Master in Teaching English as a Foreign Language
Applied Research Paper

THE INTERPLAY OF COMPETITIVE GAMING SCENARIOS AS A MOTIVATIONAL EDUCATIONAL STRATEGY IN VOCABULARY ACQUISITION

Stephanie Vanessa LARA TEJADA[a];[a] Carlos Eduardo BUENAÑO MEZA[b]
a. Licenciada en Ciencias de la Educación Profesora de Idiomas Inglés. E-mail: slarat@uees.edu.ec
b. Profesor de Segunda enseñanza de Lengua y Lingüística Inglesa. E-mail: cbuenano@uees.edu.ec

Keywords

Strategies, gamification, motivation, L2 vocabulary acquisition.

Abstract: The current research entitled "The Interplay of competitive gaming scenarios as a motivational educational strategy in vocabulary acquisition". It aims to analyze the effectiveness of motivation strategies used in the L2 vocabulary acquisition through different scenarios of competitive games. Therefore, the researchers carried out deep bibliographical research to select the most relevant papers, articles, journals, books, etc. from different academic magazines like Scielo, Eric, Redalyc, etc. It was qualitative-quantitative research; for this reason, the instrument was a survey to collect the data. The results show that gaming scenarios are essential tools to create an enjoyable class, encourage learners to acquire new vocabulary, and facilitate second language acquisition. Consequently, it was possible to identify that the interplay of competitive gaming scenarios is a good motivational educational strategy when teaching vocabulary in the EFL classroom. However, it is necessary to consider the kind of games that teachers use in the classroom since it is important to take into consideration different factors like learners' age, interest, level, etc. The researchers conclude that gaming is a great strategy to acquire new vocabulary in EFL class; nevertheless, it is necessary to select the most enjoyable and relevant games for learners. The strengths of the current research are that the teachers at "San Felipe Neri" school apply games to motivate learners; on the contrary, one of the limitations was the lack of bibliographical resources focused on the main purpose of the research.

Estrategias, gamificación, motivación, L2 adquisición de vocabulario,

Resumen: La presente investigación titulada "La interacción de escenarios de juegos competitivos como estrategia educativa motivacional en la adquisición de vocabulario". Su objetivo es analizar la eficacia de las estrategias de motivación utilizadas en la adquisición de vocabulario L2 a través de diferentes escenarios de juegos competitivos. Por lo tanto, los investigadores realizaron una profunda investigación bibliográfica para seleccionar los trabajos, artículos, revistas, libros, etc. más relevantes de diferentes revistas académicas como Scielo, Eric, Redalyc, etc. Fue una investigación cualitativa - cuantitativa; por tal motivo el instrumento fue una encuesta para recolectar los datos. Los resultados muestran que los escenarios de juego son herramientas esenciales para crear una clase agradable, alentar a los alumnos a adquirir nuevo vocabulario y facilitar la adquisición de un segundo idioma. En consecuencia, fue posible identificar que la interacción de escenarios de juegos competitivos son una buena estrategia educativa motivadora al momento de enseñar vocabulario en el aula de inglés como lengua extranjera; sin embargo, es necesario tener en cuenta el tipo de juegos que utilizan los profesores en el aula, ya que es importante tener en cuenta diferentes factores como la edad, el interés, el nivel, etc. de los alumnos. Los investigadores concluyen que los juegos son una gran estrategia para adquirir nuevos conocimientos. vocabulario en la clase de inglés como lengua extranjera; sin embargo, es necesario seleccionar los juegos más divertidos y relevantes para los alumnos. Las fortalezas de la presente investigación son que los docentes del colegio "San Felipe Neri" aplican juegos para motivar a los educandos; por el contrario, una de las limitaciones fue la falta de recursos bibliográficos enfocados al propósito principal de la investigación.

Introduction

Learning a second language has become a priority for people worldwide since it provides them a bunch of facilities to be able to accomplish academic and personal goals. For this reason, learning the English language implies the use of appropriate approaches, methods, techniques, and strategies that encourage learners to learn successfully a second language. It is important to take into consideration the learners' level and learning objectives for the English class to choose the proper methods to work in a classroom since it would play an important role when achieving the set teaching-learning goals. It is a fact that learning English involves the development of productive and receptive language skills; however, it is also necessary to mention that learners have to acquire as much vocabulary as they can since it allows them to enrich their language knowledge to communicate effectively.

The current research aims on "The Interplay of Competitive Gaming scenarios as a motivational educational strategy in vocabulary acquisition". It is mainly focused on analyzing how the Interplay of Competitive Gaming scenarios motivates learners to acquire new vocabulary. The gaming approach is focused on motivating learners to acquire new vocabulary through the use of virtual games since they allow learners to reach different funny activities while they are unconsciously and effectively acquiring a new useful vocabulary for them. Nevertheless, it is essential to choose the correct games because they would be the main way learners acquire vocabulary; moreover, it is necessary to consider the types of games according to learners' levels and interests.

Therefore, some researchers have developed similar investigations of the current research's topic. Camacho-Sánchez et al. (2022) developed the research project "Gamified Digital Game Based Learning as a Pedagogical Strategy: Student Academic Performance and

Motivation". Its objective was to analyze the effect on academic performance and motivation after an experience combining DGBL, and gamification in university students. It was experimental research; consequently, the sample consisted of 38 students. The researcher used a questionnaire to gather the qualitative data. The research's results showed meaningful differences in the EFL learners due to the competition dynamics carried out in class; moreover, it demonstrated that gamification helps to increase learners' motivation (Camacho-Sánchez et al., 2022).

Flores (2021) carried out a research paper about "Using gamification to enhance Second Language Learning". The research's objective was to analyze the effectiveness of gamification to enhance Second Language Learning on EFL learners. It was a qualitative investigation; for this reason, the researcher carried out a deep bibliographical investigation about the two variables. Articles, papers, books were analyzed to justify the investigation. The researcher concluded that Gamification allows learners to feel motivated toward Second Language Learning since it provides different alternatives to create a better environment in the class to accomplish the teaching and learning goals.

Regarding to the national field, the investigation "Gamification strategy and the English learning vocabulary" developed by (Jordán Buenaño & Villacis Villacis, 2021) had as main purpose to establish the effectiveness of the Gamification strategy in the vocabulary acquisition in the English Language in the students of the first semester at Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages Program at Universidad Técnica de Ambato. It was an experimental investigation; therefore, the researcher used a pretest and posttest to measure learners' knowledge. The final results showed that learners went to basic to intermediate

level by using Duolingo as a gamification strategy to acquire new vocabulary (Jordán Buenaño & Villacis Villacis, 2021) .

Learning new vocabulary is quite mandatory when acquiring a second language since it allows EFL learners to acquire a bunch of lexis to communicate effectively by writing or speaking. However, it sometimes could become difficult for learners since memorizing vocabulary becomes boring and challenging for them because they do not feel enough motivated to learner new words. It could happen due to the lack used of dynamic and funny strategies; it has become a big problem when looking for the best option to encourage leaners to acquire vocabulary in Second Language Learning.

The lack of motivation in the L2 vocabulary acquisition has raised the question of how effective are teachers' strategies in motivating learners to enjoy lessons and acquire the new language. Considering that the CEFR basically proposes a scale of six language proficiency levels that goes from A1, for those who are at a beginning stage, to C2, for those who can use language at high levels of discourse. According to the National Curriculum Guidelines (2014), students have to achieve a B1 level of proficiency when they finish school. As a consequence of this, it is necessary to focus on the motivation strategies that students need to learn L2 vocabulary words, based on competitive gaming scenarios allowing them to communicate effectively to reach the Ministerial goal.

At San Felipe Neri School, students in 5th Grade of Basic Education are in A1 proficiency level, it is strongly believed that games and the appropriate techniques may help to encourage and motivate students at this level to learn new vocabulary and store it in the long-term memory. The strategies used for teaching should be appropriate to engage students to learn in a meaningful environment. Consequently, this study proposes gamification as a

technique to teach vocabulary in order to motivate students to learn and internalize the vocabulary learned in order to achieve a B1 level of proficiency when they finish school.

Finally, to find a solution to the lack of motivation and vocabulary acquisition the following questions should be analyzed and answered in order to improve this research: To what extent are games effective means to acquire vocabulary in a second language? What type of emotions are involved in the teaching-learning process? Which types of games are addressed to teach vocabulary effectively?

The current research's objective was to analyze the motivation strategies used in the L2 vocabulary acquisition through different scenarios of competitive games. On the other hand, the research describes the problem in detail, the justification, the research area, and its background. In addition, it provides information about the research methodology, type, and approach used to carry out the investigation. It also contains the analysis and interpretation about the results obtained through the techniques and instruments applied by the researchers to collect the data. Finally, it presents the conclusions, strengths, and limitations, future lines of research are presented and recommended. At the end of the research paper, it is possible to identify the bibliographical references that supported the current research.

Literature Review

The lack of motivation in L2 vocabulary acquisition has raised the question of how effective teachers' strategies in motivating learners are to enjoy lessons and acquire the new language. According to the National Curriculum Guidelines (2014), students must achieve a B1 level of proficiency when they finish school. Consequently, It is necessary to focus on the motivation strategies that students need to learn L2 vocabulary words, based on competitive gaming scenarios allowing them to communicate effectively to reach the Ministerial goal.

1. L2 vocabulary acquisition

It is the developing knowledge and use of a language by children and adults who already know at least one other language. This field of research has both theoretical and practical importance. The theoretical importance is related to our understanding of how language is represented in the mind and whether there is a difference between the way language is acquired and processed and the way other kinds of information are acquired and processed.

The practical importance arises from the assumption that an understanding of how languages are learned will lead to more effective teaching practices. (Spada, N., & Lightbown, P. M. 2019). Furthermore, this term also refers to beginning the learning of another language after a first language (LA) has been acquired. (Hummel, K. M. 2021). It means that to acquire another language the learners need to be exposed to the language learned. The need for exposure is also necessary condition for L2 learners who must be

exposed to the target language in order to ultimately learn that language… the exposure to target language input is vital (Hummel, K. M. 2021).

1.1 L2 language process

Some experts suggest that there is a difference between language acquisition and language learning. It is based on the difference to be able to use the language for communication or being able to describe the rules of that language (Loewen, S., & Reinders, H. 2017).

However, there is a process to acquiring a new language, according to Taylor and Francis there are some observations to be regarded in the process.

- Observation 1: Exposure to input is necessary for L2 acquisition. It means that acquisition will not happen for learners unless they are exposed to input. (input means that the learner attempts to comprehend during communicative events.
- Observation 2: A good deal of L2 acquisition happens incidentally… The learner's primary focus of attention is on the message contained in the input.
- Observation 3: Learners come to know more than what they have been exposed to in the input.
- Observation 4: Learners' output (speech) often follows predictable paths with predictable stages in the acquisition of a given structure.
- Observation 5: Second language learning is variable in its outcome. It means that not all learners achieve the same degree of unconscious knowledge about a second language.

- Observation 6: Second language learning is variable across linguistic subsystems. Language is made up of a number of components that interact in different ways.
- Observation 7: There are limits on the effect of frequency on L2 acquisition.
- Observation 8: There are limits on the effect of a learner's L1 on L2 acquisition.
- Observation 9: There are limits on the effect of instruction on L2 acquisition.
- Observation 10: There are limits on the effect of output (learner production) on language acquisition (Loewen, S., & Reinders, H. 2017).

1.2 Strategies on language learning

Learning a new language requires some degree of exertion and strategies for learning and acquiring L2. The first thing we need to understand is what strategies mean. Learning strategies refer to a set of tactics that people use in order to gain control over their own learning process. Nowadays, enhancing strategies in second or foreign language classrooms is one of the teachers' roles, since their mission is to facilitate the learning among their students and make their thinking process visible. In order to teach a second language (L2) effectively, educators must take into consideration the needs and biographies of each learner, as a result, they are able to employ methodologies that guide students in using strategies which enhance their L2 learning process (Montaño-González, J. X. 2017).

1.3 Effective language acquisition.

It is said that there is a difference between learning and acquiring a language. Even though it is important to learn how to learn L2 effectively. It is said that the Natural approach is a good method for learning a new language. It is communication competence or functional

ability in a language, that arises from exposure to the language in meaningful settings where the meanings expressed by the language are understood. Rules, patterns, vocabulary, and other language forms are not learned as they are presented or encountered, but are gradually established in the learner's repertory on the basis of exposure to comprehensible input (Hoque, E. 2017).

On the other hand, it is said that Interaction has played an important role in SLA theory for several decades… Such processes include learners' exposure to and production of language, and the interplay of such input and output with learners' cognitive resources and other individual differences (Loewen, S., & Sato, M. 2018).

1.4 Vocabulary acquisition (CFR)

First of all, it is necessary to understand that vocabulary development is indisputably a vital aspect of a second language acquisition. (Sok, S., & Han, Z. 2020). Moreover, the outcome of second-language (L2) acquisition in childhood is markedly different from adult L2 acquisition, particularly in the domains of phonetics and phonology. Older learners are much more likely than younger learners to speak with a detectable foreign accent (Tyler, M. D. 2019).

Finally, the use of the terms incidental and intentional to describe two types of learning is widespread in L2 vocabulary research. DeKeyser, suggest that language acquisition originates in conscious processes that lead to the development of declarative knowledge, which, through practice, gives rise to procedural and ultimately, automatized knowledge (Sok, S., & Han, Z. 2020).

2. Competitive Gaming Scenarios

2.1 Gamification Approach

The educative context requires developing different skills to ensure a successful teaching and learning process. Hence, gamification can be defined as a new educative approach focused on engaging learners in learning by applying different virtual games. According to (Groh, 2016), gamification combines game elements with learning strategies to motivate people to use it to achieve academic goals in the educative system. In other words, gamification is considered the medium to boost learners' interest in acquiring new and valuable knowledge in a classroom.

On the other hand, gamification is also focused on encouraging learners to be competitive in a classroom due to its designed system to carry out a competition to accomplish the best results demonstrating proficiency in any area (Anderson & Rainie, 2012). The classroom becomes an environment where learners demonstrate their competitive instincts since it is noticeable that most learners feel comfortable winning points when playing games that allow them to apply the content they are learning in class.

Gamification is not only an approach to increase learners' motivation, but its primary goal is to help develop some learners' abilities, like solving problems. The classroom is the optimum place where learners can solve any problem regarding academic or social situations. The application of gamification lets learners understand, identify, propose solutions, evaluate them, and look back to develop their problem-solving skills in class (Kiryakova et al., 2017).

It is essential to mention that, by using gamification, learners solve problems interactively and entertainingly.

As it was mentioned above, gamification is based on the development of some interactive games by the use of digital resources; it means that it demands the appropriate conditions and enough software tools in the classroom; however, it sometimes becomes a challenge for teachers since they do not have enough resources to carry out these kinds of activities. For this reason, it is essential to seek solutions to substitute for the lack of resources. Ferreira et al. (2015), claim that gamification can be unrestricted by the lack of digital resources since it is not as essential as teachers' and learners' creativity to overcome this situation.

Regarding Second Language Learning, it is a fact that it requires motivation, attitude, and abilities to develop language skills. Thereby, gamification has become a didactic alternative to improve Second Language Learning since it provides many facilities for EFL learners to facilitate their learning process. Dehghanzadeh et al., (2021), suggest gamification as one of the modern approaches to increase opportunities to achieve learning goals due to its dynamism. In addition, it is necessary to consider that learning success depends on the methods, strategies, and techniques chosen to carry out a lesson.

2.2 Motivational Strategies

Motivation is an essential part of a classroom because it influences teaching and learning. Crookes & Schmidt (1991) argues that motivation plays an essential role in the classroom since it tries to encourage learners to participate actively in the classroom by using different engaging and motivational activities; even tough motivation sometimes becomes

difficult to define for some researchers, it is considered as a vital tool in any class. Besides, it is necessary to consider that teachers must remember that students' motivation and strategies build a dynamic, contextualized, and potentially reciprocal process to accomplish learning objectives for the benefit of learners and teachers (Sugita McEown & Takeuchi, 2014).

Second Language Learning requires learners' motivation to carry out a successful teaching and learning process; due to the importance of a motivational feature in a classroom Gardner et al. (1985) established the first motivational theory and its influence on the learning process ; as well as another motivational theory was established by Clément et al. (1977). Both were the first researcher to suggest the social-physiological approach as one of the crucial tools in a classroom due to the benefits it provides learners. Regarding Second Language Learning, motivation encourages learners to facilitate this process since it is a fact that when learners feel motivated, they tend to learn efficiently and meaningfully.

Some authors define motivational strategies as approaches, techniques, strategies, tactics, or interventions applied in any academic environment to influence students' motivation and behavior (Cirocki et al., 2019). Most EFL teachers try to apply motivational strategies in their classrooms since they facilitate second language teaching and learning processes because learners have external and internal motivations to learn a second language. Learners' motivation plays an essential role in the teaching and learning process. It facilitates students learning because learners feel more comfortable in a context where they are not obligated to do something they do not want to do.

Four dimensions of motivational strategies were established by Guilloteaux & Dörnyei (2008):

- **Creating primary motivational conditions.** Creating a pleasant and supportive environment where teachers and learners feel comfortable is essential.
- **Generating initial motivation.** Learners should have positive attitudes toward second language learning to facilitate it.
- **Maintaining and protecting motivation.** Creating innovative, enjoyable, engaging, and meaningful activities or tasks is essential to keep learners motivated in a classroom.
- **Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation.** Providing effective feedback is essential, and offering any reward for learners' effort, such as grades or points, motivates and encourages learners through the correct feedback.

2.3 Real-Life Scenarios

The teaching and learning process demands the creation of real-life scenarios to boost learners' interest. It is crucial that learners apply the knowledge they acquire in a classroom in real-life situations; therefore, it is necessary to expose learners to a context in which they have to carry out activities similar to real life. It would allow them to solve problems outside of the academic context (Illés & Akcan, 2017). As well as, the second language learning process requires the development of real-life scenarios since EFL learners need to be able to use a foreign language to communicate effectively in any context.

According to Afrin (2014), real-life scenarios bring a bunch of benefits to the second language learning process; therefore, it is essential to mention some of the most relevant benefits:

- **Keeps learners at the center.** It is crucial to focus the teaching and learning process on learners since they would receive lots of benefits when they have access to the information and material required to facilitate their learning process.
- **Knowledge retention amplified.** Teachers have to create an environment where learners learn in a meaningful way. Furthermore, it has to provide memorable learning that is difficult to forget in the short term.
- **Engaged, excited learners.** Creating activities focused on their interests and necessities is the key to motivating and engaging them in class.
- **Immediate application of knowledge.** Learners should be able to apply and use their skills to develop activities similar to real-life situations.
- **Gives learners power.** Learners must feel they have the power to lead any situation from real life; in this way, they would be conscious that their knowledge is essential to control any situation in real-life situations.

In conclusion, L2 vocabulary acquisition through games generates a significant impact on the students learning process. By relating it to different scenarios allow learners to enter a competitive world, in which they create more confidence and open their minds for an adequate language acquisition. Furthermore, the different vocabulary used in games influences a lot when learning a second language, but even more, helps to understand how this vocabulary is related to daily life, and also the way that the skills make a correlation with the language area to reinforce learning and make it meaningful for students.

Methodology

The interplay of competitive gaming scenarios as a motivational educational strategy in vocabulary acquisition.

The lack of motivation in L2 vocabulary acquisition has raised the question of how effective teachers' strategies are in motivating learners to enjoy lessons and acquire a new language. Through this study, it is expected to know how games or gamification may motivate students to study, learn, and acquire a foreign language. It arises the question How motivated are our students to learn a foreign language? How effective are the methods used by teachers to help students to internalize the new knowledge? Is gamification a good strategy to help students to acquire vocabulary and a new language?

DeKeyser (2021) suggests that language acquisition originates in conscious processes that lead to the development of declarative knowledge, which, through practice, gives rise to procedural and ultimately, automatized knowledge (Sok, S., & Han, Z. 2020). However, the current context plays an important role in determining what strategies may help students to learn. Gamification seems to be an effective tool to motivate young learners by giving them the opportunity to practice beyond the traditional school context.

The current research was an explanatory research. Moreover, it was qualitative - quantitative because it provides meaningful information based on a deeply bibliographical

research about the research's topic to justify competitive gaming scenarios helpfulness in second language learning when acquiring new vocabulary. On the other hand, it was quantitative due to the obtained data that determined the effectiveness of competitive gaming scenarios as a motivational educational strategy to acquire vocabulary. For this reason, the researchers got the quantitative data through the application of a survey.

The technique used to collect quantitative and qualitative data was a questionnaire. Consequently, the instrument was a survey. In this specific case, a descriptive survey will be applied due to the necessity to know how well the students acquire and learn a foreign language through competitive games and how motivated they feel when teachers apply games as a part of the lessons. Additionally, the survey will use closed-ended questions, which means yes or no questions, multiple-choice questions, rating questions, etc. Furthermore, a few open questions will be used.

It is necessary to mention that the mentioned instrument was previously validated by professors with a bunch of expertise in Second Language Teaching. They are university professors at Universidad Espiritu Santo. The research instruments were validated by them taking into consideration the helpfulness of the instruments to accomplish their research purpose; for instance, they consider the relevance of questions for the survey.

It was not necessary to work with a sample because the population was small. It was 33 learners from "Unidad Educativa San Felipe Neri". They are young EFL learners since they are at fifth year of EGB.

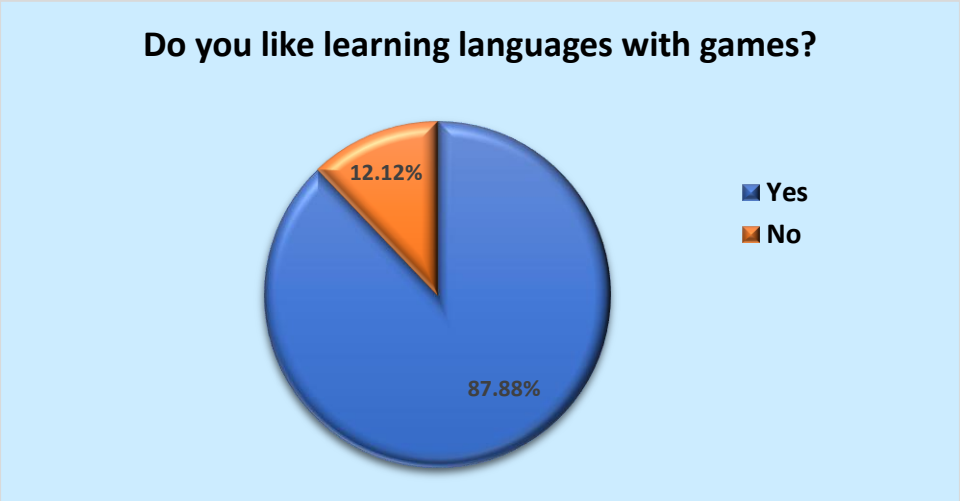
Results

The results of the application of the survey to the 33 students in the sample through Google Forms are presented below:

1.- Do you like learning languages with games?

Figure 1

Do you like learning languages with games

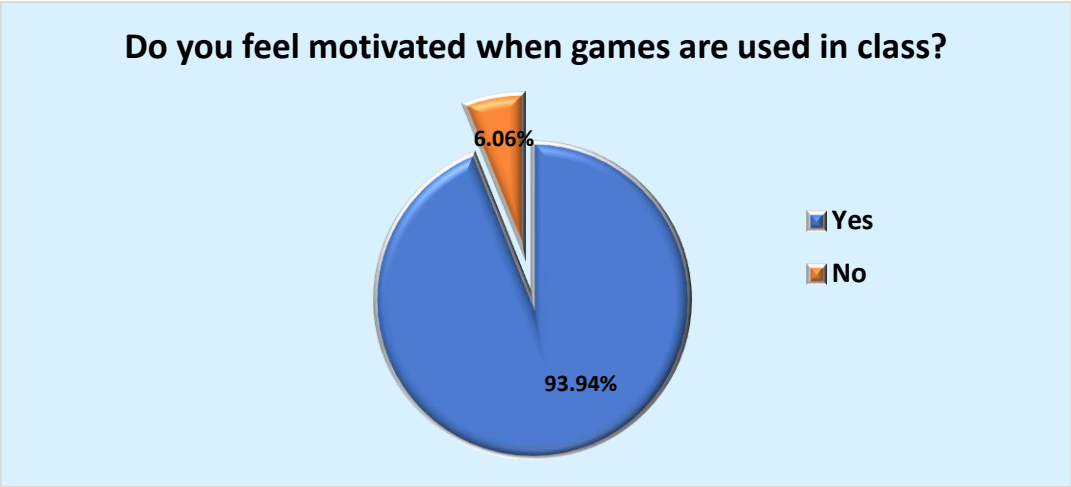


Note. According to the information in Figure 1, 29 students (87.88%) stated that they like to learn languages by playing games; on the other hand, the remaining 4 students (12.12%) indicated that they do not like to do it that way.

2.- Do you feel motivated when games are used in class?

Figure 2

Do you feel motivated when games are used in class?

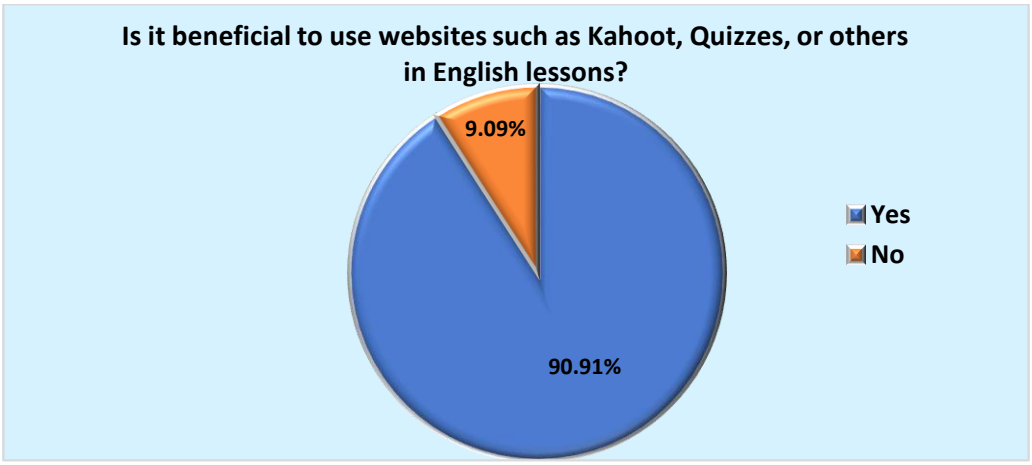


Note. According to the information in Figure 2, 31 students (93.94%) of the total assured that when games are used in the classes, they feel motivated to learn; while the remaining 2 students (6.06%) mentioned that the use of games is irrelevant or does not motivate them to want to learn more.

3.- Do you consider that it is beneficial to use websites such as Kahoot, Quizzes, or others during English lessons?

Figure 3

Is beneficial to use websites such as Kahoot, Quizzes, or others during English lessons

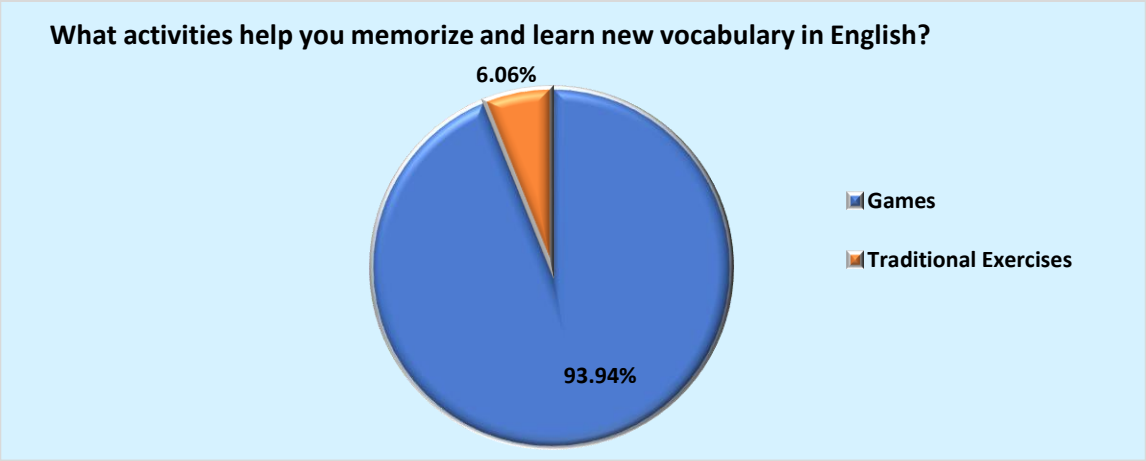


Note. In the perception of 30 students (90.91%), the use of websites such as Kahoot, quizzes, and others is beneficial in the English teaching-learning process. On the contrary, the remaining 3 students (9.09%) do not perceive that the use of websites is necessary to improve the learning process.

4.- What activities help you memorize and learn new vocabulary in English?

Figure 4

What activities help you memorize and learn new vocabulary in English?

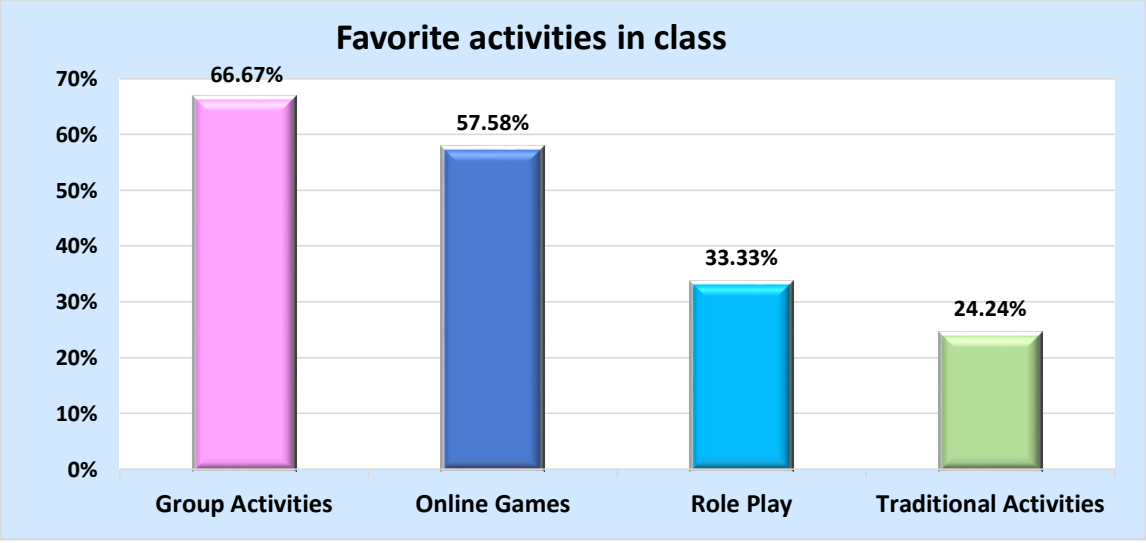


Note. According to the information in Figure 4, 31 students (93.94%) admit that the use of activities with games allows them to learn and memorize vocabulary in the English language in a better way than the traditional exercises based on the development of activities proposed in the didactic guidebook. On the contrary, only 2 students (6.06%) prefer traditional activities over the development of games.

5.- Which are your favorite activities in class?

Figure 5

Which are your favorite activities in class

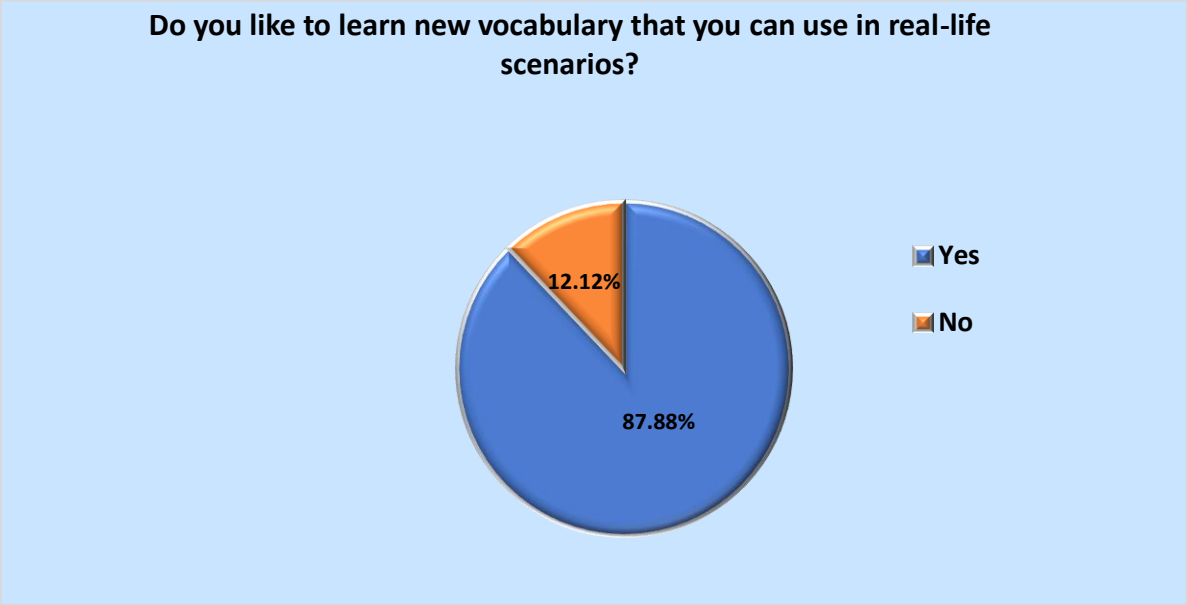


Note. From the list of suggested didactic activities, 22 students (66.67%) indicated that they like to develop group activities, 19 students (57.58%) indicated that they like online games, 11 (33.33%) students admitted that they like role-playing, and 8 (24.24%) students stated that they like traditional activities. According the results, most students prefer to learn by developing group activities and/or online games.

6.- Do you like to learn new vocabulary that you can use in real-life scenarios?

Figure 6

Do you like to learn new vocabulary that you can use in real-life scenarios?

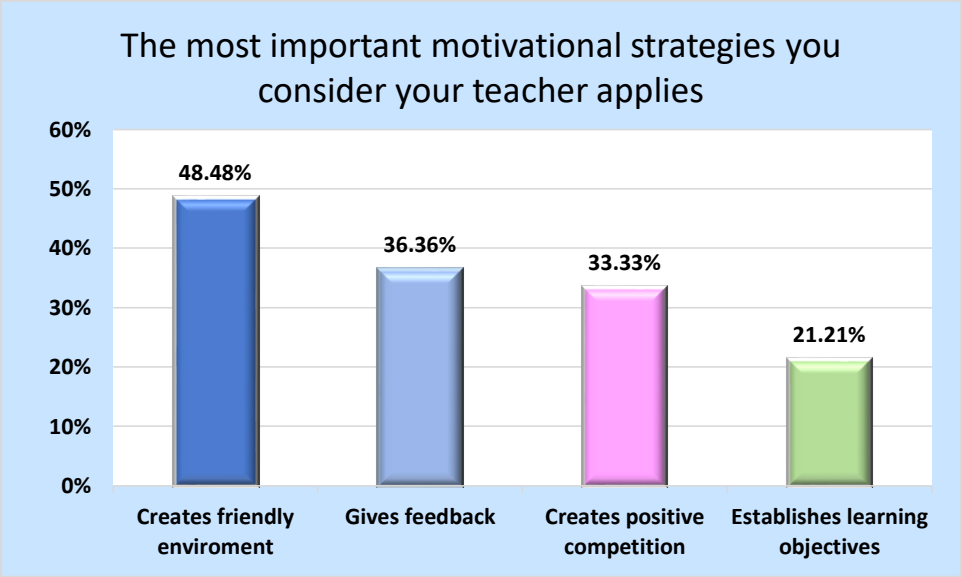


Note. As shown in Figure 6, 29 students (87.88%) prefer to learn new vocabulary in the English language that is used in real everyday life scenarios. In contrast, the remaining 4 students (12.12%) consider that it is better to learn vocabulary used in more formal contexts. Most of them are interested in learning practical and colloquial vocabulary.

7.- Choose the most important motivational strategies you consider your teacher applies in class:

Figure 7

The most important motivational strategies you consider your teacher applies



Note. From the list of motivational strategies that teachers can apply in the teaching-learning process of the English language, 16 students (48.48%) perceive that the ones that generate the most motivation are the creation of friendly environments. In second place, 12 students (36.36%) believe that it is appropriate to give feedback; in third place, 11 students (33.33%) consider that it is suitable to create positive competition; while only 7 students (21.21%) agree that learning objectives should be established.

Based on the results obtained from the application of the survey, it is observed that students are well disposed to the development of classroom activities with the use of games. The reason is that through the use of games, they consider that they can improve the learning process and vocabulary retention, and in general master the English learning skills. Additionally, they stated they liked group activities, so it would be appropriate to implement didactic strategies based on the use of online games that are developed collectively.

Discussion

To support the research's questions: What extent are games effective means to acquire vocabulary in a second language? What type of emotions are involved in the teaching-learning process? Which types of games are addressed to teach vocabulary effectively? The independent and dependent research variables were analyzed by qualitative - quantitative instruments like a survey. It allowed the researchers to analyze the different arguments and perspectives stablished in some papers, books, academic articles, etc. For this reason, it was possible to contrast ideas and arguments from different authors who have a bunch of expertise in the field about the variables of the current research. Consequently, the researchers achieve much expertise in the field of Gaming and Vocabulary acquisition through the bibliographical information analyzed a long of the development of the current research.

According to the survey results, learners have demonstrated their interest about learning English by the use of games in an EFL classroom since their feel motivated during a lesson. Therefore, it is important that learners feel comfortable when carrying out gaming activities. (Wichadee, 2022) states that games help to increase learners' motivation in the classroom since it provides learners the opportunity to carry out a competition to demonstrate the knowledge about the vocabulary they learnt in the EFL classroom. In addition, the class is mainly focused on learners (learner - centered). It also shows that most of the students showed manifest that games are effective tools to help them to memorize the new vocabulary learned. Even they show preference these kind of activities over what we know traditional exercises in class. We should understand as traditional exercises such as filling the blanks, complete the text, write sentences, read the text, etc. Even they prefer to simulate real

situations where they are given the opportunity to practice and apply the new vocabulary learned in the lesson.

Amaya & Bajaña (2020) argue that Gamification is an essential tool to enhance second language learning; nevertheless, it is necessary to look for some enjoyable digital tools to acquire new vocabulary easily. Based on the survey results it was possible to identify that, Kahoot, and Quizzes are some of the favorite games for EFL learners since they are easy to use and learners find them interesting and funny. Moreover, these kinds of games help learners to memorize vocabulary than in traditional activities. Traditional activities sometimes become boring for learners since they do not feel comfortable memorizing trough repetition. Young EFL learners need to be active in the classroom because when they are exposed to traditional activities they become bored and they do not feel interested about learning something new for them.

On the other hand, it is mandatory to consider that, Second Language Learning requires the creation of real scenarios in the classroom in order to reinforce learners' knowledge; besides, it allows them to be exposed to activities that help them to use the language they learn in the classroom to solve problems of the real life (Afrin, 2014). It means that, learners' need to learn useful and communicative language for their lives; regarding to vocabulary, they have to acquire words or expressions that help to communicate effectively in a real conversation. In other words, it is advisable to avoid teaching mechanical or traditional, and obsolete conversation to young EFL learners.

Creating a friendly and enjoyable teaching - learning environment has a great impact on learners' understanding because students feel more comfortable and engaged to learn another language when teachers apply interesting activities to teach vocabulary in the EFL

classroom (Li & Dewaele, 2021). For this reason, the kind of strategies that the teacher applies in the class has a bunch of influence on learners' motivation. Based on the survey results, learners expressed that the strategies used by the teacher allows them to create a friendly environment since they have more opportunity to practice and communicate with their classmates and teacher without difficulties.

Abrams & Walsh (2018) argue that gamification a useful approach when teaching vocabulary. Gamification provides teachers a bunch of tools to facilitate vocabulary teaching because there are different digital tools used to encourage learners to learn a second language. Acquiring vocabulary could become difficult for learners since they have to memorize lots of words by repetition and memorization; nevertheless, learners sometimes memorize vocabulary for short term. Therefore, it is necessary to apply meaningful activities that allows learners to acquire vocabulary for long term. Games helps to learn and memorize vocabulary easily trough funny and enjoyable activities for EFL learners.

Conclusions

The research was a qualitative quantitative research in order to accomplish the research's objective of analyzing how interplay of Competitive Gaming scenarios motivate learners to acquire new vocabulary. Consequently, it was necessary to apply a survey as the main instrument to collect real and meaningful data. The survey was applied at "San Felipe Neri" school in Riobamba. After applying the survey, the researchers could find and identify the relation that gamification and vocabulary acquisition have when learning a second language.

Second Language Learning demands the use of technological tools to facilitate the teaching and learning process since it provides to teachers and learners different digital tools that can be used in benefit of language skills development. Gamification is one of the digital tools that are used by teachers to teach a second language. Gamification is used by EFL teachers to carry out activities that encourage learners to acquire new and useful vocabulary. However, it is important to take into consideration that, the success of gamification would be based on the kind of games that teachers choose to teach vocabulary; for example, it is necessary to choose games based on learners' level, interest, topic, age, etc.

On the other hand, acquiring vocabulary demands that learners memorize bunch of words that they will use in when producing language; for this reason, it is necessary that EFL learners memorize vocabulary through an innovative and meaningful manner because learners will be able to acquire new vocabulary for long term; it means that, they will be able to use the learned vocabulary anytime. Games are helpful to teach vocabulary in an effective and meaningful way by means learners' exposition to real scenarios where competition encourages them to play and learn at the same time.

Motivation as well as gamification plays an essential role when learning vocabulary. Leaners' feel motivated to learn something new when they feel comfortable doing different enjoyable activities in the classroom. Thus, gamification allows teachers to create a friendly environment in the EFL classroom to assure that learners feel motivated to learner a new topic in lesson. Learning vocabulary implies that learners feel comfortable memorizing vocabulary by means of funny and competitive activities in which they can accomplish their learning goals. In addition, when learners are encouraged to learn something, it is easier than when they are obligated to learn without any motivation in the classroom.

Strengths and Limitations

The current research portrays gamification as a good motivator for learning especially to the new generation and young students. Gamification facilitates the memorization of vocabulary since using games in the class becomes more interesting for learners. Consequently, it was possible to identify that the use of games in the EFL classroom has a positive acceptance by teachers and learners because they allow learners and teacher to increase learners' interest about learning new vocabulary in the classroom. Learning a new language may require some degree of motivation to gain collaboration; therefore, games also create an environment where learners can become active characters in the classroom. Learners are exposed to a context in which they can learn and communicate effectively at the same time. For this reason, the institution facilitates every academic process to the researchers so as to carry out the research. In addition, it was easy for researchers to apply the survey since most of the teachers at "San Felipe Neri" use games as part of their teaching methodology to improve second language acquisition.

On the contrary, some of the limitations were the lack of relevant bibliographical resources mainly focused on Gamification approach to acquire vocabulary in the EFL classroom since most of the studies have different focused. Another limitation to carry out the research was that teachers usually consider that games are motivators instead of digital tools in order to acquire vocabulary; for instance, games sometimes are used as kind of warm up" before starting the class. Nevertheless, the researchers seek as much information as possible to justify the effectiveness of games when acquiring vocabulary in an EFL classroom.

Future Research Areas

It is necessary to do more research about the teacher preparation to use games in the classroom and how well the manage gamification in order it be a good means to motivate learners. Applying gamification is only one side of the coin, but how to implement it is the other side that should be analyzed to have a wider vision how gamification could be used more efficiently.

Furthermore, a deeper studio has to be done to understand how gamification could help foreign learners not only to learn and memorize vocabulary, but also to acquire the new language. Overall, acquiring a new language should prevail over the motivation and other strategies.

Bibliography

Abrams, S. S., & Walsh, S. (2018). Gamified Vocabulary: Online Resources and Enriched Language Learning. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *58*(1), 49-58. https://doi.org/10.1002/jaal.315

Afrin, N. (2014). *Developing real life experience through teaching culture in the efl class: Fostering the learning through intercultural awareness.* 7.

Amaya, I., & Bajaña, J. (2020). *The use of gamification to enhance the english as a foreign language El uso de la gamificación para mejorar el inglés como idioma extranjero O uso da gamificação para aprimorar o inglês como língua estrangeira*. *5*(03).

Anderson, J., & Rainie, L. (2012). Gamification and the Internet: Experts Expect Game Layers to Expand in the Future, with Positive and Negative Results. *Games for Health Journal*, *1*(4), 299-302. https://doi.org/10.1089/g4h.2012.0027

Camacho-Sánchez, R., Rillo-Albert, A., & Lavega-Burgués, P. (2022). Gamified Digital Game-Based Learning as a Pedagogical Strategy: Student Academic Performance and Motivation. *Applied Sciences*, *12*(21), 11214. https://doi.org/10.3390/app122111214

Cirocki, A., Soto, S. T., Encalada, M. A. R., & Honore, K. V. (2019). *Motivational Strategies in the Secondary School EFL Classroom: The Case of Ecuador*. *16*, 16.

Clément, R., Gardner, R. C., & Smythe, P. C. (1977). Motivational variables in second language acquisition: A study of Francophones learning English. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science / Revue Canadienne Des Sciences Du Comportement*, *9*(2), 123-133. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0081614

Crookes, G., & Schmidt, R. W. (1991). Motivation: Reopening the Research Agenda. *Language Learning*, *41*(4), 469-512. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1991.tb00690.x

Dehghanzadeh, H., Fardanesh, H., Hatami, J., Talaee, E., & Noroozi, O. (2021). Using gamification to support learning English as a second language: A systematic review. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, *34*(7), 934-957. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2019.1648298

Ferreira, M. J., Moreira, F., Escudero, D. F., & Salle, L. (2015). *GAMIFICATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION: THE LEARNING PERSPECTIVE*. 24.

Flores, J. F. F. (2021). *Using Gamification to Enhance Second Language Learning*.

Gardner, R. C., Lalonde, R. N., & Moorcroft, R. (1985). THE ROLE OF ATTITUDES AND MOTIVATION IN SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING: CORRELATIONAL AND EXPERIMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS. *Language Learning*, *35*(2), 207-227. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1985.tb01025.x

Groh, F. (2016). *Gamification: State of the Art Definition and Utilization*. *4*, 60.

Guilloteaux, M. J., & Dörnyei, Z. (2008). Motivating Language Learners: A Classroom-Oriented Investigation of the Effects of Motivational Strategies on Student Motivation. *TESOL Quarterly*, *42*(1), 55-77. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1545-7249.2008.tb00207.x

Illés, É., & Akcan, S. (2017). Bringing real-life language use into EFL classrooms. *ELT Journal*, *71*(1), 3-12. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccw049

Jordán Buenaño, C. del R., & Villacis Villacis, W. G. (2021). *Gamification strategy and the English learning vocabulary*. https://repositorio.pucesa.edu.ec/bitstream/123456789/3319/1/77474.pdf

Kiryakova, G., Angelova, N., & Yordanova, L. (2017). *GAMIFICATION IN EDUCATION*. 5.

Li, C., & Dewaele, J.-M. (2021). How Classroom Environment and General Grit Predict Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety of Chinese EFL Students. *Journal for the Psychology of Language Learning*, *3*(2), 86-98. https://doi.org/10.52598/jpll/3/2/6

Sugita McEown, M., & Takeuchi, O. (2014). Motivational strategies in EFL classrooms: How do teachers impact students' motivation? *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, *8*(1), 20-38. https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2012.741133

Wichadee, S. (2022). *Enhancement of performance and motivation through application of digital games in an English Class*.

Tyler, M. D. (2019). PAM-L2 and phonological category acquisition in the foreign language classroom. sl: sn, 607-630.

VanPatten, B., Keating, G. D., & Wulff, S. (Eds.). (2020). Theories in second language acquisition: An introduction. Routledge.