believe can help solve the difficulties they face when teaching vocabulary. The most chosen idea is using games and fun activities with 54.5% (18). Using pictures, videos, and technology comes next with 36.4% (12). Connecting vocabulary to pupils' interests was selected by 30.3% (10) and giving more practice through homework and exercises used by 27.3% (9). Encouraging pupils to use new words was chosen by 21.2% (7), while using group or pair activities was the least chosen with 12.1% (4).

- **Section 03: Gamification in Education**

Q11: How often do you prepare lessons in the form of a game in your classes?

Table 10: Frequency of Using Games in Lesson Delivery

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Often	11	33.3%
Sometimes	19	57.6%
Rarely	2	6.1%
Never	1	3,0 %
Total	33	100%

This question focuses on how often teachers incorporate games into their lessons. It aims to understand the frequency of using gamification in teaching. Firstly, nineteen (19) referring (57, 6%) of the total participants declared they use games sometimes, whereas eleven (11) referring to (33,3%) of them do it often. The respondents who rarely use games

represent (6,1%) with a number of two (02), and one participant affirmed that he does not use games as a method during the lesson, he represents only (3%) of them. This is due to making the lesson more effective.

Q12: pupils learn better when learning is connected to something fun or interactive.

Table 11: Fun Improving Learning

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	24	72.7%
Agree	8	24.2%
Neutral	1	3%
Disagree	00	0.0%
Strongly disagree	00	0.0%
Total	33	100%

The aim behind this question is to explore how fun and interactive lessons enhance learning outcomes for pupils. Firstly twenty-four (24) from the majority representing (72,7%), voted for the option of strongly agreeing. In addition, eight (08) participants representing (24,2%) agreed with the above statement. 3% of the participants were neutral, and there is no percentage against this statement. Based on the collected data, the majority of them believe that pupils learn better when learning is connected to something fun or interactive.

Q13: How do your pupils usually react when the lesson is introduced with games?*Table 12: Pupils Reactions to Gamification*

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Very excited and engaged	22	66.7%
Interested	10	30.3%
Neutral	1	3%
Bored	00	0.0%
Confused	00	0.0%
Total	33	100%

This is meant to assess pupils' reactions to lessons taught through games and if they are interested or involved in such lessons. The results reflect that the majority respond in the affirmative, with 66.7% (22) responding that they are "very excited and engaged," while 30.3% (10) reported being "interested." Only 3% (1) reported being "neutral," with no teacher reporting his/her pupils being "bored" (0%) or "confused" (0%). These findings reveal that the use of games as an introductory method is highly efficient in capturing pupils' attention and stimulating their interest in learning, validating the purpose of gamification to increase pupils' engagement and motivation.

- **Section 04: Gamification and Vocabulary Acquisition**

Q14: Educational games enhance pupils' vocabulary acquisition.

Table 13: Educational Games Boost Pupils' Vocabulary

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	19	57.6%
Agree	12	36.4%
Neutral	1	3%
Disagree	00	0.0%
Strongly disagree	1	3%
Total	33	100%

This question tried to determine teachers' perceptions of the role played by educational games in enhancing pupils' vocabulary acquisition. A substantial percentage 57.6% (19 respondents) strongly believe that educational games actually assist in vocabulary acquisition, but another measure that confirms the fact that they are highly perceived to be effective. Another 36.4% (12 respondents) also believe so, yet again maintaining the positive view of educational games. 3% (1 respondent) were neutral, and only a minority, 3% (1 respondent), strongly disagreed. Overall, though, these findings indicate that educational games are overwhelmingly considered to be a useful tool for enhancing vocabulary learning among primary school pupils.

Q15: Gamification makes vocabulary lessons more enjoyable.*Table 14: Gamification's Role Making in Vocabulary Lessons Enjoyable*

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	18	54.5%
Agree	11	33.3%
Neutral	4	12.1%
Disagree	00	.0%
Strongly disagree	00	0.0%
Total	33	100%

This question attempts to measure whether the use of gamification in the classroom enhances the fun of the vocabulary classes. Based on data provided in the table, eighteen (18) respondents who said they strongly agreed are (54,5%). Apart from eleven (11) that showed (33,3%) of those who agreed, there was a slight percentage who were neutral 12,1% (04 respondents). It is therefore concluded that incorporation of gamification in vocabulary studies plays a significant role in creating a fun learning environment, facilitating a better understanding on the pupils' side, and encouraging their motivation and involvement in the activities.

Q16: How can gamification be integrated into vocabulary lessons? (Please provide an example if possible).

The intention behind this question was to find out how gamification can be integrated into vocabulary lessons and also get real-life examples from the participants. In the open-ended responses, the majority of the participants suggested integrating gamification through interactive learning games such as word puzzles, matching games, word bingo, fill in the blank activities, and crosswords. The second most referenced idea was the use of points, badges, leaderboards, and reward-based motivational system to encourage pupils to take part and be more involved. Inter student competition, such as team competition and competition for recalling the most new words, was also strongly emphasized. Some participants mentioned the use of websites like Kahoot! and Quizizz for creating interactive and fun vocabulary quizzes. Some recommendations also provided the utilization of music and songs as a way of making vocabulary acquisition fun. Exercise in story building, where learners create stories out of new words, was also recommended but not as frequently. Fewer respondents suggested requesting pupils to create sentences from new words and emphasized replacing traditional exercises with game-like activities to make sure lessons are never boring. Overall, the most common suggestions were based on using interactive games and reward systems for enhancing vocabulary learning. In conclusion, the findings clearly show that gamification, when carried out using interactive activities and reward systems, significantly enhances pupil engagement, motivation, and vocabulary retention, and therefore it is an effective method of language teaching.

Q17: Gamification has several elements that make it very effective. Is the most engaging element to be used in the lesson?

Table 15: Game Elements Needed to Get Engaged in the Classroom

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Badges	9	27.3%
Leaderboards	11	33.3%
Points and levels	21	63.6%
Progress Bars	5	15.2%

The aim of this question was to understand what elements of gamification are best employed in vocabulary improvement. According to the above given table, Points and levels emerged as the most common choice, selected by 63.6% (21) of the participants.

Leaderboards followed with 33.3% (11). Badges were assigned 27.3% (9). Progress Bars remained at the bottom of the preference list with 15.2% (5). Consequently, gamification elements were perceived by the instructor to be more engaging and motivating for pupils in vocabulary learning activities.

Q18: Using gamification elements helps fifth-year primary pupils improve their vocabulary acquisition.

Table 16: How Gamification Enhances Vocabulary Learning for Fifth-Year Primary Pupils.

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	13	39.4%
Agree	15	45.5%
Neutral	4	12.1%
Disagree	00	0.0%
Strongly disagree	1	3.0%
Total	33	100%

As the table shows, it tries to synopsise participants' views concerning how gamification elements contribute to fifth-year primary pupils' vocabulary learning. It shows that, according to the findings, a vast majority of the participants consider gamification to be helpful. Specifically, 13 participants 39.4% strongly agreed that vocabulary learning is enhanced through gamification, followed by 15 participants 45.5 who agreed to the statement. Together, these answers account for 28 participants, or 84.9%, who support the impact of gamification on word learning vocabulary. Alternatively, 4 participants 12.1% were neutral, thereby indicating neither agreement nor disagreement, and 1 participant 3% disagreed. Not a single respondent strongly disagreed with the statement. These results indicate a strong tilt in

the direction of agreeing that gamification is a good way of fostering vocabulary learning among young learners.

Q19: In your opinion, what are the benefits of using gamification in teaching English vocabulary?

This question allows us to summarize the advantages which have been observed in using gamification while teaching English vocabulary. From the participants' responses, such as the use of gamification in teaching vocabulary introduces various kinds of benefits to the pupils. These benefits are categorized under various themes:

Motivation and Engagement: gamification significantly amplifies the pupils' motivation and turns the process of learning into something fun and engaging. When they play games, they are more excited to learn and willing to work in order to master their abilities. For example, with the use of points systems, badges, or leaderboards, pupils are motivated to be active and remain committed. Gamified activities also make pupils more confident and self-assured as they observe their development and achievements and feel proud and motivated to pursue learning.

Improved Memorization of Vocabulary and Language Learning: one of the key strengths of gamification is making it easier for pupils to memorize new vocabulary. Games naturally require repetition, language use, and immediate use of new words, which promote memorization. For instance, word-matching games, crossword puzzles, or vocabulary quizzes help students practice and memorize words faster. Gamified activities make learning English vocabulary significant and memorable, such that English appears to be a less difficult and more fun subject.

Active Cooperation and Participation: gamification encourages pupils to become active participants in lessons and not listen inactively. While students play team-based, role-playing games or compete against each other, they are more involved in the learning process and

engage with other students more. For example, playing a "vocabulary treasure hunt" in groups promotes cooperation and communication while enabling pupils to learn not only new words but cooperative and social skills as well.

Immediate Feedback and Healthy Competition: through gamification, immediate feedback regarding how they are faring is provided to the pupils so that they can learn from mistakes and correct them immediately. This accelerates learning and keeps the pupils informed about their performance. Additionally, sound competition, such as in-class challenges or tournaments, compels pupils to compete with one another towards better results in an amiable and supportive environment. For instance, a vocabulary tournament where small rewards are given to winners stimulates pupils to study on a daily basis and improve their proficiency in the English language.

Facilitation of Learning and Adaptability gamification is quite adaptable to accommodate different learning styles, whether visual, auditory, or kinesthetic pathways, and therefore inclusive of learners of any sort. Teachers can develop a set of games such as spelling bees for students who hear or memory card games for pupils who seek to accommodate the interests and strengths of pupils.

In summary, by transforming lessons into entertaining activities, gamification simplifies the learning process so that English lessons can be made more efficient, enjoyable, and less stressful to teachers and students. For example, the incorporation of vocabulary games or classroom applications motivates pupils and simplifies complex topics into something easier and more enjoyable to learn. Finally, Gamification motivates pupils to learn vocabulary in an entertaining, interactive, and engaging manner. Gamification raises the confidence of pupils, encourages active engagement, and fosters interest in learning English. Games also help pupils memorize new words more efficiently and retain them better through practice. Prompt feedback and healthy competition make the pupils motivated and aware of

their improvement. Gamification makes the students cooperate and flexible with the style of learning. Gamification makes the process of instruction more effective, interesting, and understandable. In short, gamification creates a conducive, interactive environment for positive learning that facilitates better learning of vocabulary.

Q20: What challenges do teachers face when trying to use gamification in teaching vocabulary?

Table 17: The Challenges of Using Gamification in Teaching Vocabulary

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of time to prepare games	21	63.6%
Not enough resources or materials	9	27.3%
Large class size	13	39.4%
Pupils get too excited or distracted	3	9.1%
Lack of technology in the classroom	8	24.2%
I don't face any challenges	3	9.1%

This question tries to assess the challenges experienced by teachers when applying gamification in teaching vocabulary. From the results in the table above, the largest challenge is the lack of time for game preparation since 63.6% (21) votes. The second most common problem is class size being too big, which is 39.4% (13) . Not enough resources and or materials problem, mentioned by 27.3% (9), Additionally, 24.2% (8) mentioned that not

having technology in the class is the issue. A further issue is that pupils may get too excited or distracted which is referred to 9,1% (3). Lastly, only 9.1% (3) indicated that they face no difficulties, reflecting the existence of teachers who were successfully applying gamification to vocabulary instruction despite these common challenges.

Q21: How can these challenges be addressed?

Table 18: Ways to Overcome Challenges in Using Gamification for Vocabulary Teaching

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Allow time for teachers to experiment with gamification	21	70%
Get support from school administration	9	30%
Adapt games to fit large classes	11	36.7
Set clear rules to manage classroom behavior	7	23.3%
Use offline games when technology is not available	6	20%
Total	33	100%

The goal of this question is to explore how instructors can overcome the difficulties that they face while using gamification in teaching vocabulary. The most widely used solution, selected by 21 participants 70%, is providing time to instructors to experiment with gamification. What this means is that instructors feel more confident and effective when they are given time to study and integrate games in their classrooms. Nine referring 30% believe school administration support is necessary in the form of encouraging the utilization of gamification, possibly through granting resources, motivation, or workshops. Seven respondents 23.3% also recommend having strict regulations for classroom behavior control, ensuring an effective learning environment and making use of games. Six 20% suggest offline game play when technology is unavailable, reflecting flexibility and gamification inclusivity. Lastly, 36.7% (11) think that adapting games to fit the size of a class is a possible solution, making gamified activities more accessible and engaging for all students regardless of the size of the class. These options reflect teachers' pragmatism and willingness to adapt measures to improve vocabulary learning through gamification.

- **Section 5: Further Suggestions**

Q22: Please, add any further suggestions that you think might help teachers when implementing gamification in teaching vocabulary

The aim of this statement is to gather and analyze teachers' suggestions that can be used to improve the use of gamification in vocabulary teaching. The feedback points out several aspects of concern. The majority of respondents emphasized the importance of simplifying the games and setting clear and definitive learning objectives for making activities more accessible and specific. These included playing a variety of games, including digital programs such as Quizizz and Wordwall, physical activities like flashcard races, and creative tasks, in order to engage pupils and cater to the different learning styles of students. Some others focused on praising effort and achievement, maybe with praise or small rewards,

in order to enhance motivation. Additionally, teachers encouraged fostering teamwork and pupil participation, which increased engagement and created a sense of belonging to learning. A few participants highlighted tracking students' progress on a regular basis and adjusting games based on young learners' needs. Creating a positive and safe classroom environment was also seen as key for effective vocabulary acquisition, ensuring pupils feel valued and self-assured when sharing. Practical considerations were also invoked, such as not wasting limited class time and making games correlate to curricular objectives so that they perform an unequivocal educational role. Finally, some respondents insisted on connecting new words to functional uses and occasionally spending special class periods on gamified exercises. In conclusion, the suggestions collectively illustrate that effective gamification requires thoughtful planning, flexibility, clear goal formulation, creativity stimulation, and an instructive environment that supports learning, which adapts according to learning needs and classroom circumstances.

2.1.5. Discussion of the Findings

The analysis of the questionnaire responses of the teachers offers great data concerning the opinions of teachers concerning learning vocabulary through gamification by fifth year primary school pupils. Based on the responses received, the questionnaire was captioned by some common themes such as effectiveness of gamification, preferred methods of teaching vocabulary, impact of gamified learning, problem areas, and recommendations for improvement. Firstly, the research shows that the instructors find gamification to be an effective and engaging tool of vocabulary acquisition. Most of the participants concurred that pupils are more probable to respond positively if games are included in the course. Games, according to them, make learning enjoyable in addition to allowing pupils to memorize words proficiently. This implies that teachers see gamification as a means of reducing the fear characteristic in language learning. Through the offering of learning in a fun and exciting

way, pupils can be more likely to be active class members and stay stimulated throughout. On the teaching methods side, participants use several interactive methods like flashcards, songs, pictures, and games in the classroom. Such techniques are also believed to be more effective than common rote memorization because they stimulate pupils' curiosity and provide pupils with the helpful contexts for new words. Most of the teachers emphasized that making lessons fun makes pupils' curiosity and inspires them to express more in the class. This method pupils unwind and feel braver to speak or use new words. Moreover, teachers also indicated that gamification is instrumental in driving and affecting pupils' classroom behavior. All of them stated that pupils actively look forward to game-related interventions and respond well to them. This shows that games can create an upbeat and relaxed learning atmosphere where the young learners are less nervous and more willing to experiment. Within that kind of atmosphere, the pupils will be more likely to engage in discussion, ask questions, and freely open themselves, which ultimately leads to better vocabulary retention. While all these benefits, the teachers also added that gamification has its own set of problems. One of the frequent problems cited was not enough time needed to plan and prepare games well, especially when confronted with extremely huge class sizes or by utilizing precious resources. Some teachers also mentioned the difficulty of discipline in class while playing games, as pupils would become overactive or distracted. It only underlines the fact that even if gamification is very effective, one needs to have good planning and classroom management abilities so that it can succeed. Another key point from the feedback is about balance. While a few pupils thrive in a light hearted, competitive environment, others will require stricter or quieter study environments. Because of this, most teachers believe that games should be used intentionally, in accordance with lesson plans, student personality, and class dynamic in general. This balance keeps education on track and accessible to all pupils regardless of individual learning style. Within the evaluation category, teachers reported

employing games as teaching media and as informal evaluation tools. Game activities offered the opportunity to see students applying vocabulary in context and to assess areas in which students needed more practice. Games varied from formal assessments in allowing on the spot feedback and reinforcement, which supported greater comprehension and long term recall. By and large, the responses to questions expressed firm support for gamification in vocabulary instruction as a useful element. Here, teachers enumerated a range of benefits, including increased pupil motivation, engagement, retention, class participation, and creation of an effective learning environment. They, along with this, expressed the necessity of adapting gamified practices to meet the specific needs of one's learners and classrooms. It can be observed from the proposals of the teachers that they value simplicity, transparency, and meaningful game design. Games, in their opinion, ought to be connected to learning objectives, easy to deploy, and enjoyable for pupils. They also suggested offering teachers training and support so that teachers are able to improve their capacities in terms of gamification use. This approach enables gamified learning to be maximized as a pedagogical approach that is enriching for the teacher and young learners. As such, analysis of the questionnaire from the teacher shows a high level of belief in the positive effect of gamification on the acquisition of vocabulary. Despite its shortcomings, there is generally an affirmation that gamified lessons impart a richness in learning, enhance the acquisition of language, and promote a more amiable class environment. Gamification, if utilized appropriately, is a highly effective pedagogy that enhances learning and teaching results in a room full of elementary school pupils.

2.2. Teachers' Interview

2.2.1. Description of the Interview

The interview is a qualitative tool that we employed to collect data for this study. According to Jacobs and Sorensen (2006), "Interviews are applied to accumulate data from

persons about concepts, views and emotions about circumstance in their own way” (p. 438). More specifically, an interview is a dialogue between two people in which the interviewer aims to learn specific details from the subject's ideas. Furthermore, interviews are used in research projects that seek to differentiate the ideas and evaluations of individuals with particular points of view. (Donald & Headlam, 2008, p. 44).

2.2.2. Instructors' Interview

The interview was conducted to collect relevant data for understanding teachers' perceptions towards vocabulary acquisition through gamification, especially in the context of fifth year primary school pupils. The interview questions (Appendix02) were carefully prepared and directed to two experienced English language teachers at Chahid Mouhammed El Taher, and Zouaghi Abdallah Primary School in Mila. These were taken individually in the third semester of school year 2025/2026, providing each teacher a chance to provide his or her views freely and with no sort of interference. Interview had minor pre-formatted questions aimed at exploring whether those teachers use gamification in classrooms, particularly while teaching vocabulary and to get their observations and comments on its impact. The feedback provided by the teachers was critical to enabling us to achieve the goals of this study. Their inputs provided meaningful insights into how gamification activities can facilitate the acquisition of vocabulary abilities among fifth-year primary school pupils.

2.2.3. The Interview's Duration

The research conducted one-on-one interviews, talking to each participant separately in the teachers' room of the primary school so that they could be in a quiet and distraction-free environment.

Table 19: The Timing of The Teachers' Interview

Interviewee (1)	Interviewee (2)
April 18th, 2025	April 23rd, 2025
8:45 - 9:10	10:00 - 10:20

The table above shows when the interviews took place. They were done over about five days, depending on when the teachers were available and when it was convenient for the research.

2.2.4. Analysis of the Interview

The interview findings were as follows:

Q 1: How many years have you been teaching English to primary school pupils in Algeria? Could you briefly describe your overall experience in this field?

Interviewee 01

I have been teaching English to primary School pupils in Algeria for 4 years. My experience has been rewarding. Teaching young pupils requires innovation, patience, and flexibility. Decades of experience have shown me how to keep pupils engaged, especially when introducing new words.

Interviewee 02

I taught English to primary school children for three years. It was a fulfilling but trying experience. It is great to see primary children grow confident in speaking foreign languages.

Analysis

This question helped to gather an idea of their background and what has been educating English to Young Learners in Algeria. Teacher (1), with four years' experience,

spoke of the more pragmatic side of teaching and mentioned that one requires creativity, patience, and adaptability in teaching primary children. She also added a useful point in suggesting methods of making the learning of vocabulary enjoyable. While teacher (2), with three years' experience, spoke about the emotional return of teaching, emphasized the excitement of watching children become proficient in a new language. These two interviewees stated that it was fulfilling yet demanding to educate young learners and that it did not require just enthusiasm but also reflective strategies for students' learning facilitation.

Q 2: Based on your classroom observations, what are some common difficulties pupils face when learning and retaining English vocabulary? How have you addressed these difficulties in your teaching?

Interviewee 01

Pupils often struggle with pronunciation, remembering new words, and using them in context. To address this problem, I used for example visual aids, songs, games, and repetition. I also used to create real life scenarios where they can practice vocabulary through role-play and interactive tasks.

Interviewee 02

I have noticed that pupils get mixed up with similarly sounding words like "kitchen" and "chicken." To help with that, I attempted to put the words into context like acting out daily routines or playing picture guessing games. We once played a "mini restaurant" role-play, and it helped them remember food words better.

Analysis

The idea behind this question was to find out what vocabulary problems pupils often face and how the teacher deals with them in the classroom. Teacher (1) identified common vocabulary learning challenges among pupils, such as pronunciation, retention, and

contextual use. In addressing them they adopt multi-sensory, hands-on methodology that includes visual aids, songs, games, and practice. They simulate real-life situations through role-plays and hands-on activities. This is a context and recognition based student-centered practical strategy that helps to promote understanding and long-term memory of words.

Teacher (2), on the other hand, observed that pupils tended to confuse words that sounded alike to each other, for example, "kitchen" and "chicken". In a bid to address this problem, they emphasize contextual learning by covering vocabulary in terms of real-life situations and games. The "mini restaurant" role-playing exercise demonstrated the way context and practical experiences can enhance the learning of vocabulary, especially for food words. This is an appreciation of the way experiential and contextual learning optimizes both meaning and recall.

Q03: What are the main methods you currently use to teach and reinforce English vocabulary with your fifth-year primary pupils?

Interviewee 01

I particularly use flashcards, stories, games such as the memory games, computer games, and role-play. I also use vocabulary in songs for better retention.

Interviewee 02

I prefer to utilize role-playing and visual materials of the textbook topics. As an example, in the topic "At the Market," I created a simulated mini-market in class where students practiced vocabulary like apples, oranges, carrots, and asked about their prices. I also make use of repetition drills and drawing activities when teaching topics like "My House" or "My Day" so that they can relate words to actual contexts.

Analysis

This question aims to explore the actual classroom practices teachers use to help fifth-year pupils learn and remember vocabulary. Both teachers showed that they used creative and

engaging methods when teaching vocabulary. The first teacher relied on a variety of interactive techniques like flashcards, memory games, storytelling, and songs. These tools were useful in keeping pupils active and having them memorize new words. The second teacher used more on a daily basis context and learning through imagery. She gave a concrete example of creating a "mini-market" in class for students to use vocabulary in a real and fun way. She also used repetition and drawing to help students associate words with their lives.

Q4: How well do you understand the concept of using gamification in education, especially when teaching English vocabulary?

Interviewee 01

I know what gamification in education means . I've attended workshops and read materials on how to integrate it into language teaching. I understand its potential to make vocabulary acquisition more engaging and effective.

Interviewee 02

I have a general understanding. It's about using games to make learning more fun and engaging.

Analysis

This question helps to discover how familiar the teachers are with the concept of gamification and how comfortable they would feel about implementing it in their vocabulary class. The first teacher was very familiar with gamification. She mentioned that she had attended workshops and read books about it, so she was familiar with it theoretically as well as practically. She also recognized the value of gamification in making vocabulary learning more interesting and effective for pupils. The second teacher's understanding was less advanced. She offered us a simple definition, explaining to us that gamification is all about making learning fun and engaging with elements of a game. This suggested that even though

she knew the general idea, she might not have explored extensively in terms of training or documentation on the topic.

Q5. According to Werbach and Hanter (2012), “gamification is the use of game-like elements and techniques in non-game context”.

In education, there are some elements of gamification such as: leaderboards, points and levels, badges, progress tracking, and other game elements to convey information and enhance its acquisition.

Have you ever used any of these gamification elements in your teaching? If yes, which ones?

Interviewee 01

Yes, I have used several gamification elements, such as points, leaderboards, and badges. For example, pupils earn stars for participation, completing tasks, or showing improvement. I’ve also used progress charts and levels where pupils “level up” as they learn more vocabulary.

Interviewee 02

Yes, I’ve used points, badges, and team competitions in class. Pupils earn stars or stickers based on participation and performance.

Analysis

This question centers on what teachers actually implement in terms of gamification elements in the classroom and what techniques work for them. The first teacher discussed using an array of gamified features such as points, badges, leaderboards, progress charts, and levels. She discussed in detail how students were able to “level up” and receive stars, and it highlighted a well defined system where pupils would be rewarded for continued efforts. The second teacher utilized comparable elements such as points and badges but introduced team

competition as well, bringing in teamwork and competition. She utilized stars and stickers as incentives, which were simple yet powerful in keeping students motivated.

Q6: How do pupils react to gamified learning situations?

Interviewee 01

Most young learners react very positively. Gamified activities increase motivation, participation in the classroom. Pupils become more engaged to learn and to show their efforts.

Interviewee 02

They usually become more motivated and competitive. For example, when I used a vocabulary quiz with a leaderboard, they were eager to score higher and asked me to play it again.

Analysis

This question accounts for pupils' responses and classroom behavior in gamified activities. The first teacher cited that young learners responded well in general. She highlighted motivation and participation were heightened when gamified approaches were utilized and pupils became more enthusiastic about learning and worked harder. The second teacher mentioned a particular instance where the implementation of using a leaderboard in a word quiz made the pupils more competitive and enthusiastic. She observed that pupils wished to have higher scores and even requested to be allowed to play again to indicate how gamification made them enthusiastic and competitive.

Q7: In your opinion, does gamified teaching make your lessons more engaging for pupils?

Interviewee 01

Absolutely. Gamified teaching makes lessons fun, interactive, enjoyable, and more effective. It fosters a sense of competition and achievement, which enhances engagement and retention.

Interviewee 02

Yes, it does. When I use simple games like "Rock, Paper, Scissors" to revise vocabulary, or team competitions with local references, pupils enjoy the lesson more and even shy learners join in.

Analysis

This question focuses on whether gamification helps make the learning experience more engaging for pupils from the teacher's perspective. The first teacher strongly believed in the benefits of gamified teaching. She mentioned that it not only made lessons more fun and interactive but also helped young learners stay focused and remember the vocabulary better. She also indicated it gave them that sense of accomplishment which urged participation. The second teacher provided real-life examples of how simple games or culturally relevant team competitions transformed the classroom environment. She indicated that these made all studs, including shy pupils, participate and enjoy learning more.

Q8: How do you evaluate or measure the effectiveness of gamification in your classroom?

Interviewee 01

I assess effectiveness through observation, quizzes, vocabulary tests, and class participation. I also track progress using, for example, individual charts, and compare results

from gamified lessons with traditional ones. It is a successful way to measure the effectiveness of gamification in classes.

Interviewee 02

I check if pupils can recall and use words correctly in tasks after playing games. For example, after a memory card game, I give them a short quiz or ask them to use the new words in sentences.

Analysis

This question helps us understand how teachers actually know whether gamification is working in their classrooms. It shows the tools and strategies they use to measure progress in vocabulary learning. The first teacher used a mix of formal and informal ways to evaluate gamification. She relied on observation and tests, but also added creative tools like individual progress charts. She even compared the results of gamified lessons with traditional lessons, which showed a thoughtful way of checking what worked best for her pupils. The second teacher focused more on immediate outcomes. She checked if pupils could remember and use vocabulary after playing games. Her strategy was very practical using short quizzes or sentence making tasks right after the activity to see if learning happened.

Q09: Do you have any other suggestions or comments regarding vocabulary acquisition through gamification for fifth-year primary school pupils?

Interviewee 01

I suggest incorporating more digital tools that include gamification, such as interactive apps or platforms. Also, training teachers in gamification techniques can boost its implementation. Collaboration between teachers to share ideas and games is another effective strategy as well.

Interviewee 02

Yes, I recommend using simple and low-prep games like “word treasure hunt” where pupils find and match words with pictures around the classroom, or “charades” to act out vocabulary. These kinds of games make learning fun and memorable, especially when repeated regularly and followed by short oral or written practice.

Analysis

This question allows teachers to offer additional suggestions or tips on how to enhance learning of vocabulary through gamification.

Both of the teachers suggested useful and pragmatic ideas. The first teacher was more concerned with the larger picture. She suggested using technological means such as apps and interactive platforms to update learning vocabulary. She also mentioned the importance of training teachers and encouraging collaboration, showing that support and sharing between teachers could help gamification grow in schools. The second teacher gave specific examples of easy games like “word treasure hunt” and “charades.” These games did not need a lot of preparation and were fun for pupils. She also highlighted the importance of repeating games and adding short follow up tasks, like speaking or writing, to help pupils remember vocabulary better. Together, both interviews offered a good mix of ideas. One teacher looked at tools and teamwork among educators, while the other shared classroom friendly games that made vocabulary fun and effective.

2.2.5. Interpretation and Discussion of the Results

After carefully analyzing the interview findings, the responses varied. The interview questions had been designed to explore teachers' attitudes towards learning vocabulary through gamification and the possible challenges they face when implementing it at Chattel Mohammad El Taher and Zouaghi Abdallah Primary School. Generally, the teachers provided positive responses. Both teachers cited their experiences in teaching as fulfilling but

challenging, citing creativity, patience, and being flexible as essential in teaching vocabulary. When citing difficulties pupils have in learning vocabulary, both referred to issues of pronunciation, forgetting of words, and confusing related terms. To counter them, both instructors emphasized context and interactive strategies such as visualizations, role-play, and games. Flashcards, storytelling, drawing pictures, repetition of words, and role-play scenarios as guided in textbook themes were their approach to reinforcement learning of vocabulary. Both instructors demonstrated knowledge of gamification but had formal exposure through gamification workshops for the first teacher. Both instructors utilized active gamification elements such as points, badges, leaderboards, and competition between teams to stimulate motivation as well as classroom participation in learning new words. Responses from the pupils were positive with intensified passion, motivation, as well as engagement. According to the instructors, shy pupils participated more in gamified classes. In analyzing the gamification impact, the first teacher utilized systematic means of observation, testing of knowledge, and monitoring of progress while the second instructor monitored instantaneous recall of words as well as application post-games. Recommendations for future improvements varied from the use of technology to low-prep games like treasure hunts and charades. In general, the interviews indicate both instructors see gamification as a powerful tool in deepening word learning through playfulness in learning, remembering, and learner-centeredness. Overall, both instructors view gamification as a powerful, useful, and stimulating means of teaching words. A study by Neville, Shelton, and McInnis (2020) titled "Gamification in Education: Motivation and Engagement in Learning Vocabulary" outlined how teachers in the organization implemented gamified methods such as points, leaderboards, and game-like engagement into learning vocabulary. In conformity with the current interview findings, the study found gamification enhanced learner motivation, engagement, and recall of terms in general and shy or less assertive learners in specific.

2.3. Limitations of the Study

This study led to valuable results, but there were some limitations that should be considered:

- Not enough time: The topic under investigation included a wide range of content that could not be fully explored within the limited time available.
- The study could not control several factors, such as teachers' experience with gamification, how comfortable they were with technology, and their workload all of which could have affected their responses.
- The study was restricted to only one grade level (fifth-grade primary pupils) and, therefore, the findings might not necessarily be applicable to another level.
- Some teachers never returned the questionnaires, which reduced the number of responses and thus may have impact on the results.
- Voice recording was not allowed during the interviews as per the teachers' preference to answer through writing. While this respected the teachers' right to choose, however, it might have negatively impacted the data collection process and limited the depth of their responses

2.4. Recommendations

In light of the study's findings, the following recommendations are put forward:

Primary school EFL teachers who teach the fifth year should:

- Integrate Gamification in Vocabulary Lessons
- Gamification can be used in an organized way by setting clear rules, managing time effectively, and choosing purposeful educational games. This helps maintain discipline and motivates students without causing chaos.
- Encourage collaboration among teachers to promote the sharing of successful gamified practices and foster a supportive teaching community.
- Adapt games to pupils' levels and Interests
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of gamification
- Include Gamification in the Curriculum to institutionalize gamified learning as a recognized and structured part of the educational process.
- Involve teachers in a training program about the implementation of gamification in education.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed an overview of the main findings that have been gathered through the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews regarding the role of gamification in vocabulary acquisition with fifth-year primary school pupils in Mila. The majority of teachers expressed positive views on gamification, considering it useful in engaging learners and helping with vocabulary retention. They pointed out that interactive activities and educational games meant to provide fun to the learning environment and make learning meaningful for pupils. However, teachers stressed the need to balance the scale and emphasize that adequate resources must be put into place for the gamification framework to be fully supported within the educational context. They also recommended that vocabulary teaching should be enhanced using various approaches to ensure long term language competency

General Conclusion

Gamification has proved to be a powerful pedagogical approach in the last few years for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes, where interest and motivation of young learners are conditions preceding successful vocabulary acquisition. In this research, attempts have been made to investigate teachers' attitudes towards gamification implementation in the teaching of vocabulary for fifth-year primary school children. It seeks also to uncover teachers' attitudes towards the effectiveness of gamification in enhancing vocabulary acquisition and the possible challenges they face when implementing such a technique in the classroom. Based on empirical experience and theoretical knowledge, the study has shown how gamification, if done appropriately, can play a major role in vocabulary learning in interactive, intuitive, and interesting environments.

This study findings showed that the participating teachers tended to view gamification positively. They introduced that learning via games not only increased pupils' involvement and participation but also led to better vocabulary retention than more traditional, teacher-centered methods. Those which functioned best to preserve learner interest and active participation were cited as rewards, competition, and cooperative computer tools. The result also indicated that how well gamification functions also depends heavily on teachers' understanding and application of its concepts. Differences in perception usually followed as a result of differences in levels of training received, exposure to resources, and prior experience with gamified pedagogy.

Despite its big potential, the study contained several limitations that should be kept in mind. First, the sample population was relatively small within one regional context, thereby potentially limiting generalizability to findings. There were also some of the respondents whose responses were incomplete throughout the questionnaire, which affected the depth of analysis in addition to the fact that interviewees did not allow for recording. Despite this, the

outcomes attained generate significant contributions to literature accessible in the field of applications of gamification in language education.

In conclusion, this research calls for the empowerment of teachers with the necessary skills and resources to effectively integrate gamification into their teaching practices. As education catches up with technology developments and changing pupil populations, pedagogy methods such as gamification will become increasingly relevant. Large-scale and heterogeneous studies are recommended to establish the implications of different gamification frameworks on vocabulary learning across different learning settings.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Teachers' Questionnaire

19/05/2025 00:05

Primary Teacher's Questionnaire

Primary Teacher's Questionnaire

Dear teachers

We kindly request your participation in our questionnaire, which aims to explore teachers' perceptions of vocabulary acquisition through gamification. Your insights are essential in deepening our understanding of this research and enhancing educational practices. Your valuable contributions will help foster a more effective and engaging learning environment for primary school pupils. Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Your responses will be kept strictly confidential, and your participation is entirely anonymous. Please answer the following questions by either ticking the most appropriate option or by providing written responses where required. Your input is invaluable for the validity of this research.

Section 01: Personal Information

1. 1. How old are you ?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Under 25
- ☐ 25 – 34
- ☐ 35 – 44
- ☐ More than 45

2. 2. What is the name of the primary school where you currently teach ?

3. 3. what degree do you hold ?*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Bachelor's Degree (Four-year license)
- ☐ Bachelor's Degree (LMD license)
- ☐ Master's Degree

4. 4. How many years of teaching experience do you have ?*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Less than 5 years
- ☐ 5 – 10 years
- ☐ More than 10 years

Section 02: Vocabulary Acquisition**5. 5. Which method do you mainly use to teach new vocabulary?***Check all that apply.*

- ☐ Repetition and memorization
- ☐ Using vocabulary in context
- ☐ Flashcards or visual aids
- ☐ Songs
- ☐ Stories
- ☐ Games
- ☐ Other: _____

6. 6 . Can fun activities help pupils remember new vocabulary better?*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ YES
- ☐ NO

7. If No, please justify :

8. 7 . What do you think helps pupils remember new vocabulary best ?

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Seeing the words used in different situations
- ☐ Being interested in the topic
- ☐ Using real-life examples or things they know
- ☐ Learning at the right pace
- ☐ Other: _____

9. 8 . How do you assess vocabulary acquisition in your classroom ?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Quizzes and written tests
- ☐ Oral activities
- ☐ Games and interactive tools
- ☐ Observation during lessons
- ☐ Other: _____

10. **9 . What challenges do you face when teaching vocabulary to fifth year primary pupils ?**

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Lack of pupils' interest or motivation
- ☐ Limited vocabulary knowledge
- ☐ Classroom management issues
- ☐ Lack of teaching materials or resources
- ☐ Pupils forget words quickly
- ☐ Mixed ability levels in the classroom
- ☐ Time constraints

11. **10. what can teachers do to address these challenges ?**

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Use games and fun activities to teach vocabulary
- ☐ Give more practice through homework and exercises
- ☐ Use pictures, videos, and technology to support learning
- ☐ Connect vocabulary to pupils interests
- ☐ Use group work or pair activities
- ☐ Encourage pupils to use new words in speaking and writing

Section 03 : Gamification in education

12. **11 . How often do you prepare lessons in the form of a game in your classes?**

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ often
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

13. 12 . pupils learn better when learning is connected to something fun or interactive

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Strongly agree
☐ Agree
☐ Neutral
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly disagree

14. 13 . How do your pupils usually react when the lesson is introduced with games

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Very excited and engaged
☐ Interested
☐ Neutral
☐ Bored
☐ Confused

Section 04: Gamification and vocabulary acquisition

15. 14 . Educational games enhance pupils' vocabulary acquisition.

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Strongly agree
☐ Agree
☐ Neutral
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly disagree

16. 15. Gamification makes vocabulary lessons more enjoyable.

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Strongly agree
☐ Agree
☐ Neutral
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly disagree

17. 16. How can gamification be integrated into vocabulary lessons ? (Please provide an example if possible.)

18. 17. Gamification has several elements that make it very effective. What is the most engaging element to be used in the lesson?

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Badges
☐ Leaderboards
☐ Points and Levels
☐ Progress Tracking
☐ Other: _____

19. **18.Using gamification elements helps fifth-year primary pupils improve their vocabulary acquisition.**

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

20. **19. In your opinion, what are the benefits of using gamification in teaching English vocabulary ?**

21. **20. What challenges do teachers face when trying to use gamification in teaching vocabualry?**

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Lack of time to prepare games
- ☐ Not enough resources or materials
- ☐ Large class size
- ☐ Pupils get too excited or distracted
- ☐ Lack of technology in the classroom
- ☐ I don't face any challenges
- ☐ Other: _____

22. 21. How can these challenges be addressed ?

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Allow time for teachers to experiment with gamification
- ☐ Get support from school administration
- ☐ Adapt games to fit large classes
- ☐ Set clear rules to manage classroom behavior
- ☐ Use offline games when technology is not available
- ☐ Other: _____

Section 5: Further Suggestions**23. Please, add any further suggestions that you think might help teachers when implementing gamification in teaching vocabulary.**

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Google Forms

Appendix 02

Instructors' Interview

These interview questions aim to gather insights into teachers' experiences, perceptions of gamification, and the challenges and benefits they associate with vocabulary acquisition through gamification. Your participation is invaluable and will help us develop meaningful educational recommendations. Thank you for your time and valuable contribution.

- 1. How many years have you been teaching English to primary school pupils in Algeria? Could you briefly describe your overall experience in this field?**
- 2. Based on your classroom observations, what are some common difficulties pupils face when learning and retaining English vocabulary? How have you addressed these difficulties in your teaching?**
- 3. What are the main methods you currently use to teach and reinforce English vocabulary with your fifth-year primary pupils?**
- 4. How well do you understand the concept of using gamification in education, especially when teaching English vocabulary?**
- 5. According to Werbach and Hunter (2012), "Gamification is the use of game-like elements and techniques in non-game contexts."**

In education, there are some elements of gamification such as: leaderboards, points and levels, badges, progress tracking, and other game elements to convey information and enhance its acquisition.

Have you ever used any of these gamification elements in your teaching? If yes, which ones?

- 6. How do pupils react to gamified learning situations?**

- 7. In your opinion, does gamified teaching make your lessons more engaging for pupils?**
- 8. How do you evaluate or measure the effectiveness of gamification in your classroom?**
- 9. Do you have any other suggestions or comments regarding vocabulary acquisition through gamification for fifth-year primary school pupils?**

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix 03

Interviewees' Answers

Interviewee 01: Chahid Mouhammed El Taher primary school

1. I have been teaching English to primary School pupils in Algeria for 4 years. My experience has been rewarding. Teaching young pupils requires innovation, patience, and flexibility. Decades of experience have shown me how to keep pupils engaged, especially when introducing new words.

2. Pupils often struggle with pronunciation, remembering new words, and using them in context. To address this problem, I used for example visual aids, songs, games, and repetition. I also used to create real life scenarios where they can practice vocabulary through role-play and interactive tasks.

3. I particularly use flashcards, stories, games such as the memory games, computer games, and role-play. I also use vocabulary in songs for better retention.

4. I know what gamification in education means . I've attended workshops and read materials on how to integrate it into language teaching. I understand its potential to make vocabulary acquisition more engaging and effective.

5. Yes, I have used several gamification elements, such as points, leaderboards, and badges. For example, pupils earn stars for participation, completing tasks, or showing improvement. I've also used progress charts and levels where pupils "level up" as they learn more vocabulary.

6. Most learners react very positively. Gamified activities increase motivation, participation in the classroom. Pupils become more engaged to learn and to show their efforts.

7. Absolutely. Gamified teaching makes lessons fun, interactive, enjoyable, and more effective. It fosters a sense of competition and achievement, which enhances engagement and retention.

8. I assess effectiveness through observation, quizzes, vocabulary tests, and class participation. I also track progress using, for example, individual charts, and compare results from gamified lessons with traditional ones. It is a successful way to measure the effectiveness of gamification in classes.

9. I suggest incorporating more digital tools that include gamification, such as interactive apps or platforms. Also, training teachers in gamification techniques can boost its implementation. Collaboration between teachers to share ideas and games is another effective strategy as well.

Interviewee 02: Zouaghi Abdallah Primary School

1. I taught English to primary school children for three years. It was a fulfilling but trying experience. It is great to see primary children grow confident in speaking foreign languages.

2. I have noticed that pupils get mixed up with similarly sounding words like "kitchen" and "chicken." To help with that, I attempted to put the words into context like acting out daily routines or playing picture guessing games. We once played a "mini restaurant" role-play, and it helped them remember food words better.

3. I prefer to utilize role playing and visual materials of the textbook topics. As an example, in the topic "At the Market," I created a simulated mini-market in class where students practiced vocabulary like apples, oranges, carrots, and asked about their prices. I also make use of repetition drills and drawing activities when teaching topics like My House or My Day so that they can relate words to actual contexts.

4. I have a general understanding. It's about using games to make learning more fun and engaging.

5. Yes, I've used points, badges, and team competitions in class. Pupils earn stars or stickers based on participation and performance.

6. They usually become more motivated and competitive. For example, when I used a vocabulary quiz with a leaderboard, they were eager to score higher and asked me to play it again.

7. Yes, it does. When I use simple games like "Rock, Paper, Scissors" to revise vocabulary, or team competitions with local references, pupils enjoy the lesson more and even shy learners join in.

8. I check if pupils can recall and use words correctly in tasks after playing games. For example, after a memory card game, I give them a short quiz or ask them to use the new words in sentences.

9. Yes, I recommend using simple and low-prep games like "word treasure hunt" where pupils find and match words with pictures around the classroom, or "charades" to act out vocabulary. These kinds of games make learning fun and memorable, especially when repeated regularly and followed by short oral or written practice.

Résumé

L'intérêt croissant pour l'amélioration de l'apprentissage du vocabulaire chez les jeunes apprenants a conduit les éducateurs à explorer des stratégies d'enseignement innovantes. L'une de ces approches est la ludification, qui consiste à intégrer des éléments de jeu pour rendre l'apprentissage plus engageant et agréable. L'intégration de la ludification dans le domaine éducatif a suscité un intérêt considérable en raison de son potentiel à améliorer l'engagement des élèves et leurs résultats d'apprentissage. Néanmoins, les avis des enseignants du primaire peuvent varier en fonction de leurs expériences antérieures, ce qui influence la manière dont la ludification est mise en œuvre ainsi que son efficacité en tant que stratégie pédagogique. La présente étude vise à examiner et à comprendre les perceptions des enseignants quant à l'utilisation de la ludification comme outil d'acquisition du vocabulaire chez les élèves de cinquième année primaire à Mila. Elle cherche également à découvrir les attitudes des enseignants envers l'efficacité de la ludification dans le renforcement de l'acquisition du vocabulaire, ainsi que les éventuels défis auxquels ils sont confrontés lors de l'application de cette technique avec des élèves de cinquième année primaire. Pour atteindre ces objectifs, les questions de recherche suivantes ont été posées : Quelles sont les perceptions des enseignants vis-à-vis de l'acquisition du vocabulaire à travers la ludification ? Et quels sont les défis qu'ils rencontrent lors de l'utilisation des jeux linguistiques pour enseigner le vocabulaire ? Afin de répondre à ces questions, une approche mixte a été adoptée. Un questionnaire a été distribué à 33 enseignants du primaire, et un entretien semi-directif a été mené avec 2 enseignants pour recueillir des perspectives plus approfondies. Les résultats ont indiqué que la plupart des enseignants ont une vision positive de la ludification, reconnaissant son rôle dans l'amélioration de la motivation, de la participation et de la rétention du vocabulaire. Cependant, certains enseignants ont exprimé des préoccupations concernant le manque de temps, le besoin de formation adéquate et la disponibilité des ressources. Dans l'ensemble, l'étude met en

évidence le rôle prometteur de la ludification dans le soutien à l'apprentissage du vocabulaire, à condition qu'elle soit mise en œuvre de manière réfléchie et avec un accompagnement suffisant.

Mots-clés: Acquisition du vocabulaire, ludification, perceptions des enseignants, leçons ludifiées, élèves de l'école primaire

الملخص

إن الاهتمام المتزايد بتحسين تعلم المفردات لدى المتعلمين الصغار دفع المربين إلى استكشاف استراتيجيات تدريس مبتكرة. ومن بين هذه الأساليب أسلوب التلعيب، والذي يتمثل في إدماج عناصر اللعب لجعل التعلم أكثر تفاعلاً ومتعة. لقد حظي إدماج التلعيب في المجال التربوي باهتمام كبير لما له من قدرة على تعزيز مشاركة التلاميذ وتحسين نتائج تعلمهم. ومع ذلك، قد تختلف آراء معلمي المرحلة الابتدائية حسب تجاربهم السابقة، مما يؤثر على كيفية تطبيق التلعيب وفعاليتهم كاستراتيجية تعليمية. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى فحص وفهم تصورات المعلمين بشأن استخدام التلعيب كأداة لاكتساب المفردات لدى تلاميذ السنة الخامسة من المرحلة الابتدائية بولاية ميلة. كما تسعى إلى الكشف عن مواقف المعلمين تجاه فعالية التلعيب في تعزيز اكتساب المفردات، والتحديات التي قد تواجههم عند تطبيق هذه التقنية مع تلاميذ السنة الخامسة من التعليم الابتدائي. ولتحقيق هذه الأهداف، تم طرح الأسئلة البحثية التالية: ما هي تصورات المعلمين نحو اكتساب المفردات من خلال التلعيب؟ وما هي التحديات التي يواجهونها عند استخدام الألعاب اللغوية لتعليم المفردات؟ وللإجابة على هذه الأسئلة، تم اعتماد منهج يجمع بين الكمي والنوعي. حيث وُزعت استبانة على 33 معلماً في المدارس الابتدائية، وأجري حوار شبه موجه مع معلمين اثنين من أجل جمع آراء أكثر تعمقاً. وقد أظهرت النتائج أن معظم المعلمين لديهم نظرة إيجابية تجاه التلعيب، ويقرّون بدوره في تعزيز التحفيز، والمشاركة، والاحتفاظ بالمفردات. ومع ذلك، عبّر بعض المعلمين عن قلقهم بشأن ضيق الوقت، والحاجة إلى تدريب مناسب، وتوفر الموارد. بشكل عام، تُبرز الدراسة الدور الواعد للتلعيب في دعم تعلم المفردات، شريطة أن يتم تطبيقه بشكل مدروس وبوجود دعم كافٍ.

الكلمات المفتاحية: اكتساب المفردات، التلعيب، تصورات المعلمين، الدروس الملعبة، تلاميذ المرحلة

الابتدائية