# The Integration of Gamification to English Learning Activities

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## ABSTRACT

This study explored the effectiveness of integrating gamified learning activities in English subject using the gamified learning platforms Kahoot, Wordwall, and Quizizz. The study used a quasi-experimental design where 16 Grade 9 students of Panaosawon Integrated School were purposively selected and distributed into experimental and control groups. The experimental group was exposed to the gamification method, while the control group was taught using the conventional way. Furthermore, a qualitative research design was employed through an interview and focused group discussion with the respondents in the experimental group to note the learners' views on the use of gamification. The pretests and posttests mean scores and T-test results revealed statistically a considerable difference in achievement of the experimental group over the controlled group, thus, favoring the experimental group. The data from student interviews and focused group discussion revealed that despite the challenges experienced by the respondents, such as technological issues, distracted learning focus, and less interaction between classmates and teacher, the students' perception of integrating gamification as a teaching method was fun, enjoyable, innovative and accessible, and it helped them develop their ICT skills and academic performance towards the English subject. Moreover, pedagogical insights and implications are provided for English teachers and researchers in light of these findings.

**Keywords:** gamification, distance learning, learning device, conventional method

## INTRODUCTION

In the continuous quest for education in the Industrial Era 4.0, integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in teaching pedagogy has been the first consideration and necessity. Schindler et al., (2017) recommended using technology to provide authentic and integrated learning experiences. In many studies, instructors used digital games to simulate authentic environments in which students could apply new knowledge and skills, which ultimately led to a greater understanding of content and evidence of higher-order thinking. One of the digital e-learning platforms that has been proven effective is gamification. With this, this study explores the effect of gamified learning activities on student performance in English.

Incorporating game elements in the learning environment, known as gamification, is a new field of study that re-engages students in learning (Malahito & Quimbo, 2020). According to Bicen and Kocakoyun (2018), gamification helps children to develop cognitive skills, such as thinking and problem-solving, increases creativity, and helps children to improve themselves in the topics in which they are deficient; moreover, combining a gamification approach with blended learning method helped students to understand the lesson better. Applying gamification in the learning environment pointed to its beneficial effects in enhancing students' engagement in learning. Putra and Priyatmojo (2021) pointed out that gamification was effective and fun to bring in classroom learning. The method allows students to engage more in-class activities and reduces boredom because it creates a learning atmosphere and increases learning motivation. This was also proven by Daud (2017) in their study when they revealed that gamification does not only add incentive to learning activities but also helps students understand more about the lesson that paved the way to the mastery of the concept. Moreover, students nowadays can learn even outside the four corners of the classroom.

In connection, Hinampas et al., (2018) stressed that in a developing nation like the Philippines, the role of ICT in language teaching is deemed vital. Still, the scarcity of ICT resources, such as the limited number of computers and the unavailability of Internet services, hinder the effective integration of ICT in language pedagogy. In addition, it was also found that teachers have limited know-how about ICT use. Lakson as cited by Sagcal (2018) disclosed that when it comes to the applicability of technology in the classroom, there is an existing "technology gap" in the Philippines. Similarly, Conoza (2021) noted that the COVID-19 pandemic had increased the use of and preference for digital tools; several, related issues cannot be overlooked. Among them is the digital divide, which simply indicates the lack of equity in access to digital devices such as the Internet and digital-enabled services. Even so, looking into the Philippines' setting, there is limited study and research on the use of gamification in teaching English. Moreover, despite the number of studies and research that claimed the potential benefits of gamification as a teaching tool in education, its integration into the lesson was not always applied.

It is, therefore, what encouraged the researcher to survey the effectiveness of gamification as integrated in English teaching and the potential of this kind of teaching method in the new normal setting. The study is deemed beneficial because it will investigate the viability and practicality of gamification as a teaching tool and strategy for engaging learners in distance learning. The study will also attempt to capture the learners' achievement towards the three gamification platforms (Kahoot, Wordwall, and Quizizz) and the possible advantages and challenges of these e-learning platforms in education. Furthermore, significant findings and weaknesses of this study will thereby be accounted for properly.

**Theoretical Framework**

The study is primarily anchored on Landers' Gamified Learning Framework. Landers et al., (2017) suggest that while serious games involve applying all the elements of games, gamification proposes the identification and use of only the required game elements to an existing instruction. In the theory of gamified learning, gamification is defined as the use of game attributes outside the context of a game to affect learning-related behaviors or attitudes. These behaviors/attitudes, in turn, influence learning by one or two processes: by strengthening the relationship between instructional design quality and outcomes (a moderating process) and, or by influencing learning directly (a mediating process). This is contrasted with a serious games approach in which manipulation of game attributes is typically intended to affect learning without this type of behavioral mediator/moderator.

The theory of Gamified Learning is based on five propositions. The first proposition suggests that the instructional content would directly impact the learning that is happening. The second proposition proposes that understanding is influenced by the learner's attitudes and behavior. It was found that levels of engagement could predict the teaching that would result from the intervention; thus, it supports the second proposition. The third proposition of the theory suggests that game elements are likely to influence attitudes and behaviors. The fourth and fifth propositions are the critical relationships to the model. The fourth indicates that game elements moderate the relationship between the instructional material and learning outcomes through their influence on learners' attitudes and behaviors. However, the moderating effect would not independently influence the product, but would only strengthen or weaken the initial relationship. Thus, the quality of the original material would still determine the strength of the relationship. The last proposition looks at the role of the game elements in directly influencing the dependent variable of learning (Nair & Mathew, 2019).

The study is also anchored on Buckley and Anderson's General Learning Model (GLM). Sarmet and Pilati (2016) noted that the GLM provides a means for describing the learning process experienced by learners in the game world. The learning cycle experienced by the game player (or learner in the context of games-based learning) begins with the understanding of the environmental cues presented. Game players then act according to the selected goal and evaluate the appropriateness of the action taken about the chosen goal. Games-based learning also integrates some of the practical and desirable learning approaches used in current practice. These learning approaches include active learning (the use of exciting activities to engage and maintain a learner's focus by encouraging participation during the lesson), experiential learning (emphasizes the importance of experience in the process of learning), and situated learning (learners to be placed in a natural, social and, or

physical environment that enables learners to experientially learn skills and knowledge of a profession through social and collaborative interaction).

As language teaching contains a set of instructional materials, materials developers should determine the phases of producing or developing the materials. Thus, in this study, the researcher also referred to another instructional theory -ADDIE. According to Maddison and Kumaran, as cited by Zhang (2020), ADDIE is a flexible instructional model that was developed and designed by the Centre for Educational Technology. It has five (5) phases called Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation. These five phases are interrelated and mutually promoted: analysis and design are the premise and basis of teaching; development and implementation are the core of teaching; evaluation is the firm guarantee of the full teaching mode. Every phase, moreover, can enter the evaluation phase at any time.

Moreover, Peterson, as cited by Iswati (2019), proclaimed that adopting the ADDIE model in a course is beneficial as it is more learner-centered rather than teacher-centered. From the beginning of its stages (analysis and design), learners who will take the course are highly considered. In the development phase, it is also based on learners' needs. Besides, in its implementation and evaluation, learners are highly involved. Further, the model can be applied in various teaching contexts which employ instructional design.

**Conceptual Framework**

This study claims that incorporating game elements in the teaching of English, especially educational technology-based games, may affect students' achievement in learning English. This is based on the assertion that language learning is more engaging and effective for learners when technologies are integrated with the lesson. They were noting that the learners of today's generation are mostly active and influenced by using different technological and digital tools.

In this study, the gamification method is used as an e-learning strategy in virtual learning sessions to actively engage the learners even in the conform of their homes. Mainly, the gamification platforms that will be utilized are Kahoot, Wordwall, and Quizizz. These game-based learning platforms are used as educational technology in schools and other educational institutions that make use of game-like quizzes and build presentations with embedded quizzes. This was initiated by the researcher to help learners build fun and facilitate learning even in virtual sessions due to restrictions of implementing face-to-face classes during this pandemic. In addition, the Messenger application will also be utilized for the dissemination of information and lessons.

The paradigm of the study, as shown in Figure 1, has two processes, as represented by the boxes, which show the progression of the chronological steps in the workflow. The Gamification method is used by the researcher for the experimental group, while the conventional approach is employed for the control group. This is designed to assess students' achievement using the learning tool. According to Iaremenko (2017), gamified learning brings a positive impact to motivate students to learn the English language. She further suggested that teachers need to accept the fact that gamification could also become one of the critical technological tools to teach students in the language classroom because it does not only help increase students' motivation but also their participation in the learning process. On the other hand, the conventional method or traditional approach, often referred to as the "chalk and talk" method, involves direct instruction by the teacher whose primary role is to pass knowledge to students and conduct testing and assessment. Moreover, for many practitioners condemn direct instruction many obvious reasons and for the prospect of non-traditional strategies such as active, collaborative, and problem-based learning (Abah, 2020).

The variables, such as the advantages and challenges, were taken into consideration to gain an in-depth understanding of the study. This is to obtain data from the selected group on the effectiveness of the method from the viewpoint of the participants of the research. It is essential to study the advantages and challenges of using gamification as a teaching tool to note issues and problems that might be used in redeveloping and improving the method. Villamon (2020) claimed that every learning and teaching methodology has its pros and cons. As always, one needs to measure requirements against existing options. Also, the successful usage of e-learning systems relies on understanding the adoption factors as well as the main challenges that face the current e-learning systems (Almaiah, 2020).

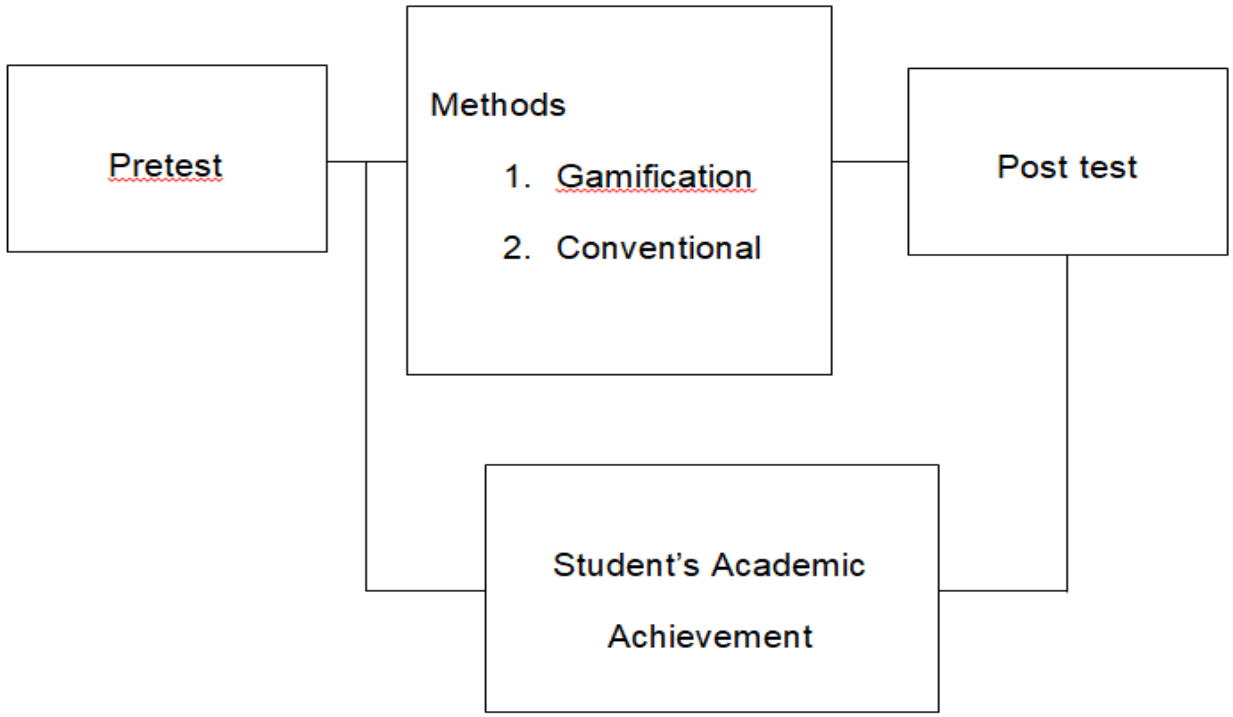


Figure 1. Schematic Diagram of the Study

**Statement of the Problem**

This study aims to assess the effectiveness of gamification as employed in teaching English. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of achievement of the learners before and after the use of gamification and conventional methods of teaching?

2. Is there a significant difference between the level of achievement of the learners before and after the use of gamification and conventional methods of teaching?

3. What are the advantages and challenges of using gamification (Kahoot, Wordwall, and Quizizz) in the delivery of the lesson?

**Hypothesis**

The hypothesis is subjected to statistical tests at a .05 level of significance:

Ho1: There is no significant difference between the level of achievement of the learners before and after the use of gamification and conventional methods of teaching.

**Scope and Limitation of the Study**

To carry out the study, the researcher employed both synchronous and asynchronous instruction. The synchronous meetings were done twice a week, and every session had an hour of engagement. On the other hand, offline activities were given to the learners for independent and reinforcement activities. Also, the study used the gamified learning platforms: Kahoot, Wordwall, and Quizizz as tools in assessing the effectiveness of the approach in the teaching of English, particularly, the learners' performance towards the subject. The study is purposely conducted to determine the learners' achievement using gamification as a teaching tool. Considering this, every new lesson is embedded with a gamification approach. The researcher is also gearing to identify the advantages and challenges of integrating game-based learning in the delivery of the lesson. The study was implemented among the Grade 9 students of Panaosawon Integrated School for the Third and Fourth

Quarters of the School Year 2021-2022. The competencies covered in the study are the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) for Grade 9 English for the Third and Fourth Quarters.

Moreover, the inclusion of literary works in the study was carefully planned, as these pieces must relate to the competencies discussed. In the Third Quarter, the speech, *I Have a Dream* by Martin Luther King was used to identify biases found in the text and to identify the relevance and the truthfulness of the ideas presented in the text, the short story, *Thank You, Ma'am,* by Langston Hughes was used as a springboard. In the Fourth Quarter, to help the students determine the relevance and worth of ideas, soundness, and effectiveness of the author's reasoning, the poem *The Telephone* by Edward Field was employed. On the other hand, the play *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare was picked for the students to lay value judgment on critical issues that demand sound analysis and call for prompt actions (see Appendix A). These literary pieces were employed to align with the content standards of demonstrating an understanding of Anglo-American literature.

**Significance of the Study**

The study is deemed beneficial to the following academic community constituents:

**Students.** The findings of this study may help the learners be aware of how technology and digital applications impact their performance in the teaching and learning process. It is timely especially since these learners are the prime movers of the next digital era to sprout soon. The findings of this study may also extend to the community of learners who are not yet into the use and integration of technology in teaching pedagogy. Moreover, the study, when proven effective, can be an avenue for learners to enhance their academic achievement and development.

**Teachers.** As facilitators in the teaching and learning process, the study may help educators design and redesign teaching strategies that will boost learners' performance and interests. With the results on learners' views and attitudes towards gamification, teachers might also adopt and use the design in the delivery of the lesson and in addressing the inclination of learners to digitized materials. Furthermore, teachers can also benchmark possible actions to the advantages and challenges stipulated in the study.

**Instructional Material Developers**. As instructional materials aid in the delivery of the lesson, the outcomes of the study may also become the basis of Instructional material designers in assimilating technology in education. The results and findings here can help them develop and redesign standard and quality-assured digitized materials to address the diversifying needs of learners in the digital era.

**School Administrators and Curriculum Implementers**. As responsible persons in providing instructional leadership and developing and evaluating schools' systems and programs, the study, if proven effective, might advise them to investigate and consider the use of gamification and its impact on the instructional process. As the curriculum is speeding up toward digitalization, may this study become a revelation, especially to those who are passive and uncertain of the effects of technology on learning.

**Future Researchers.** To future researchers, who might refer this study in discussing similar content, this paper is an open source. The researcher is open to expanding and contributing more information about the study and exploring beyond its limitations.

**Definition of Terms**

To help readers have a clearer understanding of the study, the following terms are defined:

**E-learning**. It is a learning system conducted via electronic media, typically online. The purpose of e-learning is to allow people to learn for personal accomplishment or to earn a professional degree without physically attending a traditional or academic setting.

**Gamification**. It is the use of game-design elements in non-game contexts, like a website, online community, learning management system, or business intranet to encourage participation. The goal of gamification is to engage with consumers, employees, and partners to inspire, collaborate, share, and interact.

**Industrial 4.0**. It refers to a new phase in the Industrial Revolution that focuses heavily on interconnectivity, automation, machine learning, and real-time data. The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) is rooted in integrating networked technologies to facilitate automation, with the onset of artificial intelligence (AI) and the Internet of Things being used in our everyday lives. The application of such automation is also found in the education sector.

**Kahoot**. It is a game-based learning platform used as educational technology in schools and other educational institutions. Its learning games, Kahoots, are user-generated multiple-choice quizzes accessed via a web browser or the Kahoot app. Also, it is a game-based learning platform used to review students' knowledge for formative assessment or as a break from traditional classroom activities. It is among the most popular game-based learning platforms, with 70 million monthly active unique users.

**Learning Activity Sheets (LAS).** These are self-directed instructional materials that guide the learners in accomplishing activities at their own pace and time using the contextualized resources in the community. This will also assist the learners in acquiring lifelong learning skills, knowledge, and attitudes for productivity and employment.

**Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs)**. It is the simplified curriculum formulated by the Department of Education (DepEd). These contain the competencies to be covered for the private and public elementary and secondary schools in the Philippines the meantime that no face-to-face and congested curriculum is implemented.

**Online Learning**. It is a learning system that is done online. This means someone (usually a teacher or instructor) creates learning content and then shares it with a group of students that can access it using a device connected to the Internet. Exams are applied online, too using an online exam software. Content can be accessed anytime and anywhere.

**Quizizz**. It is an online assessment tool that allows teachers to conduct student-paced formative assessments in a fun and engaging way for students. The quiz can be presented live as a timed competition or used for homework with a specific deadline.

**Wordwall.** It is a free online tool used for creating learning activities. Using the platform, teachers can easily create activities for their classes. It includes quizzes, match-ups, word games, and more.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

The chapter reviews the related literature and studies that have a bearing on the present study. This contains information like findings, conclusions, and research recommendations that will support the study's findings. Information can be foreign or local and is retrieved from books, journals, research, theses, dissertations, and the Internet.

### Related Literature

### Foreign

With the advent of the use of technology in education, researchers and educators have been dealing with its impact on increasing students' motivation and academic performance. One of the methods used nowadays in education is integrating game-based learning or gamification in the teaching and learning process. Caponetto, as cited by Dichev and Dicheva (2017), defined gamification in education as the introduction of game design elements and gameful experiences to design learning processes. It has been adopted to support learning in a variety of contexts and subject areas and to address related attitudes, activities, and behaviors, such as participatory approaches, collaboration, self-guided study, completion of assignments, making assessments more accessible and more effective, integration of exploratory approaches to learning, and strengthening student creativity and retention.

In addition, the gamification theory in education posits that learners learn best when having fun. Gamification in learning involves using game-based elements such as point scoring, peer competition, teamwork, and score tables to drive engagement, help students assimilate new information, and test their knowledge (True Education Partnerships, 2020). Furthermore, gamification works best because it triggers learners' emotions, such as excitement and accomplishment, which is why educational and e-learning settings use it.

In a report by Sanders (2015), 97% of teachers use digital games created specifically for educational use, and 18% use games for education daily. In addition, nearly 80% of learners said they would be more productive if their learning were more game-like. This notion was also supported by Intuition Publishing (2021) that the effectiveness of gamification is well-represented in the field of education. Studies involving varied subject groups, from young children to older professionals, have often yielded positive results. 80% of US workers find game-based learning a more engaging form of education. In comparison, the introduction of this method was also found to have a positive impact, as reported by companies who found using games as part of their learning strategy to increase employee engagement by 60% and productivity by 50%.

In recent years, several innovations have emerged in the field of education. In an age disrupted by COVID-19, the development of gamified teaching strategies can be seen as a promising option to provide knowledge and enhance students' collaboration during social distancing. Thus, although traditional scholarly academic curricula are content-focused and ignore personal development, some gamification literature suggests that collaborative activities can stimulate motivation and enhance learning. In most cases, the gamified strategy was well-received by learners, and considered effective, educational, engaging, and sometimes fun (Escamez and Tapia 2021).

Gamification has been shown to make education more exciting and engaging. It helps students to become more motivated towards learning because of the positive feedback they get from the game, which then stimulates them to learn. However, when a course or even an activity is gamified, a clear goal must be set. If a match is well-planned, it can increase students' motivation, engagement, and cognitive development. Moreover, it could improve students' attitudes toward language learning, and the appropriate use of gamification can enhance learning (Lui, 2012). Also, gamification has not only proven an effective teaching method in language classes but also in other fields and disciplines where increases in motivation, collaboration, and engagement were noted.

With the teacher's guidance in a learning engagement session, gamification as a teaching strategy will not only hook the learner's interest in the lesson but also enhance collaboration and the learning experience. Resilient Educator (2020) cited five significant benefits of using gamification in the classroom learning environment, namely: (1) boosts enthusiasm towards learning; (2) lessens disruptive behavior; (3) increases cognitive growth; (4) mature make-believe encourages growth and development; (5) game-centric learning improves attention span.

The concept of gamification is to insert game elements into teaching, where students learn straight from the game. This technique is believed to increase students' motivation and engagement in the lesson. Platforms like Kahoot, Duolingo, and Quizizz are commonly used for gamification. What distinguishes gamification, most particularly from traditional approaches, is the explicit use of competition as a motivational tool. Moreover, the gamification of learning has also facilitated students develop problem-solving and higher-order thinking skills (Putra and Priyatmojo, 2021).

In this time of the pandemic, where no face-to-face learning is allowed, schools opted to implement blended learning modalities. Using gamification as a teaching strategy, especially in online sessions, can bring back the learner's attention and motivation to learn. Park and Kim (2021) claimed that gamification in online learning has a positive impact on learner motivation and the understanding of the pedagogical content. Online gamified learning content offers new learning experiences for learners through game mechanisms and rules. This unique learning experience improves learners' motivation and attitude toward participation and lessens their academic stress.

**Local**

According to Diwa Learning Systems Inc. (DLSI) Vice President for e-Learning, Ana Paula Alipit, gamification "turns routine, mundane tasks into refreshing, motivating experiences." As far as game-based learning (GBL) is concerned, educational games (edugames) are explicitly designed to become tools in the teacher's arsenal. Defined learning outcomes or goals are part of the game design, and we make sure that students explore the relevant aspect of games in a learning context (Carpio, 2015). In addition, Nucum (2019) explained that gamification uses various gaming elements to enrich non-gaming experiences. It aims to boost engagement, participation, and loyalty among the users. Some gamification features include points, leaderboards, badges or achievements, playlists, and many more.

The PLDT Enterprise, the arm of the largest integrated telecommunications company in the Philippines, stressed the need to adopt creative education technologies to better promote student engagement in e-Learning. Dick Perez, PLDT Enterprise Assistant Vice President, and Corporate Relationship Management Head for Academe & FMCG, discussed that in e-Learning, learners are just drenched in knowledge through viewing or reading content. The competition in the education industry now lies in schools having the more exciting and engaging digital platform. Gamification must be incorporated into e-Learning because students need to have fun. The students are modern learners. They are busy people who are annoyed and stressed from information overload (Astig.ph, 2021).

Similarly, Asst. Prof Gian Carlo de Jesus defined gamification as converting an ordinary event into a game using game design and the principle of game elements. He further described gamification as more than a method rather than being all about badgers, achieving levels, or points. Gamification is a mindset where he emphasized three important things: (1) It elicits empathy; (2) It is applied to learning; and (3) It has a social aspect (University of the Philippines Open University, 2021).

Lopez (2018) asserted that the digital age (the information age) is how most people describe the present era. The term is quite fitting given how information—thanks to the ubiquitous use of technology—has never been more accessible today than in any other period in history. Numerous advancements and the widespread use of the Internet since the end of the 20th century have genuinely changed how humans live, including their way of acquiring and sharing information. In the academic setting, new tools and techniques are available to facilitate enhanced learning experiences. Tablets and smartphones are commonplace, all of which have access to the Internet. These gadgets, in turn, can host applications and software (e.g., Google Classroom, Quizlet, Socrative, and Kahoot) that allow for better classroom management, student interaction, and class presentations, through features like voice recording, uploading of lesson plans, class scheduling, digital grade books, and tracking of student progress. Some schools use these gadgets as part of their modern approach to education, while others let teachers decide if these tools will be utilized. Their growing popularity is a testament to the benefits they offer to students and educators, and even to parents and guardians, in the case of some applications.

**Related Studies**

**Foreign**

Studies associated with gamification have found that a game-based learning strategy increased learners' interest and motivation and was effective and fun in classroom learning. Azar and Tan (2020) claimed that a series of recent studies have indicated that the use of gamification in second language learning has brought a significant benefit not only in terms of enhancing the students' language learning process but also in terms of motivation as well. "Gamification can give more exposure towards learning to students as it adds fun educational learning." This finding ran parallel with the study of Iaremenko (2017), where she asserted, "the application of game elements into education makes it more relaxed, fun and comfortable for the students to learn." Moreover, the author suggested that teachers need to accept the fact that gamification could also become one of the critical technological tools to teach students in the language classroom because not only it helps increase students' motivation but also their participation in the learning process.

In the study of Putra and Priyatmojo (2021), it was found that most students' perceptions of gamification used in English classes were positive. The students believed gamification was practical and fun to bring to classroom learning. The teaching strategy allowed students to engage more in-class activities, reduced boredom because it created a learning atmosphere, and amplified learning motivation without disturbing the understanding of the material obtained by students. Furthermore, the researchers concluded that gamification is suitable to be applied in English classrooms and achieves the objective of gamification, which is to increase student motivation in learning the English language. They also recommended that teachers be more aware of gamification by advancing their ICT skills so that they can more freely adopt advantageous methods, especially gamification.

One of the most commonly used and studied gamification platforms is Kahoot, which is a non-game-based learning platform that has been utilized in educational settings. As cited by Nikmah (2020), Kahoot! was founded in 2012 by Morten Versvik, Johan Brand, and Jamie Brooker, who, in a joint project with the Norwegian University of Technology and Science, teamed up with Professor Alf Inge Wang, and were later joined by Norwegian entrepreneur Åsmund Furuseth. The platform makes students understand more about the context of the study that is difficult to understand.

Nikmah (2020) added that Kahoot, as a great alternative to the learning process, the use of the Kahoot can improve students' interest in learning development. It aims to encourage learners to be interested in the material being taught. Furthermore, studies have concluded that the Kahoot application had a substantial impact on students' engagement and made students more enjoy and satisfied with their results. The implementation of Kahoot made students more motivated in the learning process.

In another study, Bicen and Kocakoyun (2017) examined the general perspectives of students about gamification and its effectiveness in teaching pedagogy. Students' perceptions of gamification were surveyed to analyze the best application of the method, the environment essential for its use, and how the application should continue. The effect of the gamification approach on student achievement through intra-class competition was evaluated using quantitative and qualitative methods. The findings of the study showed that the insertion of a gamification method improved the interest of students in the class, and increased student ambitions for success. This method was also found to have a positive impression on student motivation. Furthermore, the results of this study specify that the Kahoot application can be used effectively for the gamification of lessons. Learners could see their achievement status through gamification and enhanced themselves in the topics in which they were deficient; moreover, combining a gamification approach with a blended learning method assisted students in understanding the lesson better.

In a similar study, Daud (2017) analyzed the effectiveness of using the Students Response System, namely Kahoot, to activate students' motivation and engagement in learning English as a Second Language (ESL), where a survey method was used. It revealed that more than half of the students were very interested in developing competence which indicated that the platform helped them understand more about the lesson. Most of those who evaluated the game got a positive feeling; that, 80% of students. Moreover, the high level of this type of learning recommendation suggests as well that an innovative approach by using technology in education is better than common chalk-and-talk traditional teaching and the subsequent practice involving numerous and monotonous exercises, such as filling the gaps, completing sentences with appropriate verb forms, matching forms, or choosing the correct option in multiple choice exercises.

In another study conducted by Glowacki et al., (2018), to identify students' attitudes toward using Kahoot technology, the researchers found that the skills formation of the experimental group increased notably compared with the students of the control group. Only one (5%) student in the experimental group displayed a low level of achievement, while in the control group, there were six (29%) such learners. In the experimental group, if compared with the control group, a more substantial number of students had sufficient levels of formation of the relevant skills (16 (73%) vs. 13 (57%), respectively). It is revealed that a high level after the completion of the experiment was attained by five (23%) students of the experimental group and only two (10%) students of the control group. Thus, the experiment results presented a better dynamic of the relevant lexical and grammatical skills progress in the experimental group than in the control group, which shows the efficiency and feasibility of using the Kahoot platform in teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP).

In addition, the use of one of the gamification technologies Kahoot platform, in teaching ESP to technical university students, according to the results of the experimental study, showed its usefulness and expediency, as students established not only a higher level of achievement but also more active engagement and deeper motivation for learning the language (Glowacki et al., 2018). Thus, using Kahoot as a gamification platform not only activates the students' interest, engagement, and motivation to learn but also helps the students in mastering the concepts of the lesson. Moreover, the gamification platform may work as a springboard to develop the learners' critical thinking and creativity.

**Local**

In this era of digital media, teachers are competing against technological advancements to gain students' engagement and attention. Incorporating game elements in the learning environment, gamification, is a new field of study that re-engages students in learning. Applying gamification in the learning environment pointed to its beneficial effects in enhancing students' engagement in education (Malahito & Quimbo, 2020).

In the study of Cruz and Roleda (2018), the researchers noted that the traditional method used by teachers in teaching is not sufficient enough to encourage students to learn the subject and to make it enjoyable for students to study. As students are now considered digital natives and are more exposed to video games, the use of gamification is being considered by many for its potential to motivate students. In addition, students are encouraged to learn the subject because they enjoy the fun atmosphere brought about by the elements of games.

Catindig and Prudente (2019) discussed in the findings of their study that there is a significant variance in students' performance in terms of their summative test grades. Group A, who used Kahoot, got a notably higher summative test grade than Group B. In terms of student's perception of the use of Kahoot as a modification tool in studying waves, results showed that most students: 1) had fun during the game; 2) agreed that they learned somewhat from the game; 3) said that they will commend the game; and 4) felt positive after the game. Results also exposed that the student's performance in the summative test is primarily connected with their perception of learning and feeling.

In another study by Samortin (2020), the researcher pointed out that Gamified Learning Activities (GLA) are more efficient than the traditional approach in introducing new words according to the results. The students in the experimental group appreciated the vocabulary learning activities with creative practices, while the control group engrossed themselves separately in learning new vocabulary.

Game-based learning, as proven by further research, improves the learning experiences of the student inside the classroom. This kind of approach provides social, emotional, and cognitive development for the students. The use of Augmented Reality based games, on the other hand, has been proven to offer a partial solution to the declining rate of student motivation and engagement in different learning areas in the Education Sector. The integration of new methods in teaching, like gamification and game based-learning approaches, can help students to have higher grades in different subjects (Godoy, 2021).

**Synthesis**

Gamification, as used as a teaching strategy in education, has proven to impact student's motivation, engagement, and learning interest. It was also noted that the platform could help increase students' understanding and achievement of the lesson. The approach has been utilized to create a fun learning environment not only in the classroom but also in online learning platforms. This is due to the demand of the learners of today's generation, where the integration of technology in education has positively influenced the students' development in emotional, social, and cognitive aspects. This suggests that gamification can be an alternative learning environment to that of the traditional learning setting.

One of the most commonly used gamification platforms is Kahoot, where researchers have found out that the e-learning platform is a helpful and effective tool to be incorporated into the lesson. It was revealed that the method was beneficial to the learners as to the following features: (1) increased motivation and interest; (2)

learner-centered; (3) technology-based; (4) provided collaborative and active learning opportunities; and (5) increased understanding of the concepts.

Moreover, the integration of gamification in the lesson meets the standards of 21st-century skills – technology skills and digital literacy. As revealed in some studies, using technology in teaching influences students' achievement and more prosperous and rewarding learning experiences in a fun way. However, despite the number of studies and research that appealed to the potential benefits of gamification as a teaching tool in education, its incorporation into the lesson was not always applied. The researcher has also noted nominal studies on using gamification and e-learning tools nearby. Thus, this study aims to establish the effectiveness of gamification in teaching English compared to the typical online session in today's distance learning. Furthermore, the study also wishes to evaluate learners' achievement using gamification and the possible advantages and challenges of the method in the teaching and learning.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the discussions on how the study is conducted. Mainly, this part talks about the research design, research locale, study participants, research instrument, data gathering procedure, and the data treatment.

### Research Design

The study used a quasi-experimental research design employing a pretest-posttest design and qualitative design. Cook and Campbell, as cited by Villamon (2020), said that quasi-experimental research resembles experimental research but is not entirely experimental research. Although the independent variable is manipulated, the participants are not randomly assigned to conditions or orders of conditions. Thus, this study used manipulation to assess the effectiveness of gamification as a tool in teaching English.

The participants of the study were purposively chosen, particularly those learners who have 80% and above grades in English and General Average for the first quarter and are divided into experimental and controlled groups. Both groups had online sessions twice a week using Google Meet. The only difference is that the use of games was employed for the experimental group. The participants were studied before and after the experimental manipulation using the pretest and posttest design. The researcher organized a pretest in both groups before the experimental manipulation. Afterward, the researcher applied the game-based learning method to the experimental group. Furthermore, both groups were tested to note significant changes in the academic performance of the learners.

Moreover, the researcher applied the qualitative design to note the perceived advantages and challenges of using gamification in teaching English.

### Research Locale

The study was conducted at Panaosawon Integrated School, a newly converted integrated school in the district of Bayabas. It is a public non-sectarian school offering Elementary and Junior High School programs and is a Department of Education (DepEd) accredited school. It is around 15 kilometers from the District Office (Bayabas Central Elementary School) and is situated in Barangay Panaosawon, Bayabas, Surigao del Sur. This School Year 2021-2022, the school has an accumulated enrolment of 413 learners, consisting of 285 and 128 learners for Elementary and Junior High School levels, respectively. The school has 7 units of computers, 27 units of tablets, and 7 units of flat-screen LED television that can be utilized for teaching and learning sessions. In addition, the school has two WIFI set-ups that are available in the School Head's Office and Junior High School Building.

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Figure 2. Spot Map of the Study's Setting

**Research Subject**

The participants of this study were the Grade 9 learners of Panaosawon Integrated School enrolled in the School Year 2021-2022. The school has only one section for Grade 9 and has a population of 25 learners. With this, a classroom-based research paradigm was employed, considering the number of participants. The study used a purposive sampling procedure; thus, not all enrollees became participants.

This study used a purposive sampling technique because the participants were chosen according to their academic performance, specifically those learners whose grades are 80% and above in English and General Average for the first quarter. To observe ethics in gathering the participants' data, such as their personal information and academic performance, the participants were coded. Also, the participants must have the capability to participate in online sessions and that they must have downloaded applications to be used. The criteria were set to achieve a comparable result for both the experimental and controlled groups and gain an analysis of the advantages and challenges of gamification. Inclusion and exclusion criteria define who can be included or excluded from the study sample. The inclusion criteria identify the study population in a consistent, reliable, uniform, and objective manner (Garg, 2016).

Also, the purposive sampling procedure was utilized since the study aimed to identify certain features stated in the research questions that is specific to the experimental group. Thus, among the 25 enrolled learners for Grade 9, only 16 learners were considered as the actual participants of the study. The table below displays the distribution of the participants of the study.

Table 1 Distribution of Participants of the Study

| **Respondents** | **Male** | **Female** | **Total Number of Respondents** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Experimental Group | 3 | 5 | 8 |
| Control Group | 3 | 5 | 8 |
| **TOTAL** | 6 | 10 | 16 |

**Research Instrument**

In this study, the researcher used two instruments. The first instrument was a Teacher-made Test Questionnaire validated by experts and tested in terms of reliability. Before utilizing the instrument for the pretest and posttest of the study, a validation was established. The questionnaires were subjected to confirmation by three Public Secondary teachers connected with the Department of Education who are full-fledged Doctor degree holders. Also, their experience and expertise were considered. To evaluate the test questionnaires, the researcher adopted the validation tool of the Division of Surigao del Sur in designing standardized tests. Then, the instrument was pilot tested at the neighboring Secondary school. After gathering the results, the researcher employed Kuder Richardson 21 to determine the reliability of the test questionnaires (see Table 2). The instrument was in two sets considering that the study was conducted in the Third and Fourth Grading periods. Then, the tests were given to the students prior to and after the experimentation. The questionnaire consists of a 40-item test with varying levels of difficulty as stipulated in the Table of Specifications (TOS). The type of tests employed are Multiple Choice Tests and Essay Types. The test was further distributed to a 50%-30%-20% scheme, of which 20 items are for knowledge, 12 items for process, and 8 items for understanding – constituting the easy, average, and difficult levels, respectively.

The second instrument was an open-ended questionnaire that consisted of 5 questions. These questions were used in the interview with the participants to identify their views about gamification and the use of Kahoot, Wordwall, and Quizizz applications as well as the advantages and challenges they have encountered during the experimentation.

Table 2 Reliability Test Result of Test Questionnaires

| **Questionnaires** | **Reliability Test Result** | **Interpretation** |
|---|---|---|
| Third Grading | 0.815 | Reliable |
| Fourth Grading | 0.746 | Reliable |

**Data Gathering Procedure**

The quasi-experimental study was conducted in the Third and Fourth Quarters of the School Year 2021-2022. The study was purposely undertaken to assess the effectiveness of gamification in teaching English and to determine the learners' achievement as well as the advantages and challenges of the use of gamification as a teaching method. With this, synchronous and asynchronous instruction was done.

There were two synchronous online sessions a week with an hour allotted for each learning engagement for both groups. The participants will virtually attend the class at the scheduled time using the Google Meet link provided by the teacher-researcher. To make the online sessions directed, a learning plan was designed by the teacher for the activities done (see Appendix B). On the other hand, asynchronous sessions were also done to provide time for the students to work on the exercises given, provided that they can submit the outputs on the given time. With this in consideration, Google Classroom was utilized for where the students would turn in their work. A chat platform (Messenger) was also initiated for both groups for ease of delivery of instructions and for the students' queries to be addressed.

To make this study possible, at the onset of the study, the researcher sought permission from the Division Office and School Head (see Appendix G). When approved, the researcher asked for the consent of the parents/guardians as well as the learners who were identified as the participants of this study.

The researcher requested the School ICT Coordinator and School Head to allow the learners to make use of the DepEd-procured tablets for the whole duration of the experimentation. The researcher then profiled the participants' Google accounts for directory purposes.

At some point during the study's implementation, the researcher read relevant and informative foreign and local studies to gain knowledge and salient findings on the know-how of the present study. Rest assured that these studies and literature and the corresponding authors were cited in the reference lists.

To know more about the process of the implementation of the study, the following procedural stages, as shown in the flow chart was used by the researcher:

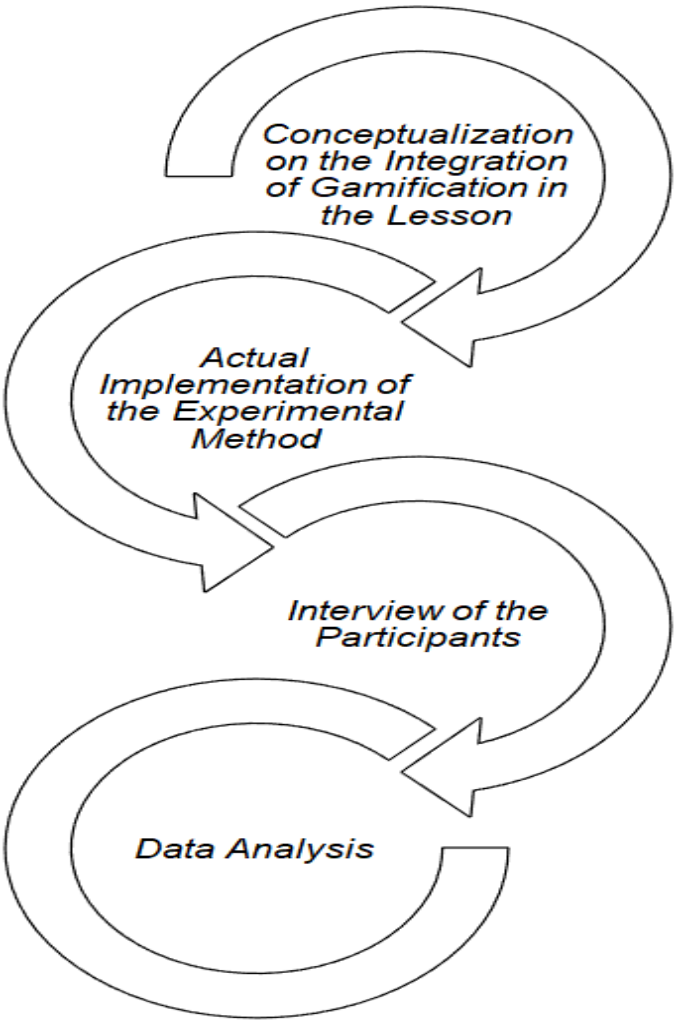


Figure 3. Data Gathering Process Flow

**Phase 1. Conceptualization of the Integration of Gamification in the Lesson**

The bases for the conceptualization of the gamification method were the Grade 9 learners' interest and inclination to technology and the content-based competencies stipulated in English 9 Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs). With the use of technology in teaching, the learners' interest arises as these generations of learners nowadays are technology inclined. The study made use of the gamification method to purposely assess its effectiveness in the academic performance of the learners during their online learning sessions. Moreover, the researcher also chose the Grade 9 learners since these learners are the most digitally savvy among the Junior High School learners of the school.

In the designing of the lesson exemplar, the researcher utilized the Division Quality-Assured Learning Activity Sheets (LAS) for the Third and Fourth Quarter as one of the learning resources to be distributed for the participants, which served as their offline material since the Division of Surigao del Sur is employing Modular (print) modality. During the online sessions, the researcher-made lessons were designed using the 5Es Lesson Plan format. The lesson objectives are also taken from the Third and Fourth Quarter MELCs. Then, appropriate assessments and activities were planned after the identification of the goals and learning objectives.

**Phase 2. Actual Implementation of the Experiment**

The second phase was the actual execution of the gamification method in teaching English. As stated in the research instruments of the study, a validated questionnaire was utilized for the pretest and was administered to both groups, namely experimental and controlled. In the absence of another English teacher, the researcher was the one who conducted the experimentation, and the teacher-researcher monitored the class for clarifications. During the online classes of the experimental group, the Google Meet platform and the gamified learning applications (Kahoot, Wordwall, and Quizizz) were utilized.

The games were employed as priming activities and to check students' understanding of the lesson. At the onset of the study, the participants were instructed to download the game applications as these will be utilized in the study. To participate in the game, the students were asked to join the platform using the game code given. After everyone is admitted to the game platform, the teacher will start the game, and the participants will be given an allotted time to submit their answers. At the end of the game, the top scorers will be recognized in a virtual podium, as this is one of the features of the gamified learning platforms.

On the other hand, online classes were also conducted in the controlled group; however, no gamified learning activities were implemented. Activities in this group are heavily dominated by traditional lectures and pencil and paper tests. Asynchronous were also done to maximize students learning, provided that the students could submit the outputs at a given time.

To ensure that the lessons were aligned with the content standards, the integration of literary works was also considered in the delivery of the lesson. Both experimental and controlled groups were given a printed copy of the literary pieces used in the study. The literary pieces were used as a springboard, and the analysis of the chosen literature was run through during the synchronous sessions to note critical points that would help the students in understanding the competencies discussed.

To guarantee the observance of academic ease as mandated by DepEd, careful planning as to how many online activities were done. With this, the participants had online meetings twice a week for the subject. A group chat was also created to assist the participants' queries and concerns from time to time. The submission of learners' output is done online to maximize learning. The experimentation lasted for seven (7) weeks, and a posttest was given to assess the effectiveness of the gamification method as employed in the online sessions. Moreover, health and safety protocols were still observed by the learners even in the comfort of their homes. As an activity prescribed by DepEd to be included in the Class Program, the learners must do handwashing and sanitizing before joining the virtual meeting.

**Phase 3. Interview of the Participants**

In the third phase of the study, the experimental group was subjected to individual interviews and focused group discussions to gain an in-depth analysis of the perceived advantages and challenges of using gamification as a teaching method. All students in the experimental group were interviewed individually after the completion of the study. Five (5) students were handpicked in the focused group discussions (FGDs). The participants were coded to hide their identity and observance of Data Privacy Act. Research Guides (2018) noted that interviews are most effective for qualitative research: they help you explain, better understand, and explore research subjects' opinions, behavior, experiences, phenomenon, etc. and interview questions are usually open-ended questions so that in-depth information will be collected.

**Phase 4. Data Analysis**

The final phase was solely for the presentation and interpretation of numerical data. The pretest and posttest were conducted using Google Forms so that answers would be checked accurately and for easy scoring and gathering of data. After the data were collected, statistical treatment was given, and insights were taken from it. To ensure an accurate and reliable statistical analysis, the researcher sought a statistician's expertise. To determine the perceived advantages and challenges of the learners, responses were subjected to content

analysis to identify themes and patterns. Furthermore, the interview results and focused group discussion (FGD) responses were transcribed, coded, analyzed, and qualitatively described to validate survey results.

**Statistical Treatment**

For the analysis of data, the researcher employed a statistical treatment. 'Statistical treatment' is when you apply a statistical method to a data set to draw meaning from it. Statistical treatment can be either descriptive statistics, which describes the relationship between variables in a population, or inferential statistics, which tests a hypothesis by making inferences from the collected data (DiscoverPhDs, 2020). For research problems 1 and 2, Weighted Mean was used to determine the mean score of the respondents during the pretest and posttest. T-test was used in establishing the significant difference between the pretest and posttest mean gained of the learnings using the gamification method and the conventional method.

**Presentation, Analysis, And Interpretation Of Data**

This chapter presents, analyzes, and interprets the data based on the problems of the study.

**Level of Achievement of the Learners Before and After the Use of Gamification and Conventional Methods**

The table below shows the mean gained scores of the pretest and posttest using the two instructional methods.

Table 3 Students' Mean Scores in the Pretests and Posttests

| Group | Third Grading | | Fourth Grading | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean Pretest | Mean Posttest | Mean Pretest | Mean Posttest |
| **Experimental (Gamification)** | 21.0 | 30.25 | 22.0 | 31.63 |
| **Conventional** | 20.13 | 26.75 | 19.25 | 25.88 |

Presented in the table above is the level of achievement of the learners before and after the use of gamification as a pedagogical strategy and the traditional method of teaching for the conventional group. The study lasted for two grading periods – the third and fourth quarters. In the third quarter, the pretest results implied that the students (both the experimental and conventional groups) had little prior knowledge and understanding of the subject matter. The pretest mean score of the experimental group is 21.0, while the pretest mean score of the controlled group is 20.13 noting a slight difference of 0.87. Thus, it can be interpreted further that before the conduct of the study for the quarter, the learners had almost the same level of knowledge on the topics to be discussed. And as also seen from the table above, the subjects of the study for both experimental and controlled groups have increased their posttest scores, having 30.25 and 26.75, respectively. Looking at the result at hand, it can be interpreted that incorporating games into lessons has affected the students' performance. Moreover, the integration of gamified activities has yielded better performance among students in the experimental group compared to the control group.

Similarly, in the fourth quarter, the posttest mean scores of the experimental group are higher than those of the control group. The scores have considerably increased from a pretest mean score of 22 to 31.63 in the posttest. The results inferred that the use of gamification in the delivery of lessons had given more impact on the academic achievement of the learners on the subject matter.

Though the experimental group has noted a significant increase compared to the conventional group, the rise in posttest scores in the controlled group means the participants have also improved. Lantajo et al., (2019) stated that the substantial increment in the pretest and posttest of the study of the two groups signifies that both teaching method is effective in increasing the academic performance of the students. Furthermore, Catindig and Prudente (2019) have also observed a significant increase in the posttest scores after implementing a

gamified strategy in the experimental group and lecture method over the controlled group. However, the researchers reported statistically significant differences in the post-achievement due to the teaching method in favor of the experimental group.

The use of gamification technologies in teaching English showed effectiveness and expediency, as students demonstrated not only a higher level of achievement but also more active engagement and deeper motivation for learning the language (Glowacki et al., 2018). Moreover, Daud (2017) affirmed that the high level of this type of learning (gamification) suggests that an innovative approach by using technology in education is better than ordinary chalk and talk traditional teaching and the subsequent practice involving numerous and monotonous exercises.

The findings in the increase of the posttest score agree with that of Karamert and Kuyumcu Vardar (2021), who reported the presence of statistically significant differences in the post-achievement due to the teaching method in favor of the experimental group. The researchers further discussed that the increase in the achievement test scores of the experimental group in which the gamification elements were used is significantly higher than the increase in the control group; thus, gamification is effective in increasing students' achievement in the mathematics course.

Furthermore, it cannot be neglected that the achievement of the experimental group is attributed to the fact that the use of gamification in the lesson is a new education method, in which students felt excitement and fun while integrating this method in teaching English subject. These results are consistent with most of the previous studies indicating the effectiveness of gamification as a teaching method. As students are now considered digital natives and are more exposed to video games, the use of gamification is being considered by many for its potential to motivate students. In addition, students are encouraged to learn the subject because they enjoy the fun atmosphere brought about by the elements of games (Cruz and Roleda, 2018).

**Comparing the Quality of Students' Responses from both Experimental and Controlled Group**

To ensure that the participants have achieved the competencies, the essay responses are subjected to analysis considering the linguistic competence of the students.

To determine whether the participants can differentiate bias from prejudice, they were asked to cite three (3) bias statements found in Martin Luther King's speech, *"I Have a Dream,"* and they had to explain the difference between bias and prejudice statements. Both participants (EG 8 and CG 2) have identified correctly three of the bias statements found in the text. This is shown when both answered the same statements in a different order.

1. *Our children are stripped of their adulthood and robbed of their dignity by signs "For whites only."*
2. *The Negro in Mississippi cannot vote.*
3. *The Americans have given the Negro people a bad check marked 'insufficient funds'.*

| **Experimental:** | **Conventional:** |
|---|---|
| *"The difference between bias statements from prejudice is that bias is a tendency to lean in certain direction either in favor or against a particular thing. To be truly biased mean to lack neutral viewpoint on a topic. While prejudice refers to the preconceived opinion or feeling toward a person based solely on their affiliation with a group. This feeling may translated into action by discriminating against a person or group." (EG 8)* | *"The difference between bias and prejudice is that bias is inclination for or against a person, idea or thing specially in way considered to be unfair. While prejudice is a preconceived opinion that is not base on actual experience or reason. It is often considered to be negative, unfair towards a person base on the persons status. Prejudice can be based on the factors like religion, gender, age and race." (CG 2)* |

Moreover, both students explained the difference between biased from prejudice comprehensively. Both answered that biased statements are one's inclination toward a particular situation; however, EG 8 expounded

his explanation that being biased means lacking a neutral viewpoint on a topic.

On the other hand, they mentioned that prejudice is a predetermined feeling or opinion toward something. EG 8 explained further that prejudice comes when a person is viewed based on affiliation. This is the same way when CG 2 elaborated that prejudice can be found on the factors: religion, gender, age, and race.

| **Experimental:** | **Conventional:** |
|---|---|
| *"When Mrs. Jones enters the kitchen to prepare a meal she leaves her purse behind, which demonstrates her trust in Roger. Roger purposely sits farther away from the purse and does not entertain the idea of stealing it. Roger refrained from stealing the purse becuase he desires to prove to Mrs. Jones that he is a trustworthy, moral adolescent. Mrs. Jones hospitality and compassion has influence Roger to dramatically change his outlook on life. Roger has recognized his mistake, learned to appreciate Mrs. Jones, and is determined to turn over a new life." (EG 1)* | *"Roger sit on the far side of the room where he thought that Mrs. Jones can easily see him out of the corner of her eye away from the purse. Roger did not trust Mrs. Jones not to trust him and Roger did not want to be mistrusted now. Roger behavior and attitude change when Mrs. Jones recognize right away that Roger does not have adult supervision or care, so she forgives him and sets about taking care of him offering some guidance along the way." (CG 7)* |

In the second essay question, where the participants were asked to explain how the main character (Roger) changed his behavior and attitude at the end of the story, both responses from the two participants supported the question by citing a scenario in the story that would prove that Roger's character has changed. This is when they mention that Roger sits farther away from the purse, to mean that he is not stealing it again. However, EG 1 has discussed further a relevant idea and a logical explanation of why Roger refrained from doing the action once again. EG 1 was able to expound the concept better by connecting the ideas present on the material read compared to CG 7 response.

Comparing the response of EG 6 and CG 2 when asked to cite one specific issue on Romeo and Juliet's teenage relationship and the opposite of it, create your solution in resolving the issue. Both participants responded infatuation as the issue presented in the play. Moreover, they provided a different solution to the problem as follows:

| **Experimental:** | **Conventional:** |
|---|---|
| *"Ask advices or guidance from our parents and friends for they know how to handle this situation especially our parents. You can ask them about their experience and how they solved that problem." (EG 6)* | *"Enjoy first our teenage life. We can pick up new hobby to invest a lot of time and attention to it. We need to focus and be busy so that we cannot think about teenage love all the time." (CG 2)* |

EG 6 stated that for teenagers to solve the problem of infatuation, one needs to seek advice and guidance from someone who can help the situation, such as our parents and friends. On the other hand, CG 2 provided a different solution by explaining that infatuation can be solved when one invests much time in developing their skills so one can go away with it. Both solutions are considered plausible and sound explanations for the issue of infatuation. Moreover, their responses also called for prompt action when someone experiences teenage love.

In the fourth essay question, the participants were asked to evaluate the importance of cellular phones in the new normal education by reasoning soundly that it is more important than merely a distraction to their studies. The following responses were recorded.

| **Experimental:** | **Conventional:** |
|---|---|
| *"Cellular phone is important to my new normal* | *"Using cellular phone in learning can help me in my* |

| | |
|---|---|
| *education set up than a distraction to my studies because it can help me find/search information regarding to my studies, it can help me in chatting with my teachers and classmates if I'm having difficulties in answering my modules and it can help me to join our online class. I think having a cellular phone is advantageous if used for good." (EG 8)* | *studies specially by doing research on the topic in our modules. It help me to find the information easier and faster. In having so much information accessible through cellular phone students are able to easier develop ideas and can understand the lesson. That is why cellular phones are helpful rather than a distraction in the new normal education." (CG 7)* |

Both responses highlighted that cellular phones have a significant role in their studies, especially in the new normal setting. They cited that cellular phones can be an instrument for them to continue their studies, especially in searching for additional information more conveniently. Moreover, they expressed that cellular phones are somewhat helpful in their studies than a distraction. Nevertheless, EG 8 ended her response by claiming that cellular phone is advantageous if used for good. EG 8 response is more insightful and relevant than CG 2 response which elaborated only on how cellular phone is helpful in the new normal.

Comparing the responses from both experimental and controlled groups, the experimental group has better answers considering the competencies taught and in terms of linguistic competence (depth, criticality, and insightfulness). Moreover, it is noted that the gamification method does not only increase the learner's motivation to learn but also their critical thinking skills. This is in agreement with the statement of Bourke (2021), who claimed that gamification rests in the creation of engaging learning environments that provide students with opportunities to make decisions and think critically.

**Significant Difference Between the Level of Achievement of the Learners Before and After the Use of Gamification in the Lesson**

Table 3 shows the result of the significant difference between the mean gained scores of the students in the pretest and posttest using the gamification method.

Table 4 Level of Achievement of the Experimental Group (Gamification) in the Pretests and Posttests

| **Sources of Variation** | | **Computed t** | **P-value** | **Decision** | **Conclusion** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Third Grading | Pretest | 0.26 | 0.800 | Failed to reject null hypothesis | Not Significant |
| | Posttest | 2.03 | 0.082 | Failed to reject null hypothesis | Not Significant |
| Fourth Grading | Pretest | 1.07 | 0.321 | Failed to reject null hypothesis | Not Significant |
| | Posttest | 2.87 | 0.024 | Reject Null hypothesis | Significant |

It can be gleaned from the table above that in the third quarter the pretest and posttest p-values are 0.800 and 0.082, respectively. Both values are higher than the 0.05 significance level; thus, it failed to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference between the level of achievement of the learners on the use of gamification in the third quarter lessons. The use of a gamification strategy during the delivery of lessons in the third quarter somehow did not affect the academic achievement of the learners.

The same conclusion can be drawn on the pretest p-value of 0.321 using the gamification strategy in the fourth quarter. Since it is higher than 0.05, therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. It can also be inferred that the pretest scores are closely related to each other, implying that the respondents had equal knowledge of the competencies to be discussed before the integration of gamification. After the gamification was employed, a posttest was conducted to gauge how much they had learned during the study. And as seen from the table above, the posttest p-value of 0.024 is less than 0.05; thus, the null hypothesis has to be rejected. Therefore, there is a significant difference between the posttest scores of the learners after the use of gamification in the

fourth quarter. The result suggests that the respondents of the gamification method have improved their performance.

To sum up, the results presented, the use of gamification was only effective during the fourth quarter. This proposes the idea that while integrating games in lessons is an excellent way to gain the learners' attention, this may not be a very effective strategy at all times considering the competencies being discussed. This is because the competencies in the fourth quarter are much fit for gamified learning activities compared to the third quarter. Moreover, the curriculum being adopted by secondary schools as mandated by the Department of Education is now spiral. Antipolo and Rogayan (2021) stressed that the Philippines uses spiral progression, which is a concept of learning approach where students revisit the same topics throughout their school career that increases complexity and reinforcement of previous learning. With this in context, this can be attributed to having gamification only effective for only one quarter. It is safe to assume that the efficacy of using a gamification strategy to increase students' achievement still depends on the competencies being taken. However, its impact on the learners' achievement in the fourth quarter cannot be neglected.

One factor to consider is that there are more competencies in the Third Grading compared to the Fourth Grading. This entails that having more competencies covered in the quarter requires time to master the concept. Gabriel et al., (2019) expressed that getting the competencies in the area also needed a lot of time to elaborate further essential competencies that serve as a foundation for learning new competencies. Having sufficient time for the mastery of the competencies strengthens the foundation of learning and tightens the interconnectedness between the competencies.

Another justification that can be derived from the situation that the gamified learning strategy made an impact only in the fourth quarter is that the participants are still adjusting to the administration of the gamified method. This validation is admitted by one of the interview participants (S2) that at first it was challenging to use because they are not yet oriented on the applications; however, as time goes it is already easy to use because of the game-like features where they can somehow fit in. Azar and Tan (2020) claimed that a series of recent studies have indicated that the use of gamification in second language learning has brought a significant benefit not only in terms of enhancing the students' language learning process but also in terms of motivation which the students can quickly adopt. However, in the context that the gamification method is new, the learners might adjust first in its first phase of implementation.

Van De Bogart, as cited by Villamon (2020), stressed that there are a variety of teaching methods that coincide with an active learning pedagogy. He said that to understand what encompasses active learning, it is essential to realize that it can be defined in many ways. One way that active learning can be defined is an effort to make learning authentic. Additionally, it refers to techniques where students do more than simply listen to a lecture. Students are doing something, including discovering, processing, and applying new information. A suitable teaching method implies relevant and visible training values which shall motivate students.

**Advantages of Using Gamification (Kahoot, Wordwall, and Quizizz) as a Teaching Method**

This section presents the data acquired from the interview and focused group discussion on students' views on the use of gamified learning platforms, specifically Kahoot, Wordwall, and Quizizz. When asked about the benefits of the method and the reasons why they enjoyed it, students reported a variety of responses.

**Fun and Enjoyable**

When asked about how they felt about the use of gamification in the lesson, all five (5) students agreed that they enjoyed and had fun using the platforms. Learning is more meaningful not only when students acquire concepts but also when the whole experience was fun (S1…S5). Having fun while learning helps students retain information better because the strategy is enjoyable and fun.

This was evidently shown when S3 shared,

*"It's enjoyable and convenient because it will make easier for students like me to answer the tasks that we are asked to do with just one click of the application especially in our online class."*

S4 added,

"*In using the applications, I feel good and I'm enjoying when I'm using the apps because it helps me to improve and test my knowledge during the class."*

S1 and S5 affirmed that the experience can also be used in the future studies,

"*Yes, sir. I'm feeling grateful because it's been a privilege to have an experience of using these applications because these experiences can be used in my future studies (S1)."*

*"I feel blessed because using these applications gave me so much experience especially that these apps gave me information that I can use to improve my learning and technical skills (S5)."*

These statements speak of the fact that having fun while learning can impact students' interest in the lesson and would affect the achievement of the learning outcomes. Also, having the learners exposed to different strategies and methods would widen their learning experience, which would likely help them in their future studies. By engaging students in hands-on experiences and reflection, they can better connect theories and knowledge learned in the classroom to real-world situations (Kent State University, 2020)

The use of gamification in the lesson has improved their motivation and interest. This is evident when S1 shared that he felt excited while using the applications because of their game-like features and that he was competing with his classmates. He further elaborated that he was happy, especially when he topped the leaderboard at the end of the game though he was at the bottom at the onset.

This finding is supported by Boudadi and Gutiérrez-Colón (2020) that gamification has been proven to be an efficient technique to boost engagement and motivation as most gamification systems use reinforcement elements (points, levels, badges, leaderboards, etc.) to promote engagement and motivation in users. Bicen and Kocakoyun (2018) elucidated that rapid developments in technology can lead to the formation of a competitive environment which can be harnessed through the use of a gamification method in the classroom as this method heightens student interest in the lesson and encourages students to become more ambitious for success. Simultaneously, the inclusion of the gamification approach has a positive effect on student motivation.

**Improved Academic Achievement and Skills**

They all believed that integrating gamified learning experiences helped them improve their studies. The synchronous discussion helped them learn the concepts better than reading the critical concepts in the learning modules. With the use of Google Forms, the students could monitor their learning and the submission of the learning tasks.

This was clearly stated by S1 when he said,

*"Yes, because it really helped me improve my knowledge and understanding specifically in English subject. Also, it enhances my critical thinking, digital, moral and comprehension skills."*

S3 also added,

*"It helps me recall and apply knowledge and critical thinking skills that capture my interest and inspire me to continue learning."*

Aside from academic improvement, critical thinking skills were enhanced as these learners solved problems. Bourke (2021) claimed that gamification rests in creating engaging learning environments that provide students with opportunities to make decisions and think critically.

Moreover, S2 expressed that the use of games prompted him to think critically.

*"Yes, sir. There are times that I cannot recall the concept, so I have to prompt myself to think and analyze the questions given to solve the problem especially that we are time pressured during the game."*

The high academic achievement of the students can be gleaned from the considerable rise in the mean scores of the learners in the posttests. Although the significant increase was noted only in the fourth quarter, it cannot be underrated that the integration of gamification in the lesson has improved the learners' performance in the subject.

**Enhanced Technological Skills**

The availability and existence of technological resources in schools and homes and the learners' inclination and fondness of technology (tech-savvy) paved the way for the developed ICT skills of the learners. All the students confirmed that incorporating the gamified learning platforms in the lesson taught them many things (S1…S5). They have learned and grasped new ICT-related skills through online meetings and chat platforms. One female student (S4) shared her experience.

She expressed,

*"The use of gamification in the lesson not only helped me improve my skills in English, but also my technological skills. I learned how to use the applications and I got a lot of knowledge in using the applications."*

Similarly, S3 admitted that it was her first experience in using the applications.

She shared,

*"It improves my ICT skills because it's the first time that I used these applications (Kahoot, Wordwall and Quizizz) in the lesson."*

Another student (S5) also expressed that he enjoyed the features of the gamified learning platforms,

*"I was able to explore the features of Kahoot, Wordwall and Quizizz. Also, one of the advantages of using the online applications is it can improve my skills [technological] and it activates students' learning."*

The learners' technological skills are essential to be cultivated as they are expected to be ICT literate – one of the 21st Century literacy skills. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) includes computers, the Internet, and electronic delivery systems such as radios, televisions, and projectors, and is widely used in today's education field. Increasingly, ICT is being applied successfully in instruction, learning, and assessment. ICT is considered a powerful tool for educational change and reform. Skills in using ICT will be an indispensable prerequisite for these learners.

**Innovativeness and Accessibility**

Employing gamified learning activities in the class manifests an innovative and accessible learning environment where students can adapt to educational practices with ease and comfort. A positive learning environment does not only mean a well-structured classroom, but also social, and pedagogical contexts in which learning occurs. Responses of the students in the experimental group showed that they liked the use of gamification in the lesson not only because it is new but also due to its usability.

This can be gleaned when S2 admitted,

*"At first it was very difficult to use because we are not yet oriented on these applications, however as time goes it is already easy to use because of the game-like features where we can somehow fit in. We have to really strive hard to get into the top three because these platforms have leaderboards especially in Kahoot."*

S3 also added,

*"Using gamification is a new way of learning because instead of doing the activities in the usual way, it is transformed in a game-like manner and it is easy to use. Also, when our teacher employed gamification in the lesson, we are active engaged in the activity."*

These students' affirmations were confirmed by Escamez and Tapia (2021) as they reported that several innovations have emerged in the field of education. In an age disrupted by COVID-19, the development of gamified teaching strategies can be seen as a promising option to provide knowledge and enhance students' achievement.

**Disadvantages and Challenges of Using Gamification (Kahoot, Wordwall, and Quizizz) as a Teaching Method**

The use of gamification as a teaching method has its drawbacks, like any other educational strategies and approaches. Educationally, students' interest and motivation in learning were positively influenced by the advent of gamified learning platforms. Nevertheless, gamification presents limitations that become barriers to learning. Consequently, all the FGD participants confirmed they experienced challenges and limitations while using the teaching method. Interview and FGD responses were carefully noted to further make a negation or affirmation. Furthermore, with the interview guide, the following experiences emerged.

**Technological Issues**

All the respondents complained of intermittent to weak Internet connection due to the poor technological structure, especially with the access to the Internet that became the main challenge that the students encountered. They admitted that the unstable internet connections hindered them from joining the game, and worst, in attending the synchronous sessions (S1…S5). One of the respondents (S2) shared that he had to transfer from one station to another to find a good signal spot.

He explained further,

*"The weak internet connection that I have experienced while using these online platforms is the reason why I cannot enter and join the game sometimes."*

Others complained that they have to stay outside of their homes to find an area with a good signal and sometimes they stayed near the dike.

S1 also commented,

*"As students, we tried our best to make use of what we have at home and ensure that we are not left behind. Still, there are some common problems that I have encountered. Some of these are slow internet connection, audio clarity and system glitch."*

S1 added,

*"Sometimes our devices are lagging especially when we are playing the game. Then the worst thing is, when I rejoined the game it's already in the middle part or at the end of the play."*

According to Barreiro (2017), Philippines has the slowest average internet speed in Asia Pacific with 4 Mbps broadband adoption. In his article, Ordinario (2017) stated that for Filipinos, the poor Internet connection is a more annoying issue. Therefore, a slow Internet connection greatly affects the education sector, especially that nowadays, the Internet has introduced many improvements. Hence, the intermittent and slow internet connection greatly affects the education sector, especially these days when schools and offices shift from virtual classrooms, meetings, and conferences due to the implementation of distance learning and the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, with the advent of digitization in instruction, the internet connection is at par importance with technological skills.

Internet connectivity in education, especially for students, plays an imperative role because, through this, they can research things easier and faster, and learn, relearn, and unlearn the concepts of the lessons. Siraj et al., (2015) high Internet usage brings better academic results as students get the opportunity to enter the information world. The same is true with the findings of Jibrin et al., (2017) in their study when they found out that the internet is one of the beneficial tools in this era of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) used in an academic exercise.

The technical challenges are not only about getting technology to work on networks. Instead, they consist of ensuring the program's success by utilizing and supporting appropriate technologies. Technical challenges include providing participants can successfully use the technology and resisting the urge to use technology simply because it is available (Villamon, 2020).

**Distracted Learning Focus**

With the implementation of distance learning, where students are learning in the comfort of their homes, plus the availability of learning devices and internet connections, all respondents admitted that their concentration on learning is troubled. Before clicking and answering a learning task and activity, they were drawn to click from one site to another. Unintendedly, their time was spent browsing other things until their limited internet MB was consumed, which resulted in or submitting the output late. In addition, the presence of environmental noise hampered their learning. This admittance is shown when,

S3 revealed,

*"Sometimes sir our environment is noisy. That is why sometimes its hard for us to really focus and we feel distracted."*

Aside from the noise pollution experienced, one student (S4) disclosed that she is time-pressured when using the gamified learning platforms.

She confided,

*"Because of the allotted time given in each question, sometimes we are pressured to answer the questions immediately."*

S1 affirmed,

*"Yes, sir. Sometimes I cannot process the questions given and apply the concepts learned because of the limited time."*

These statements from the students can be inferred that learning efforts can be distracted by several extrinsic factors during the learning process. Extrinsic factors can have a sizeable impact on students' attention and decision-making.

**Less Interaction**

In the online class setting and the integration of gamification in the lesson, the students can still meet their teacher and classmates. However, the online class limited their face-to-face interaction (S1, S3, S4).

As S4 suggested,

*"I recommend and suggest that the gamification method should be used to face-to-face classes like in group activities where we are working in teams."*

S3 also commented,

*Yes, sir gamification must be employed in the class to increase students' interaction especially when we are brainstorming ideas or when our classmates suggests answers and then we have to examine their ideas as well.*

Even though the online class has somehow lessened the student-to-student exchange, one male student (S5) recommended utilizing the gamification method in the class. This is clearly stated when he expressed,

*The method should be continually used specially in this pandemic era. The gamification method should be used by students to continue learning and enhancing their skills.*

In relation, S4 added and proposed,

*"Yes sir, to give equal opportunities to students who were not able to use the gamified learning platforms can try and explore the applications."*

Moreover, the students missed the face-to-face engagement with their classmates and teachers. More importantly, they agreed to sustain using the gamification method in the lesson when the full in-person classes are granted.

As always, every learning and teaching methodology has its pros and cons. One method can be an offshoot of an existing method due to its limitations and drawbacks. Though gamification has downsides, the positive effects cannot also be overweighed. It was a good thing that the study participants had the positive characteristics of embracing the new way of thinking and learning.

Noting the perceived disadvantages and challenges mentioned by the respondents, we can infer that these things are far and beyond. The teacher-researcher together worked side by side and kept an eye on students' feedback to ensure that their needs and queries were addressed.

As for the technological issues, several interventions were done to cater to the needs of the students. After profiling students with learning devices and internet connections at home, those students who did not have learning gadgets were provided with the DepEd-procured learning tablets upon the request of the research to the School Head and ICT Coordinator. Also, those participants who did not have internet connectivity were funded by the teacher-researcher with internet load throughout the experimentation period.

To answer the queries and inquiries of the respondents, a chat platform (Messenger) was initiated for both the experimental and control groups. As to the activities to be submitted in Google Forms, the teacher considered students who submitted their outputs late. There was no reason for students to miss an assignment or online quiz because all the activity links were sent on the group chat, and the teacher tracked the submission of outputs from time to time.

With easy access to the Internet, as the electronic loads were given freely, the study subjects revealed that they were interested in strolling from different sites to another. The Internet has so much to offer, and that's why the respondents were sometimes distracted. However, the responsibility drew them back to the line as they were prompted to submit the outputs on time.

In the educational landscape today, where a number of teaching methods are introduced, it is essential always to consider the availability of learning resources when adapting and implementing these strategies. More importantly, the student's cooperation and flexibility were appreciated for attitudes impacted the present study.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary of findings gleaned from the data gathered, the conclusions, and recommendations formulated through analysis to fill the knowledge gaps and determine the usefulness and effectiveness of integrating gamification into English language activities.

## Summary of Findings

Based on the study, the following findings and results were presented:

The pretest and posttest mean gained scores of the students (21.0-30.25, 20.13-26.75) and (22.0-31.63, 19.25-25.88) using the two teaching modalities for the third and fourth grading, respectively, showed a significant difference favorable to the experimental group. The experimental group noted an increase of 23.13% in the third grading and 24.075% in the fourth grading. In comparison, the conventional group recorded an increase of 16.55% and 16.575% in the third and fourth quarters, respectively. However, the significant difference in the level of achievement of the students on the use of gamification in the lesson was pointed out later in the fourth quarter. Thus, integrating the gamified learning activities in the English subject was only effective in the fourth quarter; nevertheless, its impact cannot be overlooked.

Findings revealed that students' views on gamification as a teaching method are fun, enjoyable, innovative, and accessible, which can help them develop their ICT skills and academic performance. However, disadvantages and challenges were also experienced by the respondents. Some significant challenges and limitations mentioned were technological issues, distracted learning focus, and less interaction between classmates and teachers.

## Conclusions

Through the findings of the study, the following conclusions were formulated:

The significant increase in the pretest and posttest mean gained scores of the student in the experimental group proved that incorporating gamification helped cater to the individual needs of the learner in the implementation of distance learning. Although implementing the gamification method was a challenge, this research about the integration of gamified learning activities into English subject somehow indicated a favorable result over the conventional way. Furthermore, the use of gamified learning platforms would likely cater to a positive learning atmosphere than the usual synchronous discussion. The teacher-researcher's choice of employing games in the lesson has contributed to the student's academic performance in English.

Apparent in the interviews and FGD, technical structure contributes a lot to either the achievement or failure of integrating gamification in the lesson. With the gamification method, the students enjoyed and had fun in their studies, improved their academic performance, and enhanced their ICT skills in an innovative and accessible environment.

To wrap it up, there were limitations considering the limited number of participants and the implementation of the study in a short period, and the technological issues experienced by the participants, such as intermittent to weak internet connection and unavailability of gadgets. The gamification method come out as an effective tool in giving quality education to the learners, especially in the new normal set-up.

## Recommendations

This research has the following recommendations and suggestions to offer in the conclusions crafted:

It is recommended that the gamification method must be used by the teachers not only in English subject, but also across learning areas as the results displayed a positive effect on the achievement of the students. The role of technology in the teaching and learning process as an educational support optimizes the academic achievement of the students.

Also, it is recommended that Instructional material developers of the Department of Education redesign pedagogical tools and incorporate the use of technology in the instructional materials being crafted.

Moreover, it is recommended that for the integration of gamification in the lesson be effective and efficient, technological and accessibility issues must be accounted for by the school administrators.

It is further recommended that the use of gamification in the lesson must be employed by the educational front

liners as this method would help them establish a positive learning environment among the learners. Also, to study this method further to address the existing gap of the present study.

Furthermore, it is recommended that other researchers may replicate the study and be employed with a more significant number of participants and a broader grading period coverage.

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**Dedication**

"Strength does not come from winning. It is in going through hardships and decide not to surrender." – MLSAS

I dedicate this work to my family and many friends who gave me the courage to go continue.

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