



GAMIFICATION IN ENGLISH EDUCATION: BOOSTING MOTIVATION AND LANGUAGE ACHIEVEMENT

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Abstract

Gamification has emerged as an innovative approach in English education, addressing persistent challenges related to low student motivation and limited language achievement. Current research highlights the potential of game-based elements—such as points, badges, and leaderboards—to enhance engagement and participation; however, many studies focus primarily on motivation or short-term outcomes rather than measurable improvements in language proficiency. This gap indicates a need for empirical evidence that directly connects gamification with both motivational and performance-based outcomes in structured classroom settings. This study aims to examine the impact of gamified English learning activities on students' motivation and language achievement. Employing an experimental design, the study involved 60 undergraduate students divided into a gamified group and a non-gamified group. Data were collected through motivation surveys, language achievement tests, and classroom observations over a six-week intervention period. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and independent-samples t-tests with SPSS to determine significant differences between groups. The findings reveal that students in the gamified group demonstrated significantly higher motivation, reflected in greater enthusiasm, persistence, and participation. In addition, they achieved substantially higher language performance scores, showing improvements in accuracy, fluency, and task completion. Statistical results confirmed that these differences were highly significant, with large effect sizes in both motivation and achievement. These results suggest that gamification not only enhances engagement but also translates into measurable learning outcomes. The study implies that integrating well-designed game elements into English instruction can create a more interactive, motivating, and effective learning environment. This research contributes to the field by providing empirical evidence linking motivation and achievement, offering practical guidance for educators seeking to improve both student engagement and language proficiency through gamified learning strategies.

Keywords: Achievement, gamification, motivation

INTRODUCTION

Gamification has transformed the way English is taught, turning traditional classrooms into dynamic and interactive spaces where learning feels like a challenge and a game at the same time. By using points, badges, leaderboards, and other game-like elements, teachers create opportunities for students to engage actively, receive immediate feedback, and experience a sense of accomplishment. These strategies align with the rise of digital learning tools, where sustaining attention and promoting active participation are essential for improving listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Students often struggle to maintain motivation in conventional lessons, but gamified activities make practice enjoyable, encourage persistence, and reduce anxiety for learners who may feel hesitant to participate. Game-based approaches also adapt to different proficiency levels, ensuring that both struggling and advanced students experience progress and recognition. In recent years, educators have increasingly explored how structured challenges and rewards can foster goal-oriented learning and enhance classroom interaction.



Motivation is a cornerstone of successful language acquisition, influencing how much effort students put into practicing and retaining new skills. Traditional teaching methods sometimes fail to maintain interest, particularly in settings where English is learned as a foreign language. Gamification addresses this by turning learning into a rewarding and goal-driven experience, where students see the results of their efforts immediately. This approach nurtures confidence, promotes active participation, and encourages students to take risks in using the language. Moreover, it supports sustained engagement over time, helping learners persist through difficult tasks. By offering personalized challenges, gamified learning can meet the needs of diverse learners, fostering improvement in performance across multiple language domains. This combination of motivation and measurable achievement highlights the potential of gamification as more than just a fun activity—it becomes a strategy that produces tangible learning outcomes.

Recent studies show that gamification has a growing impact on language education. Ameen (2026) and Tauchid et al. (2025) found that gamified English courses enhance engagement and improve reading comprehension, while Hashim et al. (2025) reported that game mechanics strengthen vocabulary retention and participation in speaking exercises. Zhou (2024) highlighted that immediate feedback in gamified activities increases intrinsic motivation, especially when learners experience both challenge and reward. Additional research indicates that combining competitive and cooperative elements sustains students' attention and encourages active involvement over extended periods. Together, these findings demonstrate that gamification can influence both interest and learning outcomes, though its direct effect on measurable achievement in structured classrooms requires deeper examination.

Despite these insights, few studies connect gamification directly to quantifiable improvements in language performance. Many investigations focus primarily on engagement or self-reported motivation rather than measurable scores in listening, speaking, reading, or writing. Research often relies on short-term interventions or observations, leaving questions about the consistent effects of gamification across an entire course. There is limited understanding of which specific elements of gamification most effectively enhance language proficiency. Exploring these areas clarifies how motivation and structured game elements translate into observable learning outcomes, providing a more complete picture of their impact on students' language development.

This study approaches gamification from the perspective of measurable achievement, integrating multiple game mechanics to examine their influence on both motivation and language performance. Unlike previous research, it tracks concrete outcomes in students' proficiency across different skills while considering how various gamified strategies interact. The design captures real classroom results, allowing for an analysis of both individual and collective responses to gamified learning. By connecting motivation directly with performance, the study investigates whether engaging students through games leads to higher achievement and consistent participation. The objectives focus on understanding how gamification influences learners' motivation and whether these changes correspond to higher scores in English assessments.

The study highlights how thoughtfully designed game-based activities can improve learners' engagement, participation, and retention. Instructors can use

these insights to craft lessons that balance challenge and enjoyment while meeting students' individual needs. Evidence shows that motivational strategies linked to practical performance can guide instructional decisions and curriculum planning. Schools can implement these approaches to enhance both student satisfaction and measurable outcomes in English learning. Patterns observed in the study provide lessons on how interactive methods affect classroom dynamics and learning success, offering guidance for educators seeking to make instruction both effective and engaging.

This research contributes to the field by offering empirical evidence connecting gamified learning with tangible improvements in English proficiency. It demonstrates how different elements of gamification influence motivation and achievement, providing clear insights for designing activities that are both enjoyable and productive. The findings contribute to ongoing discussions about educational innovation, illustrating how structured game mechanics can enhance measurable learning outcomes. By linking engagement with performance, the study provides practical and theoretical guidance for language educators and researchers seeking strategies that truly impact learners' success.

Hypotheses:

H₁: Students who participate in gamified English learning activities demonstrate higher motivation than those in non-gamified activities.

H₂: Students who engage in gamified English learning activities achieve higher language performance scores than those in non-gamified activities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Learning English can be exciting, but it often comes with challenges that leave students feeling disengaged or hesitant to participate. In many classrooms, repetitive drills and traditional lectures fail to spark curiosity or sustained effort. Gamification offers a fresh approach by transforming learning into interactive, game-like experiences where students can see tangible progress (Fatwassani et al., 2025). Points, badges, leaderboards, and narrative challenges provide immediate feedback and recognize effort, turning ordinary exercises into opportunities for achievement. This approach allows learners to focus not only on completing tasks but on improving and testing their abilities in a playful yet structured environment. Research shows that gamification can create environments where learners willingly spend more time practicing English and actively participate in lessons (Benitez-Correa et al., 2025; Fatah, 2025; Patty & Matatula, 2025). It becomes clear that gamification has the potential to shift learners' perception of English from a daunting subject to an engaging, achievable challenge.

Motivation underpins successful language learning, and gamification directly influences how students feel about their progress. According to Self-Determination Theory, people engage more deeply when they feel capable, autonomous, and connected. Gamified environments fulfill these needs by offering structured goals, immediate recognition, and a sense of accomplishment. Studies suggest that learners who experience success through gamified milestones report increased enthusiasm and persistence, even when facing challenging language tasks (Ameen, 2026; Hashim et al., 2025; Zhou, 2024). Importantly, gamified activities can reduce anxiety and create a safe space for experimentation, allowing students

to make mistakes without fear of judgment (Al-khresheh, 2025; Benitez-Correa et al., 2025). Motivation in this context is not superficial; it emerges from learners' perception that effort leads to progress and mastery. These findings emphasize that gamification nurtures engagement that feels personal and meaningful, rather than externally imposed.

Evidence shows that gamification produces measurable improvements in English proficiency. Vocabulary acquisition, for example, improves when learners repeatedly engage with interactive quizzes, challenges, and gamified flashcards (Ameen, 2026; Hashim et al., 2025; Patty & Matatula, 2025). Students retain words more effectively and report greater confidence in applying new vocabulary in speaking and writing tasks. Similarly, reading comprehension benefits from interactive storylines and challenge-based tasks, encouraging learners to process texts carefully and critically (Huang et al., 2025; Teymouri, 2024; Wei-qin & Ying, 2025). Immediate feedback helps learners identify errors and refine understanding, which leads to better performance in assessments. These practices demonstrate that gamification bridges motivation with concrete achievement, transforming engagement into real gains in language ability. Research consistently indicates that the more integrated the gamified tasks are with learning objectives, the stronger the performance outcomes.

Speaking and writing skills are similarly enhanced through gamified approaches. Studies reveal that learners participating in competitive or cooperative speaking games show improvements in fluency, accuracy, and confidence (Boudadi et al., 2024; Ge & Li, 2024; Hashim et al., 2025). Features like real-time feedback, ranking, and immediate rewards encourage learners to explore complex sentence structures and take communication risks. Writing also benefits: gamified tasks motivate learners to produce longer, more structured texts, with improved grammar and vocabulary usage (Gao, 2023; Huseinović, 2023; Weng, 2024). These iterative practices promote self-regulated learning, where learners reflect on performance and seek improvement. The findings indicate that gamified activities create a dynamic cycle in which motivation drives practice, and practice leads to measurable improvement. This demonstrates that gamification supports holistic language development, not just isolated skills.

Gamification elements vary in their effects, making thoughtful design essential. Leaderboards and badges tend to stimulate competition, while narratives and scenario-based challenges appeal to learners seeking meaningful engagement. Research indicates that adaptive gamification, which accounts for learners' preferences and proficiency levels, results in stronger motivation and better learning outcomes than uniform application of game mechanics (Aco & Suwandi, 2025; Ding & Zhang, 2025; Gini et al., 2025; Rokhmat et al., 2025). Timely feedback and visible progress increase learners' sense of competence and encourage sustained effort. The literature highlights that combining different elements strategically—competition, cooperation, and storytelling—enhances engagement while

supporting measurable achievement (Chen et al., 2024; Kai et al., 2025; Mayor-Peña et al., 2024). These insights underline the importance of intentional design, showing that gamification is most effective when it resonates with learners' needs and learning contexts.

Another advantage of gamification is its role in ongoing assessment. Platforms like Kahoot, Quizizz, and Classcraft allow teachers to track learners' progress and provide real-time feedback (Kai et al., 2025; Maraza-Quispe, 2024; Zhang & Huang, 2024). This embedded assessment helps learners correct errors promptly, reinforcing knowledge and skills. Studies show that performance data from gamified activities aligns with conventional assessments, confirming their validity in measuring language achievement (Patty & Matatula, 2025; Ratnasari et al., 2025; Quba et al., 2024). By integrating learning with assessment, gamification fosters self-regulated learning, where motivation and measurable achievement reinforce each other. Learners become more aware of their strengths and weaknesses, leading to more purposeful practice. This dual role enhances both instructional effectiveness and learners' confidence in their abilities.

Challenges in gamification research and implementation remain significant. Differences in technology access, teacher expertise, and course structure can affect outcomes. Overreliance on extrinsic rewards may lead learners to focus on points rather than skill mastery, reducing long-term retention (Maryana et al., 2024; Narayanan & Kumaravel, 2024; Rokhmat et al., 2025; Tristán et al., 2025). Many studies rely on short-term interventions, leaving questions about sustained achievement unanswered. Research also emphasizes the importance of aligning gamification with learners' individual needs and curricular objectives to maximize benefits (Çiğdem et al., 2024; Yolanda et al., 2025; Li et al., 2024; Prasetya et al., 2025). Addressing these factors ensures that motivation and achievement gains are meaningful and enduring. This underscores the necessity of thoughtful design and context-aware implementation.

The combined evidence suggests that gamification strengthens both learners' motivation and measurable language achievement. Vocabulary, reading, writing, and speaking skills improve when game mechanics are integrated into lessons that offer challenge, feedback, and recognition. Gamification encourages active participation, persistence, and self-regulated practice, transforming learners' engagement into concrete results. While challenges exist, careful design tailored to learner needs and course objectives enhances effectiveness (Khaldi et al., 2023; Li et al., 2023; Slamet & Basthomi, 2024). Synthesizing the research highlights that gamification offers a practical, evidence-based strategy that merges enjoyment with achievement, fostering meaningful language learning experiences. These findings position gamified approaches as a powerful tool to elevate both the motivation and performance of English learners in diverse educational contexts.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed an experimental design to investigate the impact of gamified English learning activities on students' motivation and language achievement. Participants were divided into two groups: a gamified group and a non-gamified group, allowing for controlled comparisons between the instructional methods. Gamified activities included points, badges, leaderboards, and interactive challenges, whereas the non-gamified group received traditional, teacher-led instruction. This design allowed the researchers to isolate the effects of gamification on both attitudinal and performance outcomes. By implementing both conditions concurrently, the study minimized external factors that might influence results, ensuring that observed differences could be attributed to the instructional approach. The design provided a structured framework to test the proposed hypotheses while maintaining practical relevance to real classroom settings.

Participants

A total of 60 undergraduate students enrolled in an English language program at a higher education institution participated in the study. Participants were randomly assigned to the gamified group ($n = 30$) or the non-gamified group ($n = 30$). The students ranged in age from 18 to 22 years, with a mean age of 19.7 years. The sample consisted of 32 females and 28 males, reflecting the gender distribution in the program. All participants had at least six years of formal English education in secondary school and had been taking English courses at the university for one to two semesters. Approximately 40% of the students reported prior exposure to technology-enhanced or game-based learning, while the remaining 60% had limited experience with gamified platforms. See Table 1 below for the detail.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of participants in gamified and non-gamified groups

Participant Characteristic	Gamified Group ($n = 30$)	Non-Gamified Group ($n = 30$)	Total ($n = 60$)
Age (years)	18–22 (M = 19.8)	18–22 (M = 19.6)	18–22 (M = 19.7)
Gender	16 F, 14 M	16 F, 14 M	32 F, 28 M
English Learning Experience	≥6 years formal English	≥6 years formal English	≥6 years formal English
University English Courses	1–2 semesters	1–2 semesters	1–2 semesters
Prior Gamified Learning Exposure	12 students (40%)	12 students (40%)	24 students (40%)

Instruments

Two instruments were used to measure the outcomes of interest: motivation and language achievement. Motivation was assessed using a standardized survey adapted from well-established instruments in the field, including items on interest, engagement, persistence, and self-efficacy in English learning. The survey utilized a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree,” enabling quantifiable measurement. Language achievement was evaluated through a series of assessments aligned with the course curriculum, covering vocabulary, reading comprehension, and writing tasks. A detailed scoring rubric ensured consistency and objectivity in evaluating student performance. Additionally,

classroom observation checklists were employed during gamified activities to monitor engagement and participation patterns. Pilot testing confirmed the reliability and validity of both instruments within the study context, ensuring accurate and meaningful data collection.

Data Collection

Data were collected over a six-week intervention period. The gamified group engaged in structured activities integrating points, badges, leaderboards, and interactive challenges, whereas the non-gamified group received conventional instruction without gamified elements. Motivation surveys were administered at the beginning and end of the intervention to assess changes over time. Language achievement assessments were conducted at the conclusion of the intervention to measure learning outcomes. Observations of participants' engagement and participation during activities provided additional qualitative insights. All procedures were standardized across both groups to maintain consistency and ensure that the data reflected the effect of the instructional method rather than external factors. Maintaining a consistent participant number and standardized procedures strengthened the internal validity of the study.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS software to determine differences between the gamified and non-gamified groups. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were computed to summarize participant performance and motivation scores. Independent-samples t-tests were conducted to test the two hypotheses, examining whether gamified activities led to higher motivation and language achievement compared to non-gamified instruction. Effect sizes were calculated to evaluate the practical significance of the observed differences. Pre- and post-intervention motivation scores were compared to measure changes over time, while language achievement scores were analyzed to assess performance outcomes. The use of SPSS allowed for accurate computation and ensured that the results were reliable and replicable. This analytical approach provided robust evidence to support conclusions regarding the effects of gamification on both motivation and English language achievement.

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics for motivation scores, as shown in Table 2, reveal the differences between students in gamified and non-gamified English learning activities. The data indicate that students in the gamified group generally displayed higher enthusiasm, persistence, and willingness to participate, whereas students in the non-gamified group tended to have lower engagement and focus. The pattern of responses suggests that gamified activities create a more stimulating and rewarding learning environment, while traditional tasks result in more uniform but lower levels of motivation. These findings highlight the potential of game-like elements to enhance learners' investment in completing tasks and sustaining effort. Gamified features appear to encourage active participation and sustained attention throughout learning activities.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for motivation scores

Group	N	Mean Motivation	SD Motivation	Minimum	Maximum
Gamified	30	4.41	0.18	4.0	4.7
Non-Gamified	30	3.31	0.13	3.1	3.5

Students in the gamified group achieved a mean motivation score of 4.41 with a standard deviation of 0.18, compared to the non-gamified group, which had a mean of 3.31 and SD of 0.13. The range of scores for gamified learners extended from 4.0 to 4.7, indicating high engagement across nearly all participants, while non-gamified learners scored between 3.1 and 3.5. The mean difference of 1.10 points demonstrates a significant advantage for gamified activities in promoting motivation. The slightly higher variability in the gamified group suggests that some students responded particularly strongly to interactive features. These patterns confirm that gamification consistently enhances attention, effort, and willingness to engage.

Even the lowest motivation score in the gamified group exceeded the highest score in the non-gamified group, showing that gamification effectively raises motivation for nearly all learners. The combination of high mean scores, broader engagement range, and responsiveness indicates that points, badges, and immediate feedback strongly support active learning. Gamified students maintained focus, participated enthusiastically, and were more willing to take on challenging tasks. These outcomes confirm that gamified learning is highly effective in increasing student motivation compared to traditional methods.

The descriptive statistics for language achievement, as highlighted in Table 3, reveal notable differences between students participating in gamified and non-gamified English learning activities. Students in the gamified group consistently performed at a higher level, showing stronger comprehension, more accurate task completion, and greater fluency. In contrast, the non-gamified group tended to demonstrate lower and more uniform performance, indicating that traditional methods may not sufficiently stimulate engagement or strategic effort. The range of scores suggests that gamified features, such as immediate feedback, points, and badges, create a more motivating environment where learners are encouraged to persist and challenge themselves. These data imply that gamification does more than just make learning enjoyable; it actively supports measurable improvements in language skills. The outcomes point to the potential for gamified activities to strengthen not only accuracy but also learners' confidence in completing complex tasks.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for language achievement scores

Group	N	Mean Language Score	SD Language Score	Minimum	Maximum
Gamified	30	87.0	2.4	82	91
Non-Gamified	30	74.5	1.8	72	78

In numerical terms, the gamified group achieved a mean language score of 87.0 with a standard deviation of 2.4, while the non-gamified group had a mean of 74.5 with SD of 1.8. The gamified learners' scores ranged from 82 to 91, reflecting strong performance across nearly all participants, whereas the non-gamified range of 72 to 78 indicates more consistent but lower achievement. The mean difference of 12.5 points illustrates the substantial advantage provided by gamified activities. The slightly higher variability in the gamified group suggests that some students responded exceptionally well to the interactive tasks, maximizing their engagement and performance. These figures demonstrate that gamification helps maintain attention, motivates effort, and encourages strategic application of knowledge, resulting in higher scores across all language dimensions.

Even the lowest score in the gamified group surpassed the highest score in the non-gamified group, reinforcing the consistency and robustness of gamification's effects. The combination of higher mean scores, wider performance ranges, and responsiveness to interactive challenges shows that gamified learners applied strategies more effectively and maintained higher accuracy throughout tasks. Gamified students demonstrated greater confidence, focus, and persistence when completing complex exercises. These results suggest that integrating game-like elements in English education not only enhances performance but also transforms the learning experience, making it more engaging and rewarding. The data provide strong evidence that gamified activities can significantly elevate language achievement compared to traditional approaches.

The results of independent-samples t-tests, as shown in Table 4, provide a statistical examination of differences in motivation and language achievement between students in gamified and non-gamified English learning activities. The analyses show that gamified learners consistently outperformed their non-gamified peers in both areas, indicating that interactive, reward-based tasks have a strong impact on engagement and performance. These findings suggest that the patterns observed in descriptive statistics are not due to chance, but reflect meaningful differences caused by the type of learning activity. The data emphasize that gamified features, such as points, badges, and immediate feedback, contribute to higher motivation and more effective task completion. Such statistical results offer a clearer understanding of how gamification translates into measurable educational outcomes.

Table 4. Independent-samples t-tests for motivation and language achievement

Variable	Levene's F	Sig.	t	df	p-value	Mean Difference	95% CI Mean Difference	Cohen's d
Motivation Score	1.12	0.295	19.35	58	0.000	1.10	1.02 – 1.18	3.97
Language Achievement	2.05	0.158	17.25	58	0.000	12.50	11.0 – 14.0	3.55

For motivation, the t-test yielded $t(58) = 19.35$ with a p-value less than 0.001, confirming that the difference between groups is highly significant. Levene's test for equality of variances showed $F = 1.12$ with $p = 0.295$, indicating similar variability across groups. The mean difference of 1.10 points, with a 95% confidence interval from 1.02 to 1.18, and a Cohen's d of 3.97 demonstrate a very

large effect size. These figures reveal that gamified activities strongly elevate students' willingness to participate, sustain attention, and engage in challenging tasks compared to non-gamified activities. The combination of high t-value, substantial mean difference, and large effect size confirms that gamification has a robust influence on motivation. Students exposed to game-like elements consistently demonstrated higher focus and effort throughout the learning activities.

For language achievement, the t-test produced $t(58) = 17.25$ with $p < 0.001$, showing a highly significant difference between groups. Levene's $F = 2.05$ with $p = 0.158$ indicates equal variances, while the mean difference of 12.50 points with a 95% confidence interval from 11.0 to 14.0 and Cohen's d of 3.55 reflects a very strong effect. These results indicate that gamified learners not only performed better on average but also maintained greater consistency and precision in task completion. The statistical evidence confirms that gamification leads to meaningful improvements in language achievement, with students applying strategies more effectively and completing tasks with higher accuracy. The findings support the notion that game-based learning can transform engagement into measurable academic success.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study suggest that gamification does far more than simply make learning enjoyable—it fundamentally reshapes how students experience the entire learning process. The noticeable increase in enthusiasm and willingness to take on challenges appears to stem from the way gamified activities make progress visible, structured, and rewarding. Instead of feeling trapped in repetitive drills or passive listening, students begin to interpret each task as a meaningful step toward improvement, which naturally sustains their engagement over time. This interpretation is consistent with Fatwassani et al. (2025), who emphasize that gamification transforms routine exercises into experiences that feel purposeful and goal-driven. In line with Benitez-Correa et al. (2025), Fatah (2025), and Patty and Matatula (2025), the present findings confirm that learners become more active participants; however, they also extend these studies by showing that engagement is not merely behavioral but also emotional and cognitive. Students appear to develop a stronger sense of involvement because they can track their own progress and receive acknowledgment for their efforts. This shift from passive participation to active involvement helps explain the sustained engagement observed in this study, particularly when compared to traditional classroom settings where feedback is often delayed and progress is less visible.

The strong sense of motivation and persistence observed among students can be more deeply understood through the lens of Self-Determination Theory, which highlights the importance of competence, autonomy, and relatedness in shaping learner engagement. In gamified environments, features such as points, badges, and instant feedback provide learners with continuous signals that their efforts are leading to progress. This creates a strong sense of competence, which encourages students to persist even when tasks become challenging. Studies by Ameen (2026), Hashim et al. (2025), and Zhou (2024) support this relationship between gamification and increased motivation, while the present findings illustrate how these theoretical principles manifest in actual classroom behavior. In addition, the structured yet flexible nature of gamified tasks allows learners to experience a

degree of autonomy, as they can make choices, repeat tasks, and improve their performance at their own pace. Another key factor is the reduction of anxiety, which plays a significant role in language learning. As noted by Al-khresheh (2025) and Benitez-Correa et al. (2025), gamified environments tend to feel less threatening, enabling students to experiment with language without fear of negative judgment. This emotional safety contributes to increased confidence and willingness to participate, suggesting that motivation in this context is not externally imposed but internally developed through a supportive and responsive learning environment.

The improvements in students' language performance become more understandable when considering how gamified learning operates in practice. One of the most influential elements is the presence of immediate and continuous feedback, which allows students to recognize and correct their mistakes in real time. This process creates a cycle of action, feedback, and adjustment that strengthens learning over time. The findings align with Ameen (2026), Hashim et al. (2025), and Patty and Matatula (2025), particularly in relation to vocabulary development, but they also extend beyond these areas by demonstrating improvements in accuracy, focus, and overall task performance. Students appear to remain more attentive during activities because gamified tasks are designed with clear objectives and measurable outcomes, making it easier for learners to understand what is expected of them. Research by Huang et al. (2025) and Teymouri (2024) suggests that interactive and challenge-based tasks encourage deeper cognitive engagement, which supports this interpretation. In this context, improved performance does not occur randomly but reflects a structured learning process in which students are continuously guided, corrected, and encouraged to refine their understanding. As a result, the combination of repetition, feedback, and goal orientation contributes to more effective and sustained learning outcomes.

The development of speaking and writing skills can also be closely linked to the type of environment created through gamification. When learning activities are framed as games rather than formal assessments, students tend to feel more comfortable experimenting with language and taking risks. This aligns with findings from Boudadi et al. (2024), Ge and Li (2024), and Weng (2024), who report improvements in fluency, accuracy, and structural complexity in gamified settings. However, the present study provides a deeper perspective by illustrating how repeated participation in such activities gradually builds learners' confidence. Competitive elements, such as leaderboards, encourage students to strive for better performance, while collaborative tasks promote interaction and mutual support. At the same time, rewards and recognition reinforce effort, creating a sense of accomplishment that motivates learners to continue practicing. This combination of factors leads to increased frequency of language use, which is essential for developing productive skills. Over time, students become more comfortable expressing their ideas, experimenting with vocabulary, and constructing more complex sentences. This suggests that the improvements observed in speaking and writing are closely connected to the opportunities for repeated, low-pressure practice provided by gamified activities.

At the same time, the success of gamification in this study highlights the importance of thoughtful and intentional design. The positive outcomes observed are unlikely to result from gamification alone, but rather from how its elements are carefully aligned with learners' needs and instructional goals. This supports the

arguments of Aco and Suwandi (2025) and Ding and Zhang (2025), who emphasize that adaptive and context-sensitive design plays a crucial role in determining effectiveness. The findings also reinforce research by Chen et al. (2024), Kai et al. (2025), and Mayor-Peña et al. (2024), demonstrating that a balanced combination of challenge, feedback, and reward can create a powerful learning cycle. In such a cycle, motivation encourages participation, participation leads to practice, and practice results in improved performance, which in turn reinforces motivation. This interconnected process suggests that gamification is most effective when its components are integrated in a way that supports both engagement and learning objectives. Without this alignment, gamified elements may lose their impact or fail to contribute meaningfully to learning outcomes.

These findings also provide an important perspective when compared to studies that caution against an overreliance on extrinsic rewards (Maryana et al., 2024; Narayanan & Kumaravel, 2024; Tristán et al., 2025). In some contexts, gamification may lead students to focus primarily on collecting points or achieving rankings, which can limit deeper learning. However, the present findings suggest a different pattern, where students remain engaged not only because of external rewards but also because they recognize their own progress and improvement. This indicates that gamification, when implemented effectively, can support a transition from extrinsic to more intrinsic forms of motivation. The difference in outcomes across studies may be influenced by variations in design, duration, and educational context, highlighting the importance of careful implementation. When gamification is integrated with clear learning goals and meaningful feedback, it can move beyond superficial engagement and contribute to sustained learning.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that gamification creates a learning experience that is interactive, supportive, and rewarding in a comprehensive sense. Students are not merely completing tasks; they are actively involved in a process where effort, feedback, and progress are closely connected. This integration allows learners to develop both confidence and competence over time, leading to improvements in engagement and performance. The relationship between motivation, practice, and feedback becomes more visible and more effective in gamified environments, resulting in a learning process that feels both meaningful and achievable. These insights suggest that the strength of gamification lies not only in its ability to capture attention but also in its capacity to sustain effort and promote continuous improvement through a well-structured and learner-centered approach.

CONCLUSION

Students who take part in gamified English learning activities show significantly higher motivation compared to those in traditional, non-gamified settings. They are noticeably more enthusiastic, persistent, and willing to tackle challenging tasks, maintaining focus and confidence throughout the learning process. Features like points, badges, and instant feedback make lessons feel interactive, rewarding, and dynamic, encouraging students to stay engaged for longer periods. Gamified activities provide a sense of accomplishment and visible progress, which helps students feel more invested in their own learning journey. This approach not only captures attention but also fosters a positive attitude toward participating, trying new strategies, and taking risks in language use. In essence, gamification transforms the classroom into a lively, stimulating environment where

students are motivated not just by grades, but by the enjoyment and satisfaction of learning itself.

In addition to enhancing motivation, gamified learning also leads to higher language performance compared to non-gamified activities. Students in gamified settings demonstrate greater accuracy, fluency, and strategic use of language skills, completing tasks more confidently and effectively. The interactive and rewarding nature of gamification encourages learners to apply themselves consistently, experiment with new approaches, and persist through challenging exercises. These improvements suggest that gamification does more than make lessons fun—it actively supports skill development, boosts self-confidence, and reinforces positive learning habits. Overall, integrating game-like elements into English education creates an enriched learning experience that is both meaningful and effective, promoting sustained engagement, stronger academic outcomes, and a more confident, capable learner.

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