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Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
University of Mohamed Seddik BenYahia. Jijel
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Teachers' and Students' Perception towards Using Gamification
in Teaching English Language

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillments of the requirements for the degree of Master in
didactics of foreign languages

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2021-2022

Declaration

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled “Teachers’ and Students’ Perception towards Using Gamification in Teaching English Language” is my own work and all the sources I have used have been acknowledged by means of references. I also certify that I have not copied or plagiarized the work of other students or researchers partially or fully. In case any material is not documented, I shall be responsible for the consequences.

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Dedication

In the name of Allah, the most gracious, the most merciful,

I heartily dedicate the fruit of my humble work to:

The apple of my eyes, who brought me to life and are my confidants, my parents, **Boualem** and **Fatiha**, may Allah always bless them;

My three soldiers, who are my sons more than my brothers, **Yassine**, **Noureddine** and **Islam Chahil**;

My **grandmother**'s memory who left this world few months before this work sees the light, who used to encourage me to step forward and optimize my outcomes in both professional and academic careers;

My little angel's memory, **Nourhane**, my cousin who left at a very young age;

My teacher who turned into one of my closest friends, **Dina Cheniti**, my ally whom I am grateful to have by my side;

My dearest friend, **Ayyoub Rekima**, with whom I share the eagerness to learn for the sake of learning;

My Alvarita, only she knows the meaning, **Hiba Bekkouche**, my partner since the first-year licence;

My dear friend **Aymen Chebita**, with whom brotherhood exceeds friendship;

My lovely cousins **Noussia**, **Yousra**, **Marwa**, and my friends **Yasmine**, **Malika**, **Warda**, **Nour El Imene**, **Mohamed Abderraouf** and **Yassine** with whom I shared lot of laughter and memories during this year.

My **Optimize** team, one by one, to whom I wish all the best and success.

My second family, my work team, **Şadan**, **Khadidja** and **Bilal** to whom I send my regards,

All my teachers, whom I am grateful to have as part of this five years journey.

All my family members, friends and colleagues who supported my academic goals.

Acknowledgement

First, all praise be to the most graceful and the compassionate the Almighty Allah who supplied me with strength, guidance, courage and blessing in time to accomplish this modest work.

I would like to express my profound appreciation and sincere gratitude to **Dr. Abdeldjalil Bouzenoun** for convincing me not to postpone this academic year, and accepting to guide this humble work by offering his precious time, valuable comments and sharing his knowledge and experience. I would like to title my supervisor's guidance "**Don't give me the fish, but teach me how to catch a fish**" for all the skills I have learnt throughout this journey, as he paved the way for me to learn further and made the research process easier.

I would like to thank the board of examiners **Mr. Redouane Naili** and **Dr. Fateh Bounar** for devoting their time and effort to read this modest work. Their insightful comments during the viva will certainly be of great value to enrich this humble work.

I also would like to express my profound gratitude for my former teacher and close friend **Dina Cheniti**, for her support and valuable time, and for being by my side step by step during the preparation of this humble work.

I also express my sincere appreciation to my favourite teacher **Dr. Meriem Bousba**, who always finds kind and motivating words to make me work harder and achieve my academic goals.

My sincere appreciation for my head manager at work Mr. **Sadettin Şadan Tenes** who supported my academic goals, and permitted me to have the exact needed time to work on them;

I would also thank my **Optimize** team, whom have shown support and cooperation during the data gathering process.

My profound gratitude to all the teachers and students who kindly accepted to help in the data collecting procedure.

Abstract

Teaching is a dynamic process, that arises over time. In the same view, teaching EFL has to be enhanced according to the current updates, since today' students are not the same as they used to be. Digital natives have a distinct mindset that allows them to grasp information differently since they grew using digital devices, in addition to their limited attention span, that hinders their learning process when exposed to the classical ways of instruction; thus, they are likely to be demotivated and have less intention to get engaged which also thwarts their autonomous learning. As a solution to this problem, gamification can be integrated in teaching EFL process. The reviewed literature of this study highlights the benefits of using gamification in teaching and the positive results obtained from this integration. This research aimed at investigating the effectiveness of gamification as an instructional technique to enhance the students' motivation, engagement and autonomy. It was carried at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia, involving teachers and students at the department of English, through the use of a questionnaire for students and semi-structured interviews with teachers. The findings demonstrated that the teachers agreed, to a great extent, on the benefit of integrating gamification in their teaching, as it can be engaging for their learners. In the same line, the students favour the application of game elements in and outside the class, as they consider it to be motivating and fosters their autonomous learning. This research concluded that the technique of gamification, if included in teaching EFL, would enhance the students' motivation, engagement, and autonomous learning.

Keywords: EFL, digital natives, microlearning, gamification.

List of Abbreviations

- 01- CALL:** Computer-Assisted Language Learning
- 02- CTML:** Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning
- 03- CLT:** Cognitive Load Theory
- 04- DDE:** Design, Dynamics, Experience framework
- 05- DPE:** Design, Play, Experience framework
- 06- ECL:** Extraneous Cognitive Load
- 07- EFL:** English as a Foreign Language
- 08- ESL:** English as a Second Language
- 09- GCL:** Germane Cognitive Load
- 10- ICL:** Intrinsic Cognitive Load
- 11- L1:** First Language
- 12- MALL:** Mobile-Assisted Language Learning
- 13- MDA:** Mechanics, Dynamic, Aesthetic framework
- 14- Q:** Question
- 15- SDTM:** Self Determination Theory of Motivation
- 16- TEFL:** Teaching English as Foreign Language
- 17- TESL:** Teaching English as Second Language

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General Introduction

1. Background of the Study
2. Statement of the Problem
3. Research Questions
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General Introduction

1. Background of the Study

Nowadays, learning English as a foreign language has become a trending necessity, especially after the emergence of technology in education. Since change and advancement occur in many areas of human life, the educational system would not be an exception. Thus, in order to keep pace with this development, it is crucial to evolve the teaching and learning process. To put it another way, there should be a modernisation of the techniques, even use of different tools can make the difference, or an implementation of new ones.

Microlearning is a term used to describe the pedagogy that motivates learning in small-sized units which fit the learners' cognitive process, using different platforms (Major & Calandrino, 2018). It is a technology-assisted learning approach where mobile phones and computers are involved in the educational pedagogy. One of the microlearning techniques is *gamification*. This concept, according to Werbach and Hunter (2012), refers to using game design and components in a non-game context. Banfield and Wilkerson (2014) asserted that the gamification elements if integrated with the educational pedagogy increase learners' motivation. Therefore, it prompts their engagement towards learning in general and learning foreign languages in particular.

Gamification in education attracted the attention of different researchers, because they seek to find different techniques to improve the instructional process. In this view, Al Dosakee & Ozdamli (2021), in their research, aimed to present this technique and related it to EFL over three databases: Web of Science, Science Direct and Scopus. This study was a literature review of 103 studies published between 2010-2020 that had gamification as the principal matter. The findings revealed that gamification is a beneficial technique for teaching and learning languages, as it can enhance learners' motivation and makes learning

enjoyable. Furthermore, research was conducted by Arunsirot (2021), whereby an experiment was carried to investigate the effectiveness of integrating gamification in English classroom, on improving syntactic knowledge of students; then, exploring the learners' views towards the use of gamification in classroom. The results asserted that the use of game elements enhanced the students' English syntactic knowledge, which favoured the integration of this technique at higher levels of education. Another study was carried by Dehghanzadeh & Dehghanzadeh (2020), to examine the findings of 28 published articles related to gamification in a form of a systematic review. The findings confirmed that the integration of gamification gained popularity among researchers after 2015, approving the benefits of gamified instruction on EFL teaching and learning.

2. Statement of the problem

Instruction techniques have been changing succeeding the advance of the teaching methods and approaches. This change has been through adding, removing or adopting new techniques, because each method or approach has its advantages and pitfalls. The latter is used as a guide to search for new insights to improve the teaching-learning process.

The old techniques are relevant to the macro context of teaching and learning, evidently, these are not suitable for digital natives who favour the micro context. The traditional instructions is based on long lessons, composed of too many items and needs long periods to be tackled. Knowing that the attention span and the cognitive load are -relatively- limited, this can impede the learner's acquisition of information in general and foreign language learning in particular. Moreover, the lack of creativity in the instructional process demotivates the learners and creates boredom. In addition, the focus on the teacher as the only source of knowledge reduces the students' opportunity for autonomous learning. To bridge the gap between the learners needs and the available techniques, digital natives seek to learn in a microlearning context, opening doors for instructors to teach microcontent;

where lessons are divided into small chunks, allowing the learners to be exposed to the suitable amount of knowledge for their cognitive load to process effectively. The present research sheds light on gamification as a microlearning technique used to optimise teaching and learning English as a foreign language.

3. Research Questions

In order to investigate the effectiveness of using game elements at the university level, this research seeks to answer the following questions:

- What are the EFL teachers' views of the integration of gamification in the teaching process?
- What are EFL learners' views of the effectiveness of using gamification in their learning process?

4. Research Hypothesis

The researcher of this study assumes that EFL teachers and learners have positive view towards the use of gamification in the educational sector, they believe it came to meet the needs of digital natives, and optimise the teaching and learning process in general as it can be applied for EFL teaching at the university level.

5. Research Methodology

The current research necessitates a mixed methodology, that consists of quantitative and qualitative data elicitation techniques, through conducting a survey at the University of Mohammed Sedik Ben Yahia Jijel. At first, a questionnaire was assigned online, and answered by two hundred and forty (240) EFL students, to collect information about their views on using gamification in education. Later, a semi-structured interview was carried out with ten (10) EFL teachers, in order to obtain in-depth data about their views concerning using gamification, adding to what extent this technique can be integrated into their teaching process.

6. Aims and Significance of the Study

This proposed research intends to achieve the following:

- Investigate whether the involved EFL teachers and learners in this research use gamification in the teaching-learning process.
- Investigate to what extent this technique is accepted among teachers and applied in their teaching process.
- Explore the teachers' and students' perceptions of the effectiveness of embracing gamification as a microlearning technique in learning EFL.
- Investigate the reasons and the benefits of the shift to microlearning and the use of gamification as a technique.
- Shed light on this technique in order to be taken into consideration and adopted by teachers in their instructional process.

7. Organisation of the Dissertation

This research paper is divided into two chapters; the literature review and the fieldwork. The first chapter is composed of two sections; the first goes from the classical foreign language teaching to mobile learning, whereas the second deals with gamification, starting with the concept until the integration of this technique in education. The practical part describes the adopted research design as well as the description, the analysis, and the discussion of the results obtained from the collected data through the questionnaire and the interview.

Chapter One: Literature Review

Section One: From Classical Foreign Language Teaching to Mobile Learning

Introduction

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Section Two: Gamification in Education

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Chapter one: Literature Review

1. From Classical Foreign Language Teaching to Mobile Learning

Introduction

The advancement in many areas of the human's life required the upgrade of all its aspects, education is one of them. In other words, teaching and learning techniques should also follow the development occurring in the world. Thus, there are always some needed changes or improvements to adopt in order to remain updated and to promote the educational system.

The use of classical techniques is no longer beneficial as it used to be. Since even learners' themselves are changing, looking for different means to fit their learning preferences, as well as to facilitate their acquisition of knowledge in general, and foreign language learning in particular.

1.1 Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

1.1.1 TEFL Vs TESL

Teaching English as a Foreign Language, or simply known as TEFL, is sometimes mixed with TESL which refers to Teaching English as a Second Language. In order to learn what the best techniques to teach English as a non-native language are, one should first understand the difference between the two terms. According to Freeman and Freeman (1998), in both cases, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second language (ESL), it is not the learners' mother tongue. Still, the EFL is learnt, taught and used within a setting where English is considered as a foreign language. Meanwhile, English is viewed as a second language where one learns it in an environment where it is a *mother tongue* as cited in (Bouzenoun, 2019, p. 22). To put this simply, English is treated as a second language when one learns it in order to use it in daily life, in a setting where it is the first language (L1), contrastingly to EFL which is learnt to be used in specific situations and not in daily life, unless learners want to communicate with native speakers of English through cultural

exchanges and tourism. Bouzenoun (2019) relates the difference between the two terms to the degree of the exposure to English language, to what extent it is used by the learner, and within which context (p. 22). This indicates that learners of EFL have limited exposure to the language, which is usually in classrooms, whereas learners of ESL are already in an environment that requires learning this language and also offers the needed amount of it in and outside the classrooms. Therefore, teachers of English should take into consideration the differences between EFL and ESL to improve their teaching techniques.

1.1.2 Teaching Approaches, Methods, And Techniques

Teaching English as a Foreign Language has always been a matter of discussion. Searching for the best methods and techniques to foster the effectiveness of students' learning process. According to Bouzenoun (2019), the challenge that confronts language teaching is the transmission of the lesson to the learners (p. 26). To reduce this challenge, one should first know the best ways to deliver the lesson, and to do so, the distinction between the three concepts of approach, method and technique, should be taken into consideration. The threefold differentiation, of the levels of conceptualisation and organisation was introduced by the American Applied Linguist Edward Anthony (1963) who proposed a hierarchical arrangement for the terms *Approach, Method and Technique*. Anthony (1963, pp. 63-67) stated that:

Approach is a set of assumptions dealing with the nature of language, learning and teaching. That is to say, it is axiomatic and describes the nature of the subject matter to be taught.

Method is an overall plan for systematic presentation of language based upon selected approach. In other words, it is procedural and describes how we teach something. Within one approach, there can be many methods.

Technique is a specific activity manifested in the classroom that is consistent with method and therefore in harmony with an approach as well. That is to say, it is particular and used to accomplish an immediate objective.

The distinction of the aforementioned tripartite was also elaborated by Richards and Rodgers (1985), although they changed the designation to *approach, design and procedure*, all under the umbrella of method, as a general idea to describe and interrelate theory and practice (Richards & Rodgers, 1985, p. 16) They are explained as follow:

Approach refers to the beliefs and theories about language, language learning and teaching that underlie a method.

Design specifies how theories of language and learning are implemented in a syllabus model and teaching and learning activities and materials in the classroom.

Procedure concerns the techniques and practices employed in the classroom as consequences of particular approaches and designs. (Richards & Rodgers, 1985, p. 17)

To sum up, Anthony, then later Richard and Rodgers, explained the levels of language teaching which can be applied to teaching English as a foreign language. In other words, an approach indicates the nature of the subject matter to be taught, a method is all the followed procedures, and a technique refers to the practices and implementations that can be adopted in classroom; for instance, the use of gamification in EFL classes in this research is considered a technique.

1.2. The Integration of Technology in Education

1.2.1 Microlearning

1.2.1.1 Definition of Microlearning

Microlearning came as a modern method of learning. Before plunging into its definition, one should first understand the meaning of this term as well as the words forming it. This term is composed of two words “micro” and “learning”. Conforming to the Oxford

dictionary, “micro” means something “of reduced or restricted size”. While the dictionary of Merriam Webster defines it as “very small, involving minute quantities and variations”. “Learning”, on the other hand, is defined by Merriam Webster as “knowledge and skills acquired by instruction or study”. Therefore, microlearning means learning through acquiring small units of knowledge.

According to Major & Calendrino (2018), microlearning is considered any kind of instruction that fosters learning in *small-sized units*, which can be reinforced using many devices (p. 2). Microlearning is a machinery-assisted learning tactic, in which the activities presented to the learners are in a small-size that can be processed formally or informally (Khong & Kabilan, 2020, p. 2). Microlearning is a perspective that relates many education facets and learning using mobiles (Hug, 2010). Buchem and Hamelmann (2010), and Nikou and Econimides (2018) mentioned that microlearning has the characteristics that enhance the learner’s autonomy, as it is a self-organised lifetime learning, as cited in (Khong & Kabilan, 2020, p. 3). The authors added that microlearning is easy to fit into one’s life, since it contains bite-sized, single-topic items to be learnt in an autonomous setting (Khong & Kabilan, 2020, p. 3). It is also considered a “part of a larger curriculum or set of other instructional material” (Rettger, 2017, p. 18). All in all, microlearning is a contemporary way of learning, it focuses on grasping small chunks or small parts, like short activities, rather than a whole lesson. This denotes that even the periods of time consumed during the learning process are shorter compared to the ones spent using classical techniques.

1.2.1.2 Microcontent

Microlearning suggests the acquisition of knowledge through *small-sized chunks* of a defined topic that can be processed easily in short periods of time. This was asserted by Nilsson (2021) who stated that “by breaking information down into smaller modules, learners are enabled to focus on one specific set of information at a time” (p. 9). This

indicates that instead of studying a full lesson, that contains several items and needs hours to be learnt which became old-fashioned nowadays, one has just to digest small chunks related to the topic under study.

Microcontent is usually delivered through micro-media. The latter refers to cybernated media, supplied by different instruments that are sometimes linked to networks, such as mobile phones, which offer sustainable and autonomous portions of microcontent that aid the learner to formulate a specific and focal point of micro-knowledge (Khong & Kabilan, 2020, p. 2). In other words, micro-media, in general, is related to the internet, where self-directed small-sized knowledge is stored and ready to be used whenever needed, which facilitates the learning process.

1.2.2 Necessity of Microcontent

Many motives have stimulated the switch into teaching and learning microcontent. To name just the most pertinent: Cognitive Load Theory (CLT), Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML) and Self Determination Theory of Motivation (SDTM).

1.2.2.1 Cognitive Load Theory (CLT)

Cognitive load is defined “as the amount of information that working memory can hold at one time.” (Khong & Kabilan, 2020, p. 5). This means that the capacity of short-term memory –which holds and processes information for a short of time- is limited. Confirming to Miller (1956), the number seven is the limit to working memory’s capacity of elements retention, and this is for only a transient period that does not exceed twenty seconds (p.90). In other words, the human cognitive load can process less than seven items at a time and retain them for no more than twenty seconds. For this reason, and in order to maintain an efficient learning process, instruction has to be designed in a manner in which learners are exposed to new knowledge in fragments that fit the aforementioned limited capacity (Sweller J. , 2012, p. 22). Furthermore, direct instructional guidance is considered the best alternative

to permit learners to improve their schemas smoothly, therefore avoiding engaging them in time-consuming courses that contains arbitrary generation succeeded by testing (Sweller J. , 2012, p. 26).

Cognitive Load is manifested in three main forms; Intrinsic (ICL) Extrinsic (ECL) and Germane (GCL). Before explaining that, one should first refer to the element interactivity. According to Sweller (1994), an element means “any material that needs to be learned” (p. 304). According to the same author (2012, 2019), element interactivity is a measure of informational complexity -the number of items to be processed concurrently in working memory- that CLT considers to reduce through different instructional designs. Thus, to decrease the cognitive load while the acquisition of knowledge (p. 41). The first category is intrinsic (ICL) which is governed by the innate complexity of learning input or activity being tackled at a certain level of proficiency (Khong & Kabilan, 2020, p. 5). This means, having too many elements interacting with each other simultaneously necessitates an unlimited working memory’s capacity, and the load would be difficult to process, hence, the content complexity should be adapted to this limitation. The second category is extraneous (ECL) which “is determined by instructional procedures” (Sweller J. , 2019, p. 9). To put it simply, educational designs in some cases augment the ECL by increasing the element interactivity, in other cases, these designs might not match the learners’ level of expertise in the presented content (Khong & Kabilan, 2020, p. 6). Consequently, the ECL has to be controlled by improving the pedagogical procedures to fit the CL capacity. The third category is germane (GCL), dealing with schema acquisition –the adjustment and storage of information in long-term memory. GCL results from the moderation of element interactivity through micro-content (Khong & Kabilan, 2020, p. 6).

In order to benefit from CLT and create a better instructional design, as maintained by Khong and Kabilan (2020, p. 6) micro-content has to be:

- Coherent and self-governed, to decrease ICL by fragmenting complex activities into minor chunks that can be learnt autonomously,
- Well-organised and spaced, to reduce ECL by forming a short and structured didactical design that facilitates the acquaintance with novel information, then its storage,
- Able to lower the interactivity of elements that would allocate enough working memory capacity for GCL to take place to manage new input, thus, facilitating the schema acquisition.

1.2.2.2 Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML)

The Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML) promotes the use of multimedia in the instructional process. In order to understand it better, one should mention its assumptions. As maintained by Mayer (2005), there are three assumptions the CTML is founded on: the dual-channels, the limited capacity, and the active processing of the information (p. 31).

A. Dual Channels Assumption

Dual-channels assumption means “that humans possess separate information processing channels for visually represented material and auditorily represented material.” (Mayer, 2005, p. 31). To put it another way, information exposed to the learner’s eye is processed in the visual/pictorial channel, whereas knowledge presented to his/her ear is treated in the auditory/verbal channel.

B. Limited Capacity Assumption

Limited capacity as mentioned in the cognitive load theory is also applied to this one. In other words, the load of information the learner is able to process in each channel at one time is limited. For instance, when a video is presented to the learners, only a few images are held in their working memory. (Bouzenoun, 2019, p. 72)

C. Active Processing Assumption

According to Mayer (2005), “humans are active processors who seek to make sense of multimedia presentations” (p. 36). According to Bouzenoun (2019), significant learning takes place when learners actively participate in cognitive processing to generate a coherent mental schema of their experiences. This comprises paying attention to the novel knowledge, organising entering information into pictorial and verbal representation, and integrating them with prior knowledge (p. 72).

2.2.3 Self Determination Theory of Motivation (SDTM)

Self-determination theory of motivation (SDTM) is another proposition that watered the seeds of microlearning, as it helps to explain learners’ motivation and its sources in order to foster their engagement in the learning process. Schnotz et al. (2009), stated that “motivation concerns the direction, intensity and persistence of behaviour” (p. 70). Furthermore, conforming to Lei (2010), “motivation to learn is seen in the form of student persistence, curiosity, and performance” as cited in (Banfield & Wilkerson, 2014, p. 292).

Motivation is divided mainly into two types; intrinsic and extrinsic. The former involves inner or internal motives. That is to say, one can be motivated to do the task itself for the sake of enjoyment and satisfaction. Whereas extrinsic motivation is concerned with external motives. In other words, one is motivated by prizes or goals. In this type of motivation, the activity itself isn’t necessarily interesting, since at the end of it one can be rewarded -by material or non-material rewards- or achieve a goal. On the other hand intrinsic motivation gives importance to the activity itself, as one finds satisfaction doing it. (Pavlova, 2019, p. 31).

SDTM is based on the concept of psychological needs, which is “important because it supplies a criterion for specifying what is essential to life” (Ryan & Deci, 2004, p. 7). This refers to the necessities that permit people to live and improve their lives. Ryan and Deci

(2004) stated that people show a natural tendency to chase challenges, perceive new insights, and conscientiously internalize novel knowledge (p. 3). According to the same authors, SDTM focuses on three main psychological needs, the need for competence, autonomy, and relatedness (p. 7). First, the need for competence is linked to the tendency of feeling effective in achieving appreciated results. This argues that learners should be offered challenging activities, well-structured support, and appropriate feedback through micro-media in order to indulge the learners' need for competence. Second, the need for autonomy is concerned with the learners' will to self-direct and self-endorse their own learning activities. That is to say, to foster learners' need for autonomy, the learning atmosphere should permit them to choose what, when, where and how to involve in microlearning tasks. Third, the need for relatedness, from its name, one can induce that it has relation with the feeling of socialising and connectedness to others. In order to satisfy this need, learning tasks sometimes have to share some interactivity like the one taking place in groups regarding the learners' interests (Khong & Kabilan, 2020, p. 9). Consequently, whenever these three needs are satisfied in a social setting, learners' motivation is enhanced and the learning process is maintained.

1.2.3 Digital Natives and Mobile Learning

The use of technology became primordial in several domains, from the use of computers to mobile phones and other electronic devices. This integration in different areas of the human's life is related to the characteristics of the new generation, or the *digital natives* as Marc Prensky (2001) named them. Conforming to this author, this generation is referred to as *native speakers of digital technology*, in other words, they speak digital as a first language, due to their exposure to digital technology since their birth. Thus, their brains are probably different physically and their learning process will follow this difference (Prensky, 2001, p. 1). To put it simply, digital natives are people who were exposed and been using technology since their younger ages; this makes them different even in their ways of learning, since the

environment in which they grew up is distinct from the one where technology didn't exist. Therefore, to teach this generation, the techniques used by the instructors should be updated to the digital natives' needs and not through the use of the classical ones.

Technology is considered as a valuable and useful teaching and learning scaffold that offers a great number of advantages for both students and instructors (Khan, Radzuan, Shahbaz, & Ibrahim, 2018, p. 41). In education, and language learning precisely, the use of these technologies is referred to as Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL). The former is defined as "any process in which a learner uses a computer and, as a result, improves his or her language" (Beatty, 2013, p. 7). Moreover, according to Levy (1997), CALL is "the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning" as cited in (Chapelle, 2012, p. 1). To put simply, CALL refers to any pedagogy that integrates computers as a mean of teaching and learning languages. Meanwhile, MALL is related to the use of mobile technology to engage the students in language learning (Loewen, et al., 2019, p. 2). This implies that the use of any *portable device* is counted as a mobile technology, not only mobile phones, but also tablets... etc, in teaching and learning languages.

In order to better understand the reason behind integrating technology in education besides the digital native's characteristics, one should know the features of mobile learning. Loewen, et al. (2019) declared that mobile learning offers a certain flexibility, continuity, ease to access to information, and adaptability (p. 2). This means that learning through the use of mobiles is flexible, because one can use them to learn anytime and anywhere. The continuity of learning that it offers through the use of different devices; one can start learning using a mobile phone then switch to another electronic device, a tablet for instance. It also makes the access to information easy as it is always available especially when connected to internet. The features mentioned above open doors for *blended learning*. In this view,

Dziuban et al. (2018), stated that “blended learning is a double component, integration of traditional face-to-face education with technological platforms” as cited in (Rahim, 2019 , p. 1166). Likewise, mobile learning can be distance, online, as it can be self-regulated or schedule-based learning (Chinnery, 2006, p. 9). This suggests the combination of face-to-face, in classes, and distant, online using electronic devices, teaching and learning. Thus, fitting the learner’s busy schedule, by delivering small bites of knowledge is done successfully through, the use of technology, mobile-learning.

Conclusion

To sum-up, this section was about the development that has occurred in education. It follows the update that researchers seek to perform each time in order to facilitate knowledge acquisition. This part promotes for the integration of technology using microcontent, in order to make digital native benefit from the available devices and alternatives, as well as paving the way for gamification as a microlearning technique to take place.

2. Gamification in Education

Introduction

Digital natives refer to the new generation learners, who grasp information differently from the classical one. This suggests that teaching them has to be updated according to their needs; by integrating technology devices in and outside classrooms, in addition to delivering small chunks of knowledge at a time instead of long lessons. Instructors who adopt microcontent use different techniques like gamification for instance. This technique is going to be explained in detail in this section.

2.1 The concept of Gamification

2.1.1 The History and Definition of Gamification

Gamification is considered as a new concept, although it has its root since decades. According to Pavlova (2019), this concept existed long time before it extended beyond technology, and turned into a multi-disciplinary term (p. 19). Pavlova (2019), also stated that gamification followed the rise of the video game industry, which always aims to catch people's attention and make them willing to play and participate in activities (p. 19). To put this another way, the concept of gamification is not a new one, since all humans play games in a way or another; however, it started gaining proponents with the increase and diversity of video games, as they make people play them regularly. In this view, Csikszentmihalyi (1990), asserted that "the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it" (Csikszentmihályi, 1991, p. 4). This means, when individuals find something pleasant, it attracts them to do it repeatedly to live the experience again. Furthermore, Pavlova (2019), put this forward claiming that "games are supposed to catch the attention of the player in such a way that all the other distractions are pushed to the periphery of consciousness, which may lead to experiencing a loss of self-consciousness and a distortion of time when playing" (p. 19). In other words, the aim behind making games is

to attract people and motivate them to play the game. The mechanics and aesthetics of the game are done in a very attractive manner that makes the player lose the notion of time while playing.

Gamification has several definitions, although there is no generally accepted one. According to Karimi & Nickpayam (2017), this concept's emergence dates back to 2008; however, it started gaining popularity around 2010 (p. 34) . The commonly used definition is provided by Deterding, Khaled et al. (2011), who described it as “the use of *game elements* in *non-game contexts*” as cited in (Naji, 2020, p. 7). Moreover, Kapp (2012) added that gamification is “using game-based mechanics, aesthetics and game thinking to engage people, motivate action, promote learning, and solve problems” (p. 10). Furthermore, Anderson et al. (2017), as cited in Arunsitrot (2021) added that gamification offers the needed motivation for learners to solve problems, participate in activities and apply them in real life setting; therefore, enhance learners' achievement (p. 33). Gamification can also refer to the application of a collection of activities and processes to deal with an obstacle using one or several game elements in a teaching-learning setting (Al-Dosakee & Ozdamli, 2021, p. 560). In addition, Alfulaih (2019), added that the application of gamification in many domains, business, health care, and education, works to involve and attract individuals' attention into different activities of each domain, which otherwise would not be interesting (p. 20). To put this simply, gamification is a technique based on the use of elements related to games in another setting than gaming. Its application aims to make people benefit from the characteristics of these elements, as they promote individuals' motivation and engagement in whatever they are tackling. It also provides fun and enjoyment for its users; thus, makes them engaged and willing to achieve their goals.

2.1.2 Game-Based Learning Vs Gamification

At first glance, the term *gamification* makes one think of its relation with games. Certainly, *games* are the root of this technique; nonetheless, many individuals confuse it with serious games, which are also known as game-based learning. Although both of the aforementioned try to control aspects of games to achieve something beyond playfulness, there is a difference between them. According to Chapman & Rich (2018), gamification is not the conversion of activities into games; though, it intends to extract the principles of how and why games motivate the players; thus, use them as a basis to promote interaction in non-game settings (p. 315). This means, gamification focuses on understanding the reasons behind the players' motivation and engagement towards games, to apply them in other settings than games. To have a clearer idea of this distinction, one should know what serious games, game-based learning, refer to. Conforming to Flores (2015), they are described as "full-fledged games for non-entertainment purposes" (p. 39). Game-based learning is a procedure that uses games to instruct learners both inside and outside the classroom (Huang, 2018, p. 14). In this view, Karimi & Nickpayam (2017), stated that "serious games reflect games that are linked to a particular learning objective" (p. 35). Furthermore, it is described as the integration of games into education in order to teach learners a specific skill or attain a learning objective; thus, game-based learning deals with the game itself and its cognitive resulted features (Alfulaih, 2019, p. 22). According to the same author (2019), serious games are used to attain two goals; the game goal, the steps the player should follow and the rewards to receive at the end; and the learning goal, it refers to the learned skill intended from playing the game (Alfulaih, 2019, p. 22). To put this simply, serious games encompass a real game in the teaching/learning process, aiming to teach a certain skill or ability as a goal. This means, that the targeted skill is turned into a game, with its steps, to increase learners' motivation and make them participate and learn in a funny way; therefore, enhance the

learning process. On the other hand, gamification does not include the games themselves; yet, it uses the features and elements of games to make learners motivated and more engaged in the instructional procedure.

2.2 Game Elements

The common definition of gamification focuses on the use of game mechanics and game design in the instructional process. One should know what these elements are in order to understand how they are used in a non-game setting.

2.2.1 Game Mechanics

According to Flores (2015), the *game components*, are available in the majority of game; like points, badges, rewards, progress bars...etc. These components have different purposes, and can be easily adapted to other contexts than games; work, business, education and so on (p. 39). This means that *game mechanics* represent the rules underlying the game, which can be adopted in several domains rather than gaming setting. Although there are many mechanics used in games, there are some more used in a non-game context than others. According to (Pavlova, 2019, p. p: 26-26; Naji, 2020, p. p: 15-16; Flores, 2015, p. 39), the widespread game mechanics that can be used in the instructional process are as follow:

- **Avatars:** refers to the visual representation of the learner through an image linked directly to his/her particular character, which is mostly used while playing in a virtual setting.
- **Badges:** indicate the accomplishment of a given task, or a skill by the learner, they are given to him/her as an award, a visual sign of achievement and recognition.
- **Feedback:** it describes the progress in the activities; games deliver informational feedback, which induces the targeted behaviour, thought and actions.
- **Leaderboards:** In order to give significance to other components, leaderboards indicate the player's rank, name and score, where the leader is the one placed in the first position in rank. It aims to create competition between the learner; thus, fostering group work.

- **Points and levels:** Points represent a numerical data, or a scoring system, indicating the status progress of a person in the game, these points accumulated together, make the learner jump from a level to another, as each level necessitates a certain number of points.
- **Challenge:** It refers to any kind of activity or task that requires an effort to be solved, it is considered to be in a higher level than the learner's one.
- **Rewards and competition:** it's a system followed to motivate the learners to complete a given task or achieve an upper level, and winning a certain number of points, through offering them prizes as gifts, stickers...etc.
- **Progress tracking:** this means that the learner's progress is measured each time to verify if there is an improvement or not. It is usually presented through graphs, or bars; which works as an illustration of the extent to which the task has been completed.

According to Pektaş & Kepceoğlu (2019), game mechanics are adopted in the instructional processes. This means, challenges, ways to gain and lose points, complete mission...etc, are used in the description of goals and objectives of the instruction. Moreover, the use of characters, avatars, unlimited possibilities, are integrated to increase the learners' participation and engagement. Furthermore, equipment, virtual coins, lives, power bank...etc, are adopted to evaluate the learners' achievement and prize them with rewards. In addition to the progress trackers, signs and warnings that are used in the feedback section. Also, the cooperation and collaboration are done through team work, guides, battles...etc (p. 66). In other words, the use of game mechanism is a projection of their benefits on the instructional process, to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge.

2.2.2 Game Design Frameworks

Another component of gamification inherited from games is game design. To understand better how games work, one should know game design frameworks. Since games are a combination of different elements, three frameworks have been developed; the Mechanics-

Dynamics-Aesthetics (MDA); the Design, Play, Experience (DPE); and the Design, Dynamics, Experience (DDE).

The *Mechanics-Dynamics-Aesthetic Framework* (MDA), from its name one can deduce that it contains three parts. First, *mechanics*, which describe the exact components of the game, at the algorithms and data representation level which keep the person engaged in the process. Second, *dynamics*, are the wide-ranging aspects of gamified system that should be considered although it may not be a part of the game. Third, *aesthetic*, it characterises the needed emotional responses evoked in the player during the interaction with the game systems, in other words, it creates a sense of amusement which makes the players engaged with the gamified process. The main aim of this framework is to make the game elements easy to be adopted in a non-game setting (Werbach & hunter, 2012; Azmi & sigh, 2015; Naji, 2020). To put this simply, the tripartite modal used the designation of mechanics, dynamics and aesthetic to describe the combination of game elements that seems to facilitate the integration of these elements in education.

The Design, Play, Experience Framework (DPE), came as an expansion of the MDA framework, it aims to include the targeted pedagogical content as narrative, characters, and underlying technology in the gamified process. It alludes that the cooperative design and interaction between game-elements and learning context fosters the appropriateness of this framework to education (Winn, 2009, pp. 1014,1015). To put this another way, this modal came as an update to the previous one, also aiming to facilitate the integration of the game elements other contexts than games.

The *Design, Dynamics, Experience Framework* (DDE), in which *mechanics* in MDA is called *design* instead. In addition to *aesthetics* that changed into *experience*, in order to seem more comprehensible, since it denotes a closer terminology to player's journey with games. The DDE framework alludes that game should be considered as experiences instead of

functional elements, this means, designer should orient their game design into experience-based approach and not a functional one (Winn, 2009; Naji, 2020 p. 14). This means, the DDE modal asserts the experiential side of games that should be focused on during the preparation of the instructional design.

2.3 Gamification in Education

2.3.1 The Integration of Gamification in Education

The use of gamification in the educational context needs an adaptation of game elements to instruction. To dig deeper, and better understand this matter, one should have an idea of how a gamified instruction is done. According to Flores (2015), in order to guide educators to the way they can gamify their teaching, the application of gamification needs a succession of steps to be followed (p. 43). In the same view, Huang & Soman (2013), proposed a five steps model to show how to gamify education, in which they explained the importance of each step.

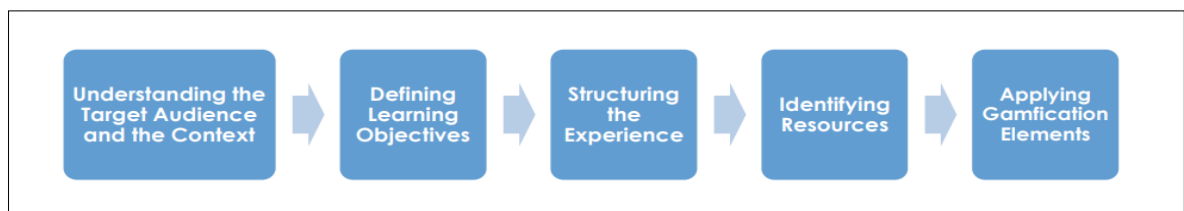


Figure 01: Educational Gamification Five Step Model

Adapted from (Huang & Soman, 2013, p. 7)

The figure above shows the five steps of the *gamified education model*. First, *understanding the target audience and the context*, this key factor governs the success of the instructional program (Huang & Soman, 2013, p. 7). This means, instructors have to know first the characteristics of their students, adding to the setting in which instruction takes place, as this helps the teacher to plan instruction accordingly. Second, *defining learning objectives*, as a second step, teachers should have general educational goals, where learners have to complete an assignment; specific learning goals, where learners are able to perform

a task; and behavioural goals, like minimizing distraction in class (Flores, 2015, p. 44). This alludes, that educators are required to have the capacity to join and implement the learning objectives to make the gamified learning successful. Third, *structuring the experience*, in this step, teachers prepare the sequence and quantify what the learners' need to achieve by the end of each level (Flores, 2015, p. 44). To put this simply, the third step works on the identification of the main points of the program, in addition to the main obstacles that can be faced by learners during the learning process. Fourth, *identifying resources*, the educator will be able to judge which stage s/he is going to gamify according to several aspects like tracking mechanism, levels, feedback and points (Huang & Soman, 2013, p. 11). In other words, this stage permits teachers to know if they can apply gamification in their process or not, as it shows the game elements that could be implemented in educational setting. Fifth, *applying game element*, which can be either self-elements as points, achievement badges and levels; or social-elements like leaderboards as interactive competition and cooperation (Huang & Soman, 2013, p. 13). This alludes to the integration of game elements according to the aimed activity; if it is an individual one, the teacher should use elements that attract learners to compete with themselves to win points, badges...etc. However, when the task requires interactive competition the use of leaderboards would be the needed element to integrate.

Gamification is also combined with *blended learning* setting, and this affects students' learning positively. According to Yildirim (2017), who asserted that blended learning when supported by gamification has a positive impact on the students' attitude towards the lesson (p. 14). In the same view, Mese & Dursan (2019), who conducted a study on the combination of blended learning and gamification, asserted that this combination has a positive effect on learning, as students are more motivated to achieve tasks related to their academic career (p. 131). In other words, gamification in blended learning, the continuous instruction through

face-to-face learning and mobile learning, enhances students' motivation and fosters their individual achievement in learning.

2.3.2 Gamification on Students' Motivation, Engagement, and Autonomy

Gamification has an effect on the students' learning, more precisely, on students' *motivations, engagement* and *autonomy*. Motivation, is related to the learners' willingness to be part of the instructional process; while engagement is related to the environment in which the instruction takes place as it is the motive to make the learner participate or not, and autonomy refers to the learners' ability to learn with less or no teachers' interference. *Gamified education* is based on practices that envisages educational objectives, which students will see as challenges to be faced and accomplished to jump from a level the other; thus, this is considered a part of the learning outcome (Flores, 2015, p. 43). This means, the students will be more *engaged* and *motivated* if the instructors set the lesson's objectives in a way where learners consider them challenges, and keep moving forward each time they complete a task or a lesson to the next one. Moreover, the integration of game elements like reward system rises the learners' motivation, because their performance and achievement will be *openly recognized*. Furthermore, the implementation of these elements is seen as a motivational tool; for instance, badges can be used as a form of formative assessment, the continuous evaluation of students, that permit learners to keep their level of motivation and engagement high to accomplish the needed tasks and receive the badges (Flores, 2015, p. 43). To put this simply, gamification's purpose is to make students motivated and engaged in the educational process through game elements that keep the learner interested and aiming to learn. On the other hand, *autonomy*, as mentioned earlier, is also affected by gamification. Learners' autonomy is enhanced whenever they collaborate and are involved, because they will feel themselves part of a group and will think they are responsible for their learning process; thus, will use their own plans to organize and manage their learning (Garcia, 2017,

pp. 14-16). In addition, the students should be permitted to decide how much amount of content to be learned (Landers, Armstrong, & Collmus, 2017, p. 474). To put this another way, the need for autonomy as maintained by SDT, should be satisfied, in this case, through the use of gamification. This means, the integration of game elements for instance, allows the learners to have the opportunity to study following their paces. Furthermore, since today's learners are digital natives, they would prefer an online setting using electronic devices to be included in their learning journey, with small chunks of knowledge, that permits them to be responsible for their learning progress.

2.3.3 Gamification Application in Foreign Language Teaching

There are many researchers conducted to see the effects of using gamification in the educational setting, and EFL context specifically. A brief summary about some recent studies (Al-Dosakee & Ozdamli, 2021; Arunsirot, 2021; Dehghanzadeh & Dehghanzadeh, 2020)

Al Dosakee & Ozdamli (2021), conducted a study titled *Gamification in Teaching and Learning Languages: A Systematic Literature Review*, in which they aimed to present gamification and EFL over three databases Web of Science, Science direct and Scopus. The researchers reviewed 103 studies published between 2010-2020 that tackled the use of gamification in teaching. The results of this study declare that gamification is a beneficial technique for teaching and learning languages, as it can enhance learners' motivation and makes learning enjoyable (Al-Dosakee & Ozdamli, 2021, p. 559).

Under the title *Integration of Gamification Approach in EFL Classroom Context*, Arunsirot (2021), aimed to examine the effectiveness of incorporating gamification in English classroom for English-majored students on improving their English syntactic knowledge, in addition to exploring the learners' view concerning the use of gamification in classroom. This study was conducted on 64 students, who were divided into two equal

groups, experimental group and control group, they registered in the English Syntax1 core course in section 1 and 2 respectively. In the experimental group, gamification was incorporated in the learning process, while the control group was supplemented with an ordinary course book. The researcher used a pre-test and post-test, and a questionnaire on incorporating gamification. The finding of this study revealed that the experimental group was ranking higher than control one. As a result, the use of game elements fosters the students' English syntactic knowledge, in addition to a positive view towards the integration of this technique at higher levels (Arunsirot, 2021, p. 30).

Dehghanzadeh & Dehghanzadeh (2020) conducted a study aiming to examine the findings of studies related to gamification in EFL of 28 articles published during 11 years. The researchers followed a systematic review methodology, resulting in finding that after the year of 2015, the integration of gamification gained popularity among researchers. Furthermore, quantitative methods were adopted and the data have been analyzed; the results mainly showed the benefits of gamified instruction on EFL teaching and Learning (Dehghanzadeh & Dehghanzadeh, 2020, p. 53).

Conclusion

In a nutshell, the technique of gamification attracted the interest of many researchers, as it consists of using the game elements in a non-game context. It is integrated in education because researchers consider it to be motivating and engaging for the students to enhance their learning; thus, it will be beneficial for EFL learners.

Chapter two: Fieldwork

Introduction

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2.2 Population Sampling

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Chapter Two: Fieldwork

Introduction

The current chapter is devoted to the practical part of the research in hand, which aims at determining the perception of teachers and students concerning the use of game elements in teaching EFL. This part aims to test whether the aforementioned hypothesis is to be maintained or rejected; thus, answering the research questions. First, it presents the methodological design of the study, and then deals with the description, analysis and discussion of the data collected through two different tools; a questionnaire for students and an interview for teachers.

2.1 Data Collection Procedures

In the present study, the researcher incorporated both quantitative and qualitative data elicitation instruments, as they appear to be appropriate to investigate the current research. Quantitative data collection is adopted through the use of questionnaires to retrieve relevant data from the students to investigate their perceptions concerning the use of game elements in education. It was administered online to university students from all levels, first-year, second-year, third-year, licence; Master one and two. Second, qualitative data was collected through conducting interviews with the teachers to determine their views on using gamification in teaching the English language.

2.2 Population Sampling

The questionnaire used in this study was conducted using Google Forms and was administered to EFL students at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia. The total number of participants was two hundred and forty (240) varying from all levels. Whereas, an interview with ten (10) teachers was the second tool adopted to investigate this study, varying between face-to-face and online interviews.

2.3. Students' Questionnaire

2.3.1. Description of the Questionnaire

According to MacDonald & Headlam (2008), the questionnaire is seen to be a useful instrument that is commonly used to gather information and provide numerical data, by asking questions (p. 11). In other words, from its name, one can understand this tool contains a number of questions to be asked to the population sample in order to collect the needed data for the researcher to analyze and extract knowledge. In this study, the questionnaire (see appendix 1, page 71) consisted of thirteen (13) questions varying from single responses, multi-responses and Likert scale questions (see appendix 01, page 70). These questions were in order; from general information to specific ones that target the research questions of this study. The asked questions were about the students' perspectives on the use of game elements as a technique to teach the English language.

2.3.2. Analysis of the Questionnaire

Question 01: Are you a male or female?

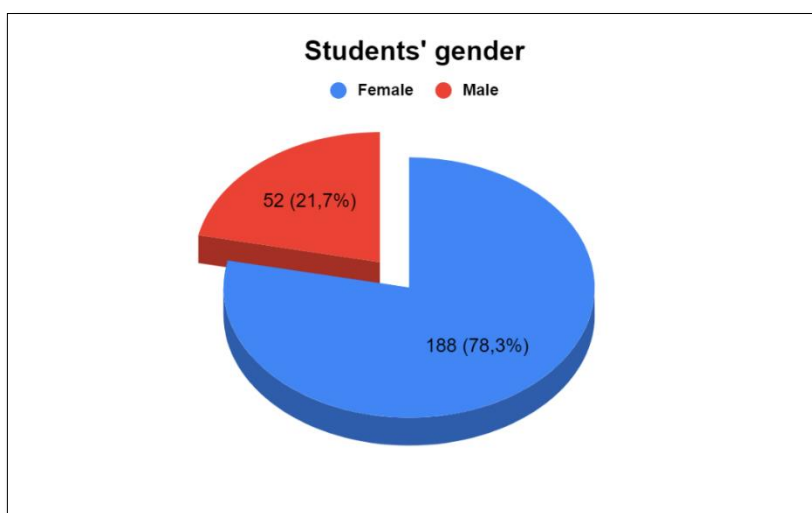


Figure 02: Students' Gender

The purpose of this question is to determine whether the gender difference would affect the learners' view towards the use of gamification in learning EFL. Conforming to the data

presented in the graph below, 188 were females representing the majority of the participants, whereas only 52 were males, all together forming 240 participants.

Question 02: Specify your academic level?

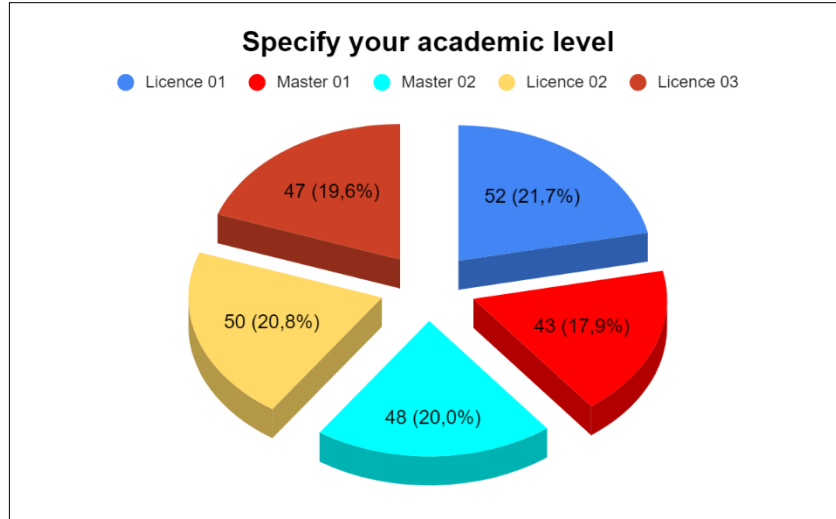


Figure 03: Students' Academic Level

This question aimed to specify the academic level of the participants. It revealed that the participants were varying from first-year Licence to Master two students; where the up leading level with more than one over five is the first-year Licence with fifty-two (21.7%) students, followed by second-year Licence with fifty (20.8%) students. Master two, with a fifth, forty-eight (20%) students, succeeded by third year Licence with forty-seven (19.6%) students, and Master one with forty-three (17.9%) students.

Question 03: How do you prefer your lessons to be?

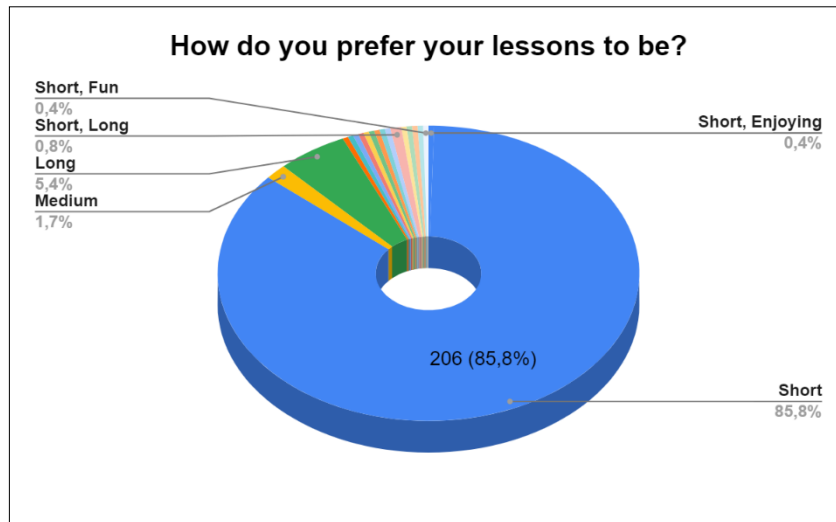


Figure 04: Students' Preference of Lesson's Length

The aim behind this question is to know how the students prefer the lessons to be, the majority of learners (85.8%) have chosen short lessons, whereas only sixteen (5.4%) of them voted for long lessons, followed by four (1.7%) of the participants who suggested medium length lessons. The rest fourteen (1.6%) shows a few other suggestions in favour of short lessons; they claimed the lessons to highlight only the useful and important points, in addition, be fun and enjoyable.

Question 04: Do you play games?

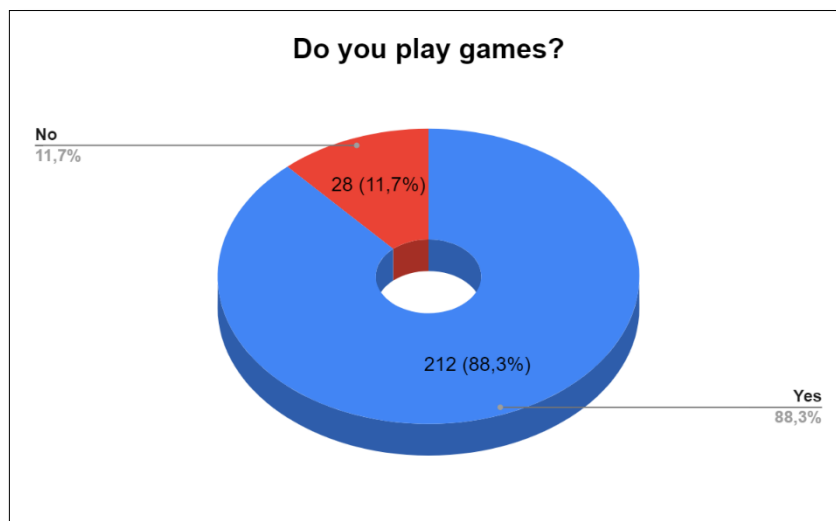


Figure 05: Percentage of Students Who Play Game

The purpose of this question is to know whether EFL students play games or not. The findings portray that only twenty- eight (11.7%) from the total number of participants declared they do not play games; however, two hundred and twelve (88.3%) learners representing the majority do.

Question 04, part 02: If your answer is yes, how often?

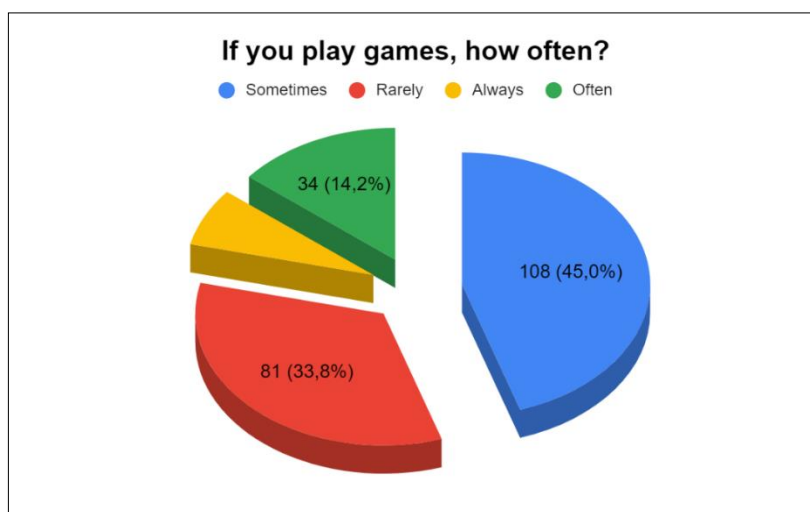


Figure 06: Frequency of Playing Game

This question aims to show the frequency of the learners' playing games. Eighty-one students (81) representing (33.8%) of the total participants declared they play games rarely, whereas one hundred and eight (108) referring to (45%) of them do it sometimes. The students who often play games represent (14.2%) with a number of thirty-four (34), and sixteen (16) students affirmed they are game addicted as they always play, they represent only 7% of the participants.

Question 05: What makes you play games?

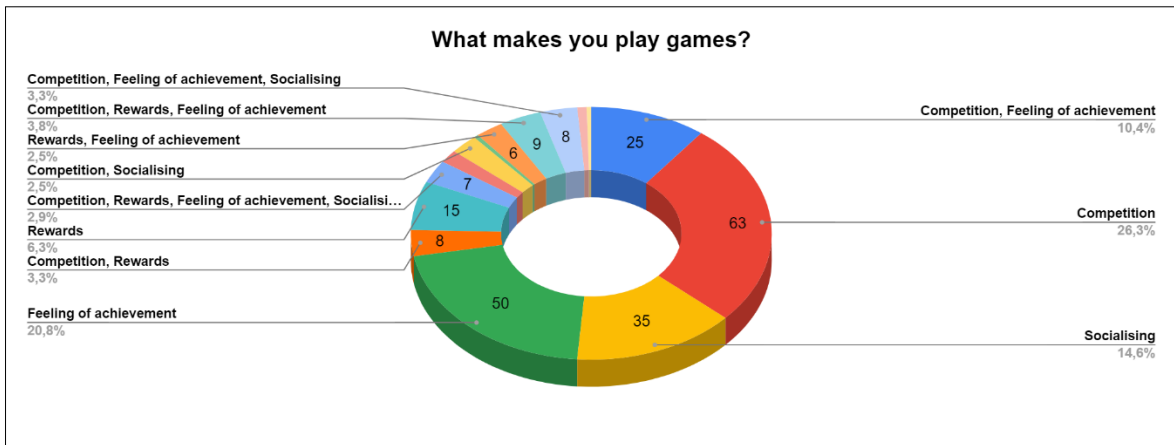


Figure 07: Students' Motives to Play Games

The purpose of this question is to show the learners' reasons to play games. Sixty-three (26.3%) students are seeking for competition, while fifty (20.8%) of them prefer the feeling of achievement. As for the socializing, it was chosen by thirty-five (14.6%) students, Whereas, fifteen (6.3%) have chosen rewards as a motive. Twenty-five (10.4%) learners have chosen a combination of competition and feeling of achievement, while the rest fifty (21.6%) have chosen a mixture of the already mentioned motives.

Question 06: Werbach and Hunter (2012) stated that "Gamification is the use of game-like elements and techniques in a non-game context". In education, Gamification uses competition, rewards, feedback, tracking mechanism and other game elements to deliver information and assert its acquisition. **Have you ever heard about Gamification?**

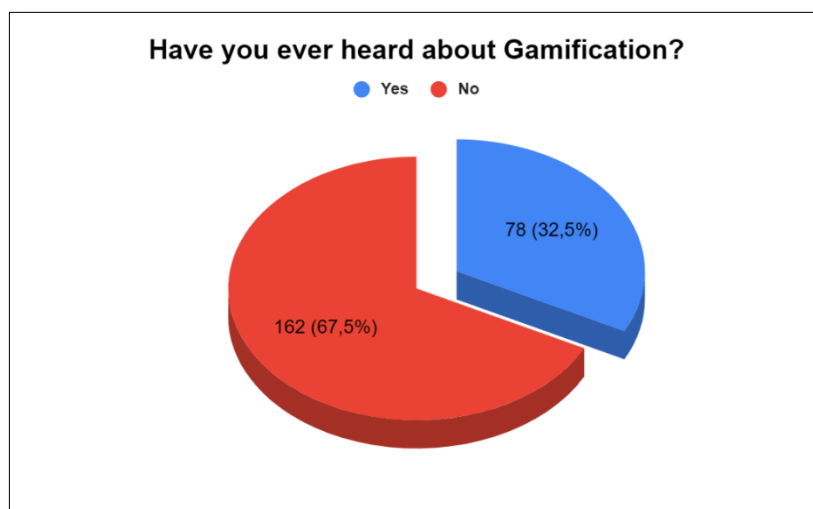


Figure 08: Students' Awareness of Gamification

This question aims to show whether the students are aware of gamification. Seventy-eight (32.5%) stated that they have heard about gamification, whereas, one hundred and sixty-two (67.5) learners stated they have not.

Question 07: According to the given definition, would you like your teacher to use gamified lessons?

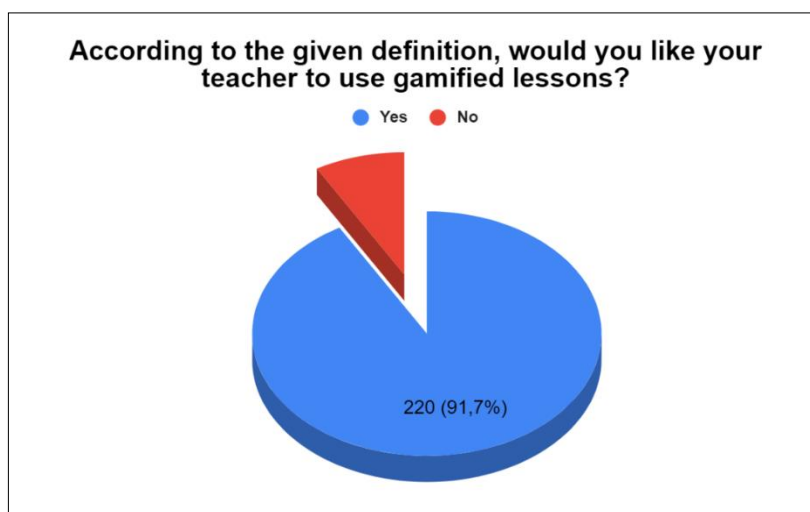


Figure 09: Students' Acceptance of Gamified Lessons

The reason behind this question is to show whether the students would like their teachers to use gamified lessons. Two hundred and twenty (91.7) representing the majority of learners have shown a positive response, while only the remaining twenty (8.3%) have shown a negative one. The formers justified their answers by stating that the use of game elements would attract the students' attention, as the instructional process will be enjoyable which makes them motivated and engaged, therefore the received information will consolidate effectively in their memory. On the other hand, those who are against the use of gamification, claimed that there is no need to integrate such a technique because they see it as pointless.

Question 08: What do you like to have as a source of information?

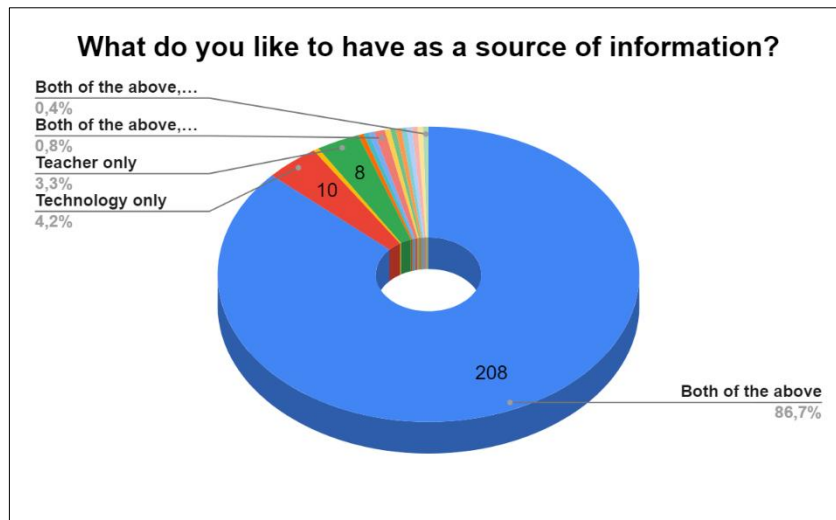


Figure 10: Students' Preference of the Source of Information

This question aimed to present the learners' preferences of the source of information. Eight (3.3%) students stated they would like the teachers as the only source of information, while ten (4.2%) of them stated they prefer technology only, whereas two hundred and eight (86.7%) students prefer having a combination of the teacher and technology as a source of knowledge. The rest fourteen (5.8%) suggested having books, articles, the internet, and other more knowledgeable people instead of the teachers themselves.

Question 09: Is the nature of the task important to make you active to participate in class?

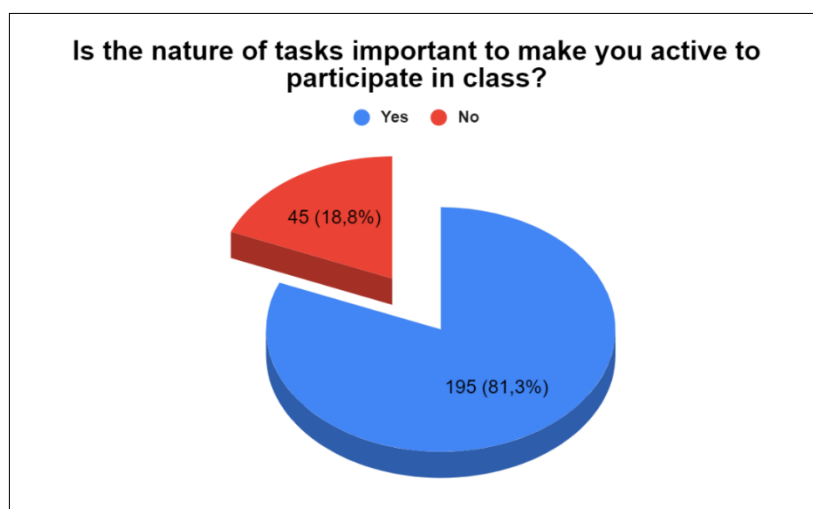


Figure 11: Influence of the Nature of Tasks on Participation

Seeking to find whether the nature of tasks in class is important for the students to participate. Although forty-five (18.8%) learners stated that it was not, one hundred and ninety-five (81.3%) representing the majority claimed the importance of the nature of tasks, they put forward their claims stating that if they are provided with a variety of interesting and engaging activities, their participation would increase, and vice versa.

Question 10: What are the elements that make a learning experience enjoyable?

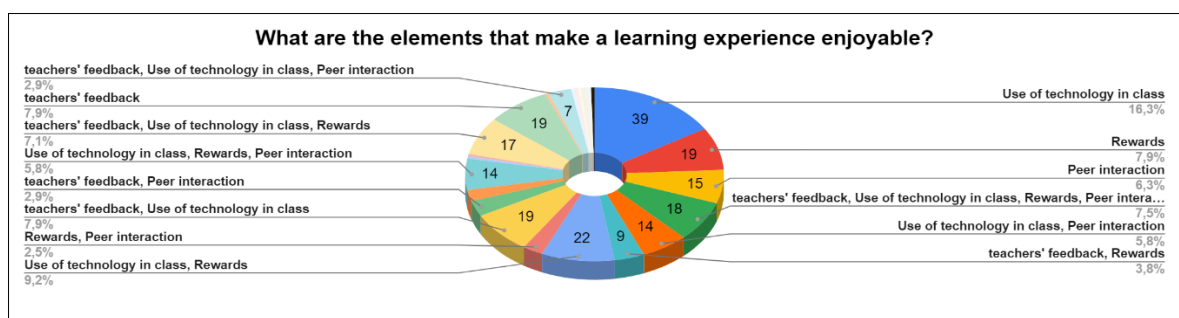


Figure 12: Elements that Make a learning Experience Enjoyable According to the Students

The purpose of this question is to know what are the game elements that make the learning process enjoyable for the students. Eighteen (7.5%) of them selected the four given elements; teachers’ feedback, use of technology in class, rewards, and peer interaction. Twenty-two (9.2%) selected the use of technology and rewards, whereas seventeen (7.1%) selected the teachers’ feedback, the use of technology and rewards. A group of fourteen (3.8%) learners went with the use of technology, rewards and peer interaction, whereas another group of fourteen (5.8%) chose the use of technology and peer interaction. The remaining majority selected either two or three elements. The element that has been selected the most is the use of technology, by one hundred and fifty-two (63.3%) learners; followed by the use of rewards, by one hundred and thirteen (47.1%) students; adjacent to the teachers’ feedback, by one hundred and four (43.3%) learners; then the peer interaction, selected by ninety (37.5%) students.

Question 11: Which elements would you like to have to get engaged in a lesson?

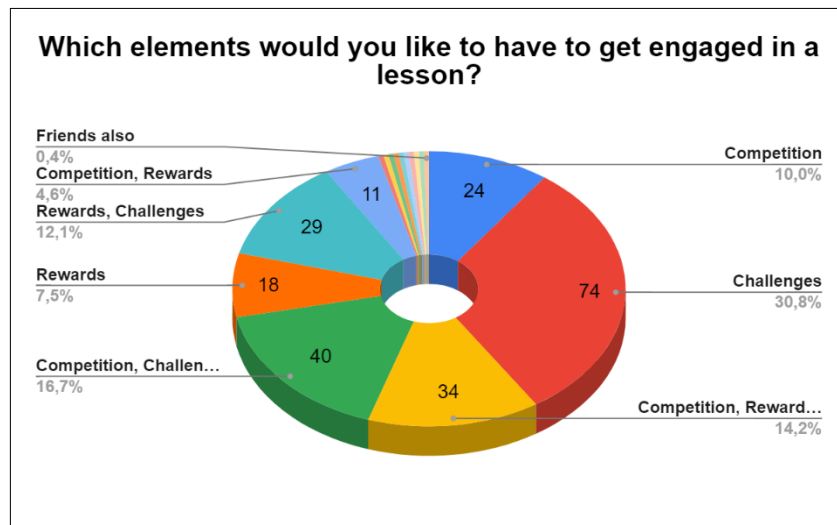


Figure 13: Game Elements Needed to Get Engaged in Class According to the Students

This question aimed at making the students choose which game elements they would like to have to get engaged in class. Thirty-four (14.2%) students selected the three given elements; competition, rewards and challenges. Seventy-four (30.8%) voted for the use of challenges, while twenty-four (10%) students voted for competition, whereas eighteen (7.5%) voted for rewards separately. In addition, some students voted for two elements at a time; forty (16.7%) students voted for competition and challenge, while eleven (11) selected competition and rewards, whereas twenty-nine (12.1%) selected rewards and challenges. The remaining ten (10) have chosen more than one element. The most selected element is the use of challenges, selected by one hundred and eighty (75%) learners, followed by competition with one hundred and eleven (46.3%), and then rewards with a total of ninety-five (39.6%) students.

Question 12: To what extent do you agree with the following?

A: Technology should be integrated in the teaching/ learning process

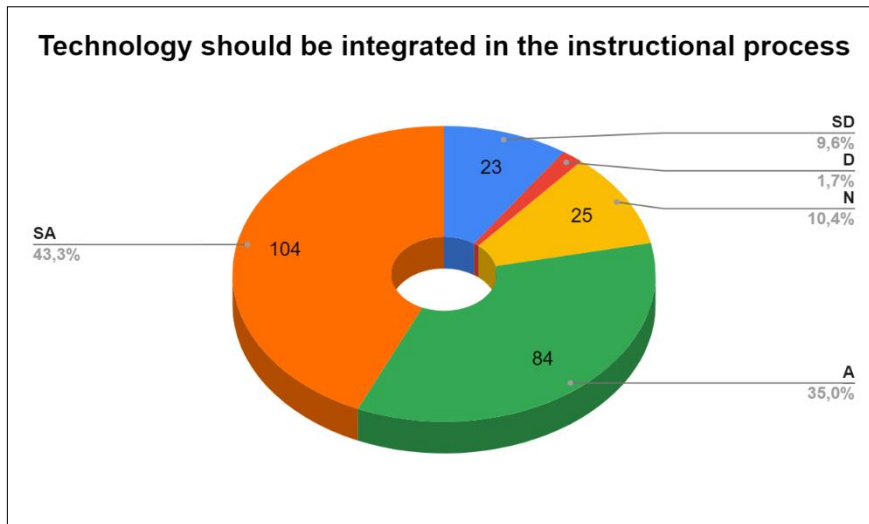


Figure 14: Students' Views towards Integrating Technology into Education

From the students' responses to the questionnaire, it was revealed that one hundred and four (43.3%) students strongly agreed, while eighty-four (35%) agreed on the integration of technology in the instructional process. On the other hand, twenty-five (10.4%) of them remained neutral. Only four (1.7%) disagreed, whereas twenty-one (9.6%) students strongly disagreed with this statement.

B: The use of technology hinders your EFL learning.

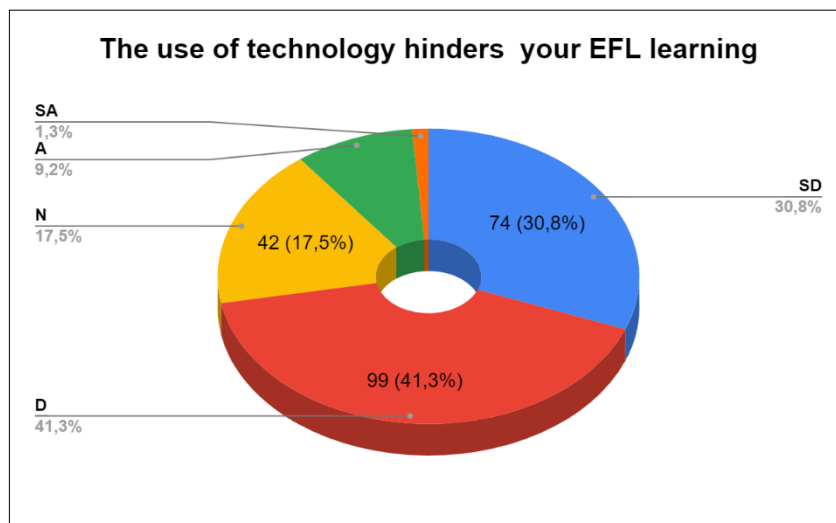


Figure 15: Use of Technology Hinders the Students' EFL Learning

Once again, the learners were asked about the use of technology in EFL learning; however, this statement proposes a negative side of technology. A large proportion of students, ninety-nine (41.3%) learners disagreed, while seventy-four (30.8%) strongly disagreed. Forty-two (17.5%) students remain neutral, while twenty-two (9.2%) agreed and only three (1.3%) of them strongly agreed.

C: Your teachers' feedback enhances your engagement in the learning process.

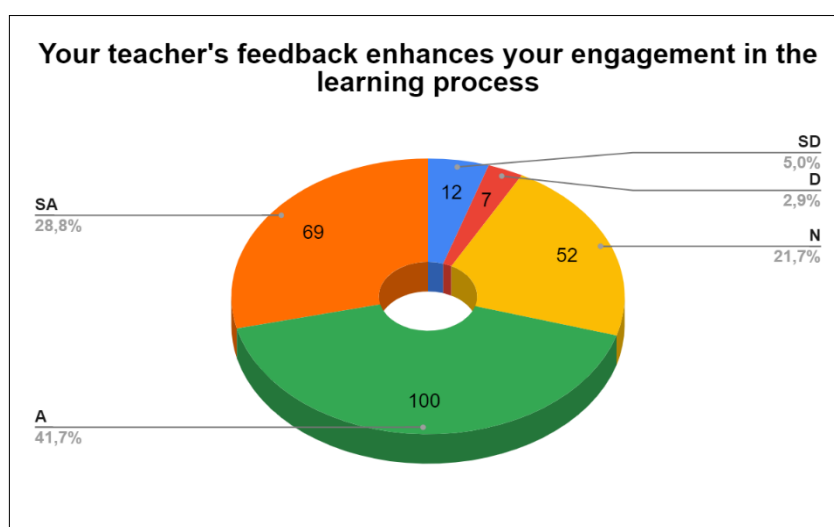


Figure 16: Teachers' Feedback Enhances the Students' Engagement in Class

This statement was about finding out the learners' perspective on whether the teachers' feedback promotes their engagement in class. The minority represented by seven (2.9%) students disagreed, and twelve (5%) strongly disagreed with this statement. Although fifty-two (21.7%) students remain neutral, one hundred (41.7%) learners agreed, while sixty-nine (28.8%) strongly agreed that they are more engaged in the lesson when the teacher supports them with feedback.

D: The use of game elements in a university lesson

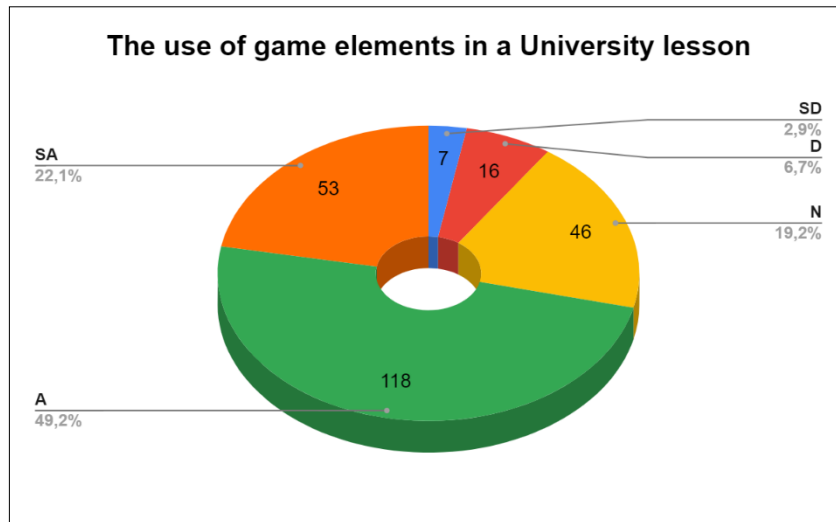


Figure 17: Students' View towards the Use of Game Elements in a University Lesson

According to the questionnaire, students are positive about this statement. One hundred and eighteen (49.2%) learners agreed, while fifty-three (22.1%) strongly agreed on the use of game elements in a university lesson. Whereas, sixteen (6.7%) disagreed and only seven (2.9%) strongly disagreed with this statement.

E: Using game elements promotes your motivation to learn EFL.

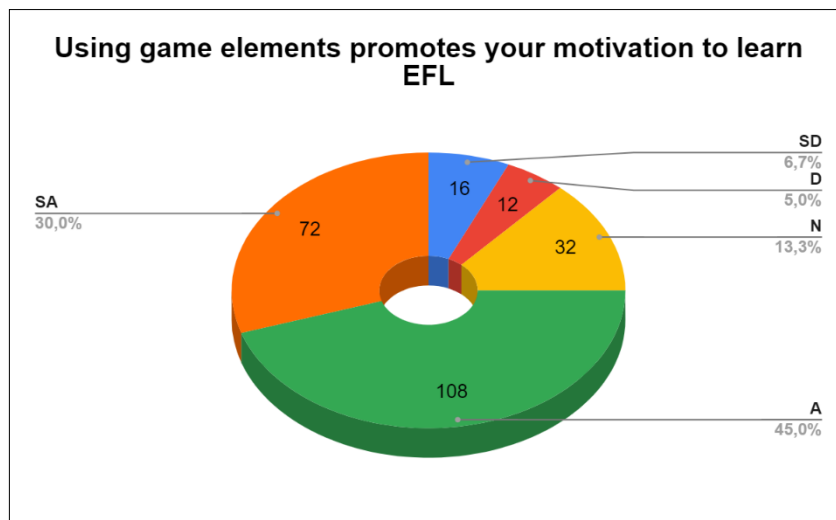


Figure 18: Use of game Elements Promotes the Students' motivation to Learn EFL

From the students' responses to the questionnaire, it is revealed that one hundred and eight (45%) students agreed, while seventy-two (30%) strongly agreed on the use of game

elements to enhance the learners' motivation. Whereas, thirty-two (13.3%), remain neutral twelve (5%) disagreed, and twelve (6.7%) strongly disagreed with this statement.

F: The use of game elements distracts you from the lesson's objectives (as you might focus on the elements themselves and not on the lesson)

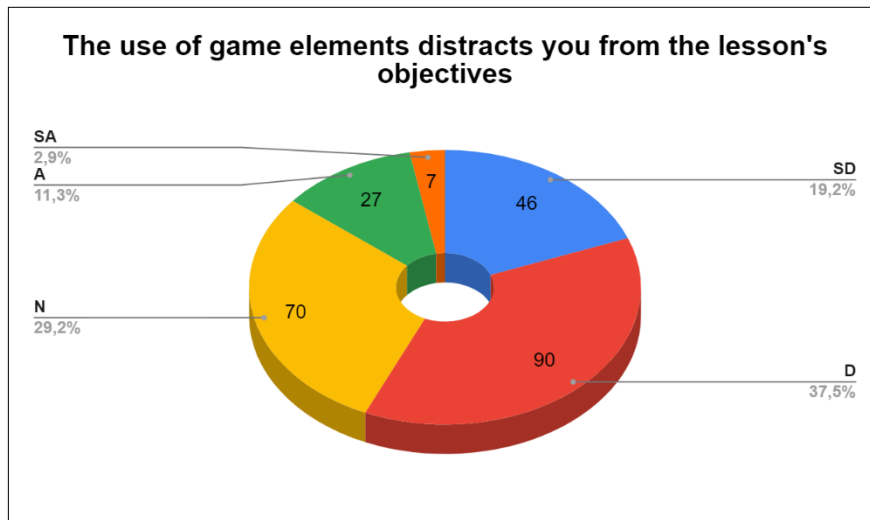


Figure 19: Use of Game Elements Distracts Students from the Lesson's Objectives

According to the students' responses a good number of students, seventy (29.2%), remain neutral to this statement. Whereas ninety (37.5%) disagreed and forty-six (19.2%) strongly disagreed that the use of game elements drives away the learners from the objectives of the lesson. However, the minority with twenty-seven (11.3%) students agreed, and seven (2.9%) of them strongly agreed that gamification distracts from the lesson objectives.

G: A gamified lesson provides amusement and entertainment

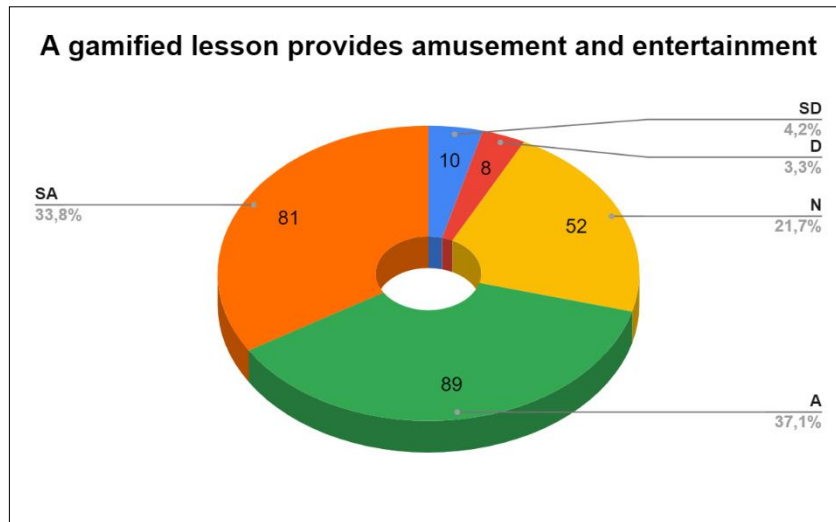


Figure 20: Gamified Lesson Provides Amusement and Entertainment

A large proportion of the students was in favour of this statement, where eighty-nine (37.1%) agreed, and eighty-one (33.8%) strongly agreed that a gamified lesson offers amusement and entertainment. Whereas, fifty-two (21.7%) were neutral about it, only a minority of eight (3.3%) learners disagreed and ten (4.2%) of them strongly disagreed with this statement.

H: The use of game elements has no significance in a university lesson.

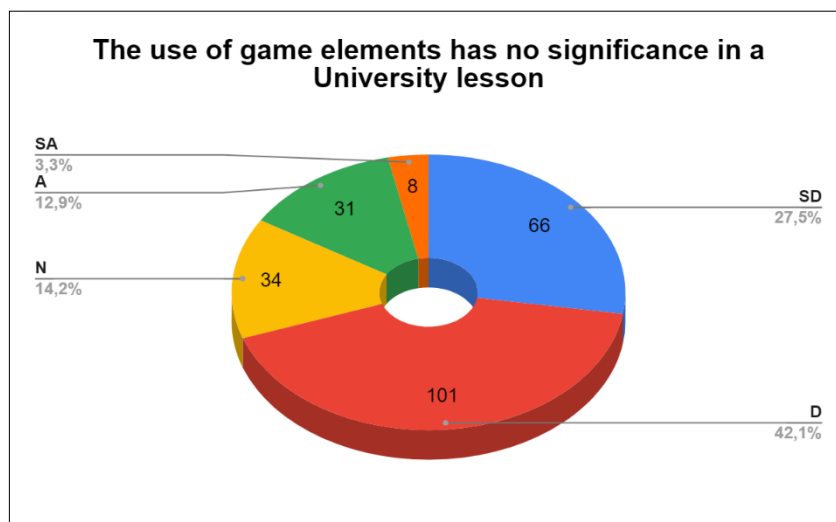


Figure 21: Significance of the Use of Game Elements in a university lesson

The collected data shows that the majority of the students are against this statement. One hundred and one (42.1%) disagreed, and sixty-six (27.5%) strongly disagreed with the non-significance of the use of gamification in a university lesson. Otherwise, thirty-four (14.2%) learners stated they were neutral, while thirty-one (12.9%) agreed and eight (3.3%) strongly agreed.

I: Gamified lessons are more challenging than conventional one.

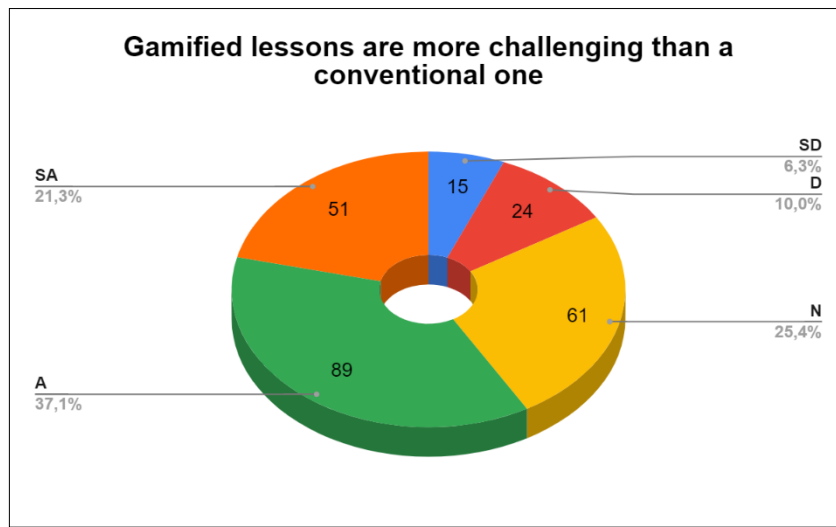


Figure 22: Gamified Lessons are More Challenging than Conventional Ones

The responses of the learners show that the majority have a positive view on this statement. Eighty-nine (37.1%) agreed, and fifty-one (21.3%) strongly agreed that gamified lessons are more challenging than classical ones. Although a quarter (61) of students neither agreed nor disagreed but remain neutral, twenty-four (10%) students disagreed and fifteen (6.3%) of them strongly disagreed with this statement.

J: A lesson full of challenges decreases your motivation to participate in class.

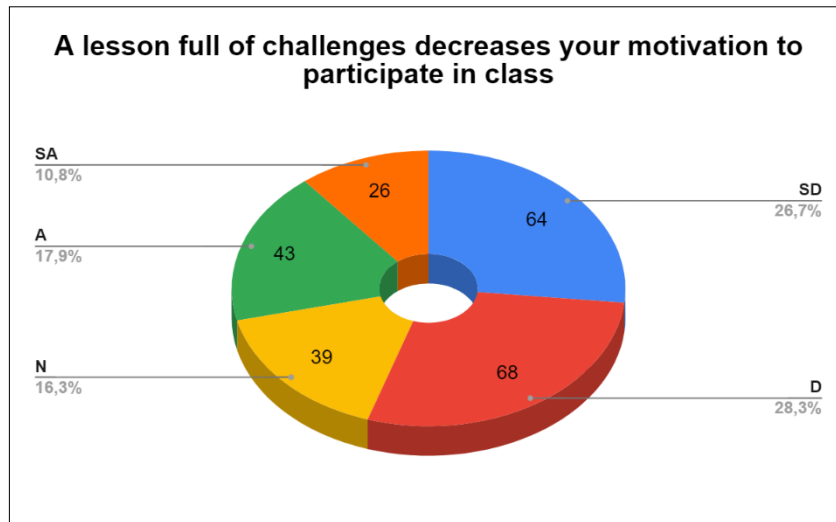


Figure 23: A Lesson Full of Challenges Decreases the Students' Motivation to Participate in Class

Looking at the results in the figure above, there is a controversy of views concerning this statement. Thirty-nine (16.3%) students were neutral, while sixty-eight (28.3%) disagreed, and sixty-four (26.7%) of them strongly disagreed that the students' motivation decreased when the lesson is full of challenges. However, forty-three (17.9%) learners agreed, and twenty-six (10.8%) strongly agreed with this statement.

K: Gamification makes your interaction with your teachers and classmates more active.

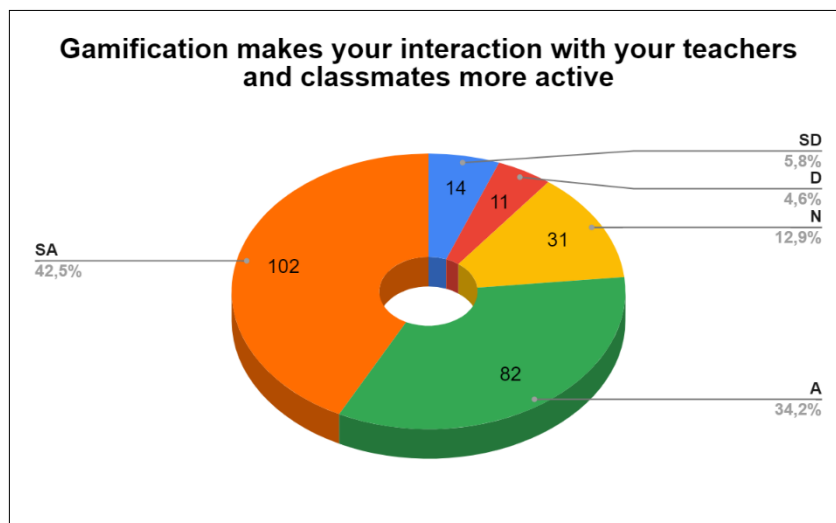


Figure 24: Gamification Makes the Students' Interaction with their Teachers and Classmates More Active

The responses portray that the students are very positive about this statement. Eighty-two (34.2%) agreed, and one hundred and two (42.5%) strongly agreed, representing the dominant view that the use of game elements makes the interaction between the students and their teachers more active. Thirty-one (12.9%) students remain neutral, whereas eleven (4.6%) disagreed, and fourteen (5.8%) strongly disagreed with this statement.

L: Rewarded competition is useless in a university lesson.

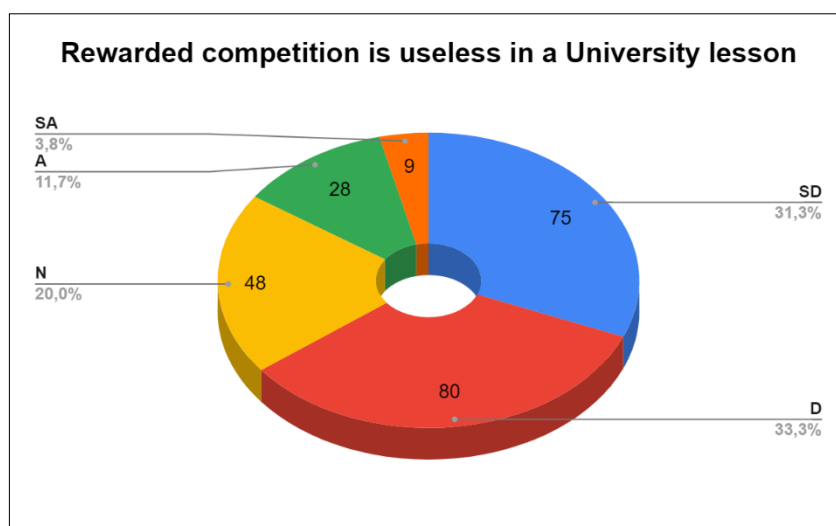


Figure 25: Rewarded Competition is Useless in a University Lesson

A large proportion of students disapproved on this statement. Eighty (33.3%) disagreed, while seventy-five (31.3%) strongly disagreed that rewarded competition is useless in a university lesson. However, forty-eight (20%) learners remain neutral, whereas twenty-eight (11.7%) agreed, and nine (3.8%) strongly agreed that this element is useless in a university lesson.

M: To boost your autonomous learning, teachers should not be spoon-feeders (who provide you with ready information).

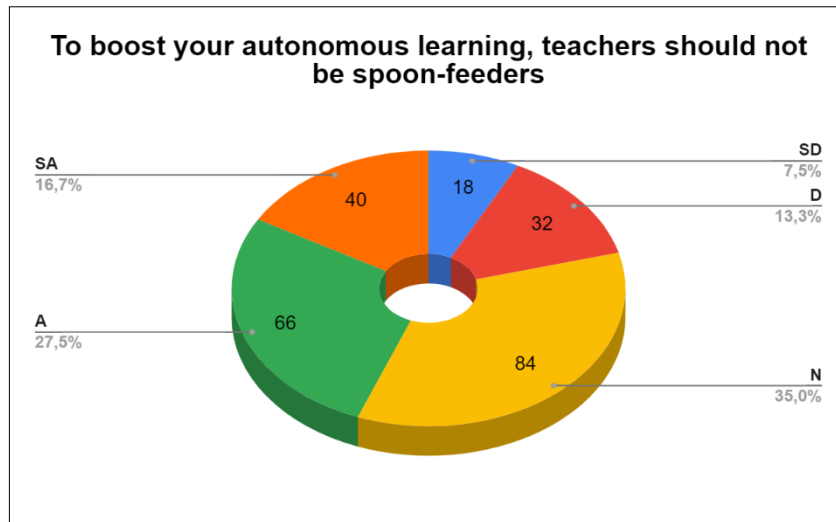


Figure 26: To Boost the Students’ Autonomous Learning, Teachers Should Not Be Spoon-Feeders

The results of the figure above show a variety of views on the given statement. A large number of students, eighty-four (35%) remain neutral, whereas thirty-two (13.3%) disagreed, and eighteen (7.5%) strongly disagreed. Nevertheless, sixty-six (27.5%) students agreed, and forty (16.7%) strongly agreed that the teachers should not always provide ready information to the learners for the sake of increasing their autonomy.

2.3.3. Interpretation and Discussion of the Analysis

After a vigilant inspection of the questionnaire results, sufficient conclusions were extracted. The presented questions investigated the students’ perceptions towards the use of game elements, in learning EFL at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia. The students’ responses were positive to a certain extent and consistent with the research assumption.

To begin with, the data revealed that majority of students (87%) prefer to have short, simple lessons rather than long lectures containing too many details as mentioned in Q3. Then, questions 4 and 5 were concerned with games playing; the results demonstrated that although the majority of students (88.3%) affirmed they play games, the frequency was

leaning towards rarely (34.4%) and sometimes (45.8%), only the minority play games often or every day. In addition, the motives that make the students play games were more likely to be a combination of elements, but competition (52.9%) and the feeling of achievement (46.3%) represent the motives of the majority of players, then rewards and socializing come in the second position. Furthermore, questions 6 and 7, highlighted the students' awareness of gamification as an educational technique, where most of them (67.5%) declared, they have never heard about it. However, once reading the provided definition and explanation of this technique, a very large number of students (92.5%) certified they would like to have it in their learning process, they claimed that it would be more fun to have these elements in a lesson, and this certainly will motivate them. The following questions 8 and 9 were about the instructional design, students were asked about their preferences of the source of knowledge, and the majority (90%) stated they would prefer both the teacher and technology as a source of knowledge; on the other hand, they were asked about the nature of tasks, where a great number (81.7%) of students certified to be very important, because when students are provided with interesting or varied activities, they will definitely be motivated to learn and participate in class. Questions 10 and 11, were designed to see which game elements the students would prefer to have in order to enjoy their learning experience and get them engaged in the lesson. The results revealed that some students voted for all the proposed elements, as they would prefer to have a combination of these elements. Nevertheless, the elements that received a higher acceptance (63.3%) to have an enjoyable learning experience were the use of technology in class, in the first place, then the use of rewards, adjacent to the teachers' feedback; on the other hand, to increase their engagement, a large proportion of learners (75%) went with challenges as the most engaging element, followed by competition and rewards.

To have an in-depth look at the learners' perception towards the use of game elements, they were provided with thirteen (13) statements designed in a Likert scale table to see how they perceive gamification. The results of statements A and B demonstrated a positive view towards integrating technology in education. In addition to the teachers' feedback, which learners consider an engaging element. The majority of students were also positive about the use of game elements in a university lesson, especially to increase their motivation towards learning as they provide amusement and entertainment, on the other hand, they refused that the game elements can distract them from the lessons' objectives, as well as to have no significance in a university lesson. Continuing with the students' motivation, they rejected the statement that a lesson full of challenges would decrease their motivation. They also rejected the idea that rewarded competition is purposeless, which shows that learners have a positive view towards the use of this element in class, because it will make their interaction with peers and teachers more active, as declared by the majority of students. The only statement which received more neutral views was the last one; it claimed that the teachers should stop being spoon-feeder to enhance the autonomous learning of the students, this shows that they are likely to depend on their teachers to provide them with knowledge.

2.4 Teachers' Interview

2.4.1 Description of the Interview

According to Kvale (1996) an interview is "a conversation, whose purpose is to gather descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee" (p. 174). This means, that the interview is a form of a dialogue, where the interviewer is trying to collect some data concerning certain points from the interviewee's life, thinking, perceptions...etc. This tool is the suitable one to be adopted in this research; as the main goal is to get in-dept and authentic data from the participants. Moreover, interviews are used when the study seeks to deduct the views and opinions of people with a specific perspective (MacDonald & Headlam, 2008, p. 42). In this

study, a semi-structured interview (see the appendix 2, page 75) was conducted during the end of the second semester of the academic year 2021-2022, with ten (10) teachers who teach different levels and different subjects in the department of English language, for no more than twenty (20) minutes. This interview is composed of twelve (12) main questions, that helped to collect the needed data concerning the teachers' perspectives on the use of the game element in teaching EFL. The first three questions are general, whereas the others are related to the research at hand.

2.4.2 Analysis of the Interview

The results of the interviews are as follow:

Q01: How long have you been teaching EFL at the university?

This question is asked in order to determine the periods being taught by instructors, because when varying, the results will be more reliable. According to the responses, the interviewed teachers can be divided into three categories, depending on their teaching experience. The first category is for teachers who have been teaching for more than ten (10) years; where teacher 07 taught for thirteen (13) years, teacher 05 and 08 with a difference of one year from the former, have twelve (12) years of experience. In the second category, the period of teaching is between five (05) and ten (10) years, where four teachers belong; teachers 03, 01, 10, and 02 have respectively; nine (09), eight (08), seven (07) and six (06) years of teaching experience. The third category comprises teachers with less than five (05) years of teaching EFL; teacher 09 has been teaching for four (04) years, while teachers 04 and 06 taught for three years.

Q02: What is/ are the level (s) that you are or have been teaching?

The purpose of this question is to know whether the interviewees teaching is focused on one or different levels, as it may affect their views towards the subject matter. The results revealed that only teacher 01 deals with all levels, whereas teacher 10 deals only with first-

year licence. Teachers 02 and 08 declared that they taught all levels except for second-year licence, while teacher 03 teaches all levels except first-year licence. On the other hand, teachers 04, 05 and 07 dealt with the three levels of licence, whereas teacher 09 has master levels and third-year licence.

Q03: How do you deliver your lessons?

This question aimed to see the ways teachers follow to instruct their students. The findings revealed that the majority of teachers stated that it depends on the nature of the content itself, which means, each module has its techniques; for instance, teacher 01 stated that “in phonetics... I would focus on the presentation of the content then some practice and then I look for production... and grammar is pretty much like phonetics” referring to the most used way of lesson’s delivery, this focuses on the presentation and explanation of the subject matter, then practising what has been taught. Teacher 02 mentioned that “I used to give lectures... assign homework to students through which they searched for information... and presented their homework in front of their classmates” which shows another way of instruction. Although one teacher skipped this question, these two main ways have been approved by the majority of the interviewees. However, teacher 09 declared that “I made a shift... I handle some workshops... of course, I chose another approach which is a kind of group work” as she used to follow lecturing before. Some teachers stated they used PowerPoint slides in their lectures in order to attract the students’ attention. On the other hand, teacher 06 asserted to follow any specific strategy or approach, he claimed “I’m the kind of teachers who prefers to be spontaneous”, this makes him the only interviewee whose teaching is based more on the flow of the lesson.

Q04: What do you do to motivate your students to complete a given task?

The findings of this question revealed that two of all of the teachers are convinced that the students must follow their intrinsic motivation, because they believe that when students

are attending classes, they are already motivated; teacher 01 maintained “I think the students at university do not really need to be shown purpose in order to be motivated, they have their own purpose, so I suppose that every single student present in the classroom is already motivated”. However, the other teachers believe that students should be motivated in different ways. Teacher 10 declared “One way to motivate my students...is by adopting a continuous evaluation. Students are assessed regularly, performing tasks inside and outside class, participating...etc. This makes the students ready to engage in the learning process”, this teacher believes that formative assessment is the best way to motivate students. However, according to the other teachers, the learners become motivated when they are informed that they will receive rewards when completing the task or get punished if they do not. In this view, teacher 02 claimed that “students are generally motivated... when they are informed that the task is graded because they think of marks as the best reward they can get”, whereas teacher 03 asserted she motivated them “on the hard way” as she mentioned referring to punishment, because the students would do the task to avoid it.

Q05: How do you make your students engaged in the instructional process?

The results of this question were interrelated with the previous one and proposed a diversity of ideas. Teachers 03, 05, and 06 tend to move in the classroom and interact with students, by asking them questions or asserting if they have understood the discussed point, or if they are working on the given task. On the other hand, teachers 01 and 04 declared that adopting a variety of activities, and switching from individual work to group work or vice versa, make their students more engaged to learn. In addition, teacher 01 said "I encourage competition in terms of who among the groups or among the students is going to get something right or finish something first... to make them feel they achieved something" he claimed that this makes the students proud of themselves, because the feeling of achievement makes them more engaged. Teacher 02 declared “students, I believe, are affected by the

teacher's attitude towards the module", she explained that if a teacher shows importance to the module, the students would automatically follow his/her paths, and vice versa, she also stated that she presents the objectives behind and the benefits of doing any task to the students before starting it, in order to have a better understanding of the tackled point. Furthermore, teacher 09 follows a completely different way to engage her students; she declared that she switches her role as a teacher with students as they will be practising what they have been taught during the lectures, and experiencing the teacher's role.

Q06: Do you encourage autonomous learning? How!

This question aimed at showing if the teachers inspire the students to rely on themselves more than on the teacher to expand their learning. As many claimed, their job is to introduce the subjects in general then the students are intended to do most of the work, especially during the protocol of COVID-19, where lessons at the university take no more than one hour. Teacher 02 added that she assigns activities for her students whereby they have to depend on themselves for gaining knowledge. Moreover, teachers 07, 08 and 09, encourage further reading and left their emails at the students' disposal for discussion. Teacher 09 found that her students started to be more open to scientific research. she stated that, after assigning further reading, a student told her that she found more interesting information while reading, and this opened her eyes to the amount of knowledge she can assert with further reading and discussion. Whereas, teacher 06, asserted that the students have to expand their knowledge, because at the university level they are considered more researchers than students. She said:

“You are a researcher... starting from your first year you are considered as a researcher, so anything that you hear, that catches your attention or that is related to the topic or the subject that you're studying...you should like... expand your knowledge in it” (teacher 06)

Q07: What do you think of the use of technology? Are you with or against it! Explain.

This question was administered to see whether the teachers approve of the integration of technology in education or not. Almost all the interviewed teachers stated they are using technology from time to time, and most of them would like to adopt more of it in their teaching process. However, teacher 08 asserted “theoretically speaking, yes...but practically speaking... No” due to the lack of teachers’ trainings, and the problems of the internet. Teachers 05 and 06 claimed to use technology if some conditions are fulfilled; in addition to what teacher 08 mentioned, they referred to the availability of the needed types of equipment, and a good internet connection. In favour of the use of technology, teacher 06 added that it is the best alternative source of knowledge for students to adopt, as they can find videos, PDF documents, and different activities to practise certain skills, especially when these technology devices are connected to the internet. In the same view, teachers 02 and 10 declared that using technology in the classroom increases the students’ motivation and created a fun atmosphere, as it provides students with easy-to-access information. Furthermore, teacher 09 expressed her total agreement with this idea, she stated “I’m totally against... forbidding phones or any type of technology inside the classroom” as they expand the learners’ knowledge and assert the acquisition of information, which is according to her the goal of instruction.

Q08: Have you ever heard about an instructional technique named “*gamification*”?

This question aimed to demonstrate the teachers’ awareness of gamification. The findings revealed that only four teachers know about it, while six over ten (6/10) declared they do not know this technique. However, they have some assumptions; some related it to the use of games in teaching, whereas, others assume that it has to do with funnily delivering the lesson. Nonetheless, teacher 05, claimed it is game-based learning.

After this, the interviewed teachers were provided with the commonly used definition of gamification, to make sure they understand this technique, they were also provided with a brief explanation.

According to Werbach & Hunter (2012), “gamification is the use of game-like elements and techniques in a non-game context” (p. 10). In education, gamification uses rewarded competition, levels, badges, leaderboards, feedback, tracking mechanism, points, challenges, avatars, and other game elements to deliver information and assert its acquisition.

Q09: Considering this definition, have you ever used one of these elements in your classes? If yes, which one? And how was it?

The results of this question demonstrated that only a minority of the interviewed teachers uses game elements in their classes; they tend to use competition, challenges, and feedback. Teacher 01 stated that he uses “competition in terms of who among the groups or among the students is going to get something right or finish something first”, he claimed that competition makes the students experience the feeling of achievement. While, teacher 07 confirmed he set challenges in his classes, where he feels the students are more motivated and engaged in the process than when rewarded competition is included. Teachers 02 and 05 claimed they use feedback with their students, as they think that comments and advice guide the learner to better acquire the taught point. The rest of the teachers declared they use no game element in their classes, yet they give extra marks to students who complete the task, or answer graded questions.

Q10: Which game element (s) would you like to use to enhance your students’ motivation?

This question has two aims, an explicit and an implicit one; the former is to know which element the teacher chose to use in class to foster their students’ motivation, while the latter is that when they accept to choose, they implicitly accept to use game elements. The finding

of this question demonstrated that more than half of the interviewees selected rewarded competition as the element they would like to adopt in their instructional process. Most of them claimed that this element will make the students eager to win the competition and get rewarded; thus, ensuring knowledge acquisition. Challenges, on the other hand, were ranked the second position; teachers who selected this element claimed that nowadays' learners love to face challenges, because when they achieve them, they will feel proud of themselves; therefore, their learning motivation increases and they will be searching for other information. Furthermore, a large proportion of teachers asserted they already use feedback even though they did not know this element can belong to gamification. A minority of teachers went with the use of levels, and points.

Q11: If you are told that providing your students with *feedback* promotes their *engagement*, would you adopt it? Or use it more often?

The findings of this question have shown that a large proportion of the interviewees were positive about this suggestion. They claimed that providing feedback is one of the best ways to create a stress-free environment which promotes the learners' interaction in class. Teacher 08 declared "yes! Of course! ... you can't present a course without feedback", referring to the importance of this element in teaching. In the same view, teacher 10 maintained that "Feedback is one way of promoting students' engagement by making them reflect constantly on their own learning process, and thus improving it". Furthermore, teacher 05 asserted "I use it, and I will use it more", she explained that in order to ensure if learners are progressing, the teacher guides them through commenting on their work, correcting their mistakes, and showing them the best ways to avoid them... etc. In addition, teacher 09 asserted that by providing her students with feedback, especially through emails, when she provides further reading documents, the learners started to improve their critical thinking, and even their ways of learning expanded.

Q12: To what extent do you think that using *leaderboards* in the EFL instruction will foster the students' *autonomous learning*?

The answers of the teachers revealed that teachers were divided into pros and cons; half of the interviewees accepted the suggestion of using ranking leaderboards in their classes if the content of the module or the activity itself allows; they claimed that this element would develop learners' speed, collaboration, team work and communication skills. In this view, teacher 10 asserted that if the leaderboards are integrated into the lesson "students are ready to produce higher effort (inside and outside class), engage in a deep learning leading to a better performance". Otherwise, the second half of the teachers certified they would not use this element in a university lesson. Three over five (3/5) claimed this element to be more suitable for younger levels rather than for university students. While two over five (2/5) had another argument not to use it; they claimed that this element can demotivate the students as the majority lack self-esteem and are kind of afraid to fail to their more knowledgeable classmates; thus, they would not even try to learn more and be in the top leaderboard.

2.4.3 Interpretation and Discussion of the Interview Analysis

After a deep examination of the interviews' findings, a variety of views were derived. The asked questions were aimed at investigating the teachers' perception towards the use of gamification in teaching EFL at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia. The teachers' responses were positive to some extent and consistent with the research assumption.

To begin with, teachers were asked the general question; about the levels and the periods they have been teaching EFL at the university level. The interviewees are dealing with a diversity of levels from first-year licence to second-year master; in addition to their teaching period which varies from three to thirteen years; therefore, this would present a variety of teaching levels and experiences that makes the research findings more reliable. Then they

were asked about their way of delivering the lesson, which varies from one teacher to another. The commonly used is lecturing, through presenting the information to the students, guiding them during the practice, and waiting for their production, either in class or as homework. While one of the teachers mentioned she made a shift from lecturing to handling workshops which opens another opportunity for student interaction, another teacher stated he depends on the environment of the class to define how he is going to teach. Later, the interviewees were asked about what they do to motivate their students to complete their tasks. The finding demonstrated that although the minority of teachers stated they do not motivate their students, as they believe, learners should depend more on their intrinsic motives to learn rather than waiting for teachers to increase their motivation. The majority of teachers, on the other hand, claimed they are using either extra marks as a reward or punishment for a student who completes their tasks or not respectively. In addition to adopting a formative assessment, where students will always be prepared to be evaluated. After this, the interviewees' responses to the following question, about what they do to engage their learners in the process, have shown an interrelation with motivation, as both go hand in hand to enhance the student's learning. Different results were obtained, a large proportion of teachers is divided into those who tend to create an interactive environment so the students will be able to discuss and share their opinions, and those who vary their activities, switching from individual to group work, making competition between students...etc. Meanwhile, the minority of teachers, represented by only one teacher, adopted a completely different way to engage the student in the process. By switching roles with the teacher, learners will have the opportunity to experience what teaching is like; therefore, practising what they have been taught and ensuring its acquisition. Furthermore, teachers were asked about their view towards autonomous learning, where they unanimously agreed to encourage it. Around a third of the teachers stated they assign further reading and

discussion to their students, one of them asserted her students are very receptive; thus, they share and discuss their findings with her to expand their knowledge. Then, the interviewees were asked whether they are with or against the use of technology in education, where a large section of teachers was positive about the use of technology; they claimed that it would provide the learners with a variety of resources and easy-to-access information. However, this integration has to be with some conditions; the availability of electronic devices, good internet, and teachers' training to facilitate its use. In order to know about the teachers' awareness about the technique of gamification, they were asked if they have ever heard of it. The minority stated they did, while more than a half do not, and related it to game-based learning. At this stage, teachers were provided with the commonly used definition of gamification, and then asked if they have ever used one of its elements in class. Those who said yes, use competition, challenges and feedback, they asserted that this promotes their students' motivation, and engagement, and this is seen through their increased participation and interaction in the classroom. In the same context, the instructors were asked to choose one element or more according to what they think will motivate learners. The rewarded competition received the acceptance of the majority of teachers, followed by challenges; they put these choices forward saying that learners in their daily life like to be in competition and face challenges, because when they win, they either get rewarded or appreciate the feeling of achievement, in education, this will make them eager to learn more, and be part of the instruction. Although the interviewees were not asked if they would like to use game elements in instruction, they have chosen the ones they think will be beneficial for their learners; this shows their positive view towards the use of gamification, and that they have already accepted it. Another question was more related to the learners' engagement and feedback, where the interviewees also have a positive view, as providing feedback and ensuring they will provide it more often inside and outside the classroom. The last question

tries to investigate the views of the instructors concerning integrating leaderboards to enhance the learners' autonomous learning in a university course. The findings revealed that half of the interviewees were for this integration, claiming it will be beneficial, as the students will try their best inside and outside the class in order to learn and rank. Nevertheless, the other half of the teachers were against this idea; for some, it seems to be efficient for lower levels like high school or even middle school, because they are more into the ranking context. Whereas, the rest of the teachers think it would be demotivating; they see that students are not that prepared psychologically to face such integration, in addition, the less knowledgeable learners would not even do an effort to rank, as they are convinced that only the brilliant students will rank top of the board. Nevertheless, teachers unanimously asserted that in order to apply this technique, they should first do their investigations concerning its application, and have the needed training in order to benefit from its characteristics.

2.5 Overall Discussion of the Results

This part represents the core of the current research study where the collected data, through the students' questionnaire and the teachers' interviews, was analysed and interpreted. The discussion is structured according to the research questions and with respect to the literature review. The reached findings are in favour of the previously stated assumption, that EFL teachers and learners have a positive view towards the use of gamification in the educational sector, and that it came to meet the needs of digital natives, and optimises the teaching and learning process in general as it can be applied for EFL teaching at the university level.

Research Question 01: What are the EFL teachers' views of the integration of gamification in the teaching process?

The findings obtained from the teachers' interviews reported that the teachers have a positive view towards the use of gamification in teaching EFL at the university. The attained results are consistent with those (Flores, 2015; Garcia, 2015; Huang & Soman, 2013), who emphasized the importance of the use of game elements in the instructional process as they increase the students' motivation and engagement. This means, the learners will be more engaged and motivated if instructors provide them with a variety of game elements to keep moving forward each time towards the next step. Nonetheless, the results also show that this integration has to be well studied, and organised. This was mentioned by (Flores, 2015), instructors are intended to have the ability to join and implement learning objectives to make gamified learning successful.

Research Question 02: What are EFL learners' views of the effectiveness of using gamification in their learning process?

The data analysis and interpretation of the student' questionnaire revealed that they have a positive view towards the use of game elements in their learning process. The achieved results go hand in hand with Pektaş & Kepceoğlu (2019), as they asserted that game elements are adopted in instruction in order to increase learners' motivation to participate as well as get engaged. Furthermore, they claimed that each game elements, either used alone or combined with others, has its role to promote the learning process, the reason behind the students' choice of different elements depends on what they want to achieve. In the same view, the students' results are consistent with Yildirim (2017) and Mese & Dursan (2019), who claimed the benefits of integrating technology in instruction to foster autonomous learning, all this under the guidance and supervision of the instructors, in order to ensure the acquisition of valuable and authentic knowledge. In addition, the learners' preference for small-sized content is reliable to (Miller, 1956; Sweller, 2012, Khong & Kabilan, 2020), who asserted the limited capacity of cognitive load, which retains a small amount of

knowledge for a short period. Furthermore, the students' views reflect what (Prensky, 2001), asserted, that gamification combined with technology is seen to be efficient to assert the knowledge acquisition for digital natives.

Conclusion

This chapter covered the practical part of this research. It inspected the data collected from two research tools, a questionnaire and an interview. The findings sustained the research hypothesis, that teachers and students have a positive view towards the use of gamification in the instructional process, and that it came to meet the needs of digital natives. Therefore, the results emphasized the integration of gamification in teaching EFL at the university level.

General Conclusion

1. Putting it All Together
2. Pedagogical Recommendations
3. Limitations of the Study
4. Suggestions for Further Research

General Conclusion

1. Putting it All Together

The current research aimed to find out the perceptions of the teachers and students towards using gamification in teaching EFL. In addition to presenting the benefits of its application in EFL teaching process. It is composed of two chapters; the theoretical, and the practical part.

The first chapter contained two sections wherein the literature of the studied topic was reviewed. To ensure a better understanding, it was divided into two sections; where the researcher aimed at presenting the shift from classical EFL teaching to microlearning and mobile learning, where technology is integrated to suit the needs of digital natives. The second section aimed at introducing gamification, where the general concept of this technique was presented, in addition to its application in the educational setting, according to previous studies.

The second chapter, on the other hand, contained the practical part of this research. It sought to investigate the teachers' and students' views towards using game elements in a university course, wherein data was gathered through the use of a questionnaire and interviews respectively. The collected data was analysed and interpreted, then a discussion of the findings was provided. The obtained results, assert the positive view of the teachers and the students of using game element at the university level, where both have shown their interest to adopt it in education and in EFL teaching process

2. Pedagogical recommendations

This study aimed to show an alternative technique that can be used in teaching in general, and in teaching EFL in particular. Following its results, few recommendations that may help to improve the instructional process are proposed below:

Adopting a variety of activities and tasks by teachers will engage the students in the educational process, as well as integrating them in the design of the tasks and the instructional process in general.

To enhance the students' autonomous learning, it is beneficial to integrate more technology in the educational process, under the guidance of the teachers, whom themselves are required to proceed the needed training to benefit from the use of technology.

Concerning the adoption of game elements in education; rewarded competition, and challenges are the most accepted among students and teachers to enhance the students' motivation and engagement, a reason why they are foreseeable to be efficient if integrated in creative ways.

Launching a website for the department of English would create a digital learning atmosphere;

- Under guidance, teachers and students can share articles, lectures, summaries of the lessons, documents for further reading, ...etc.
- It can also contain announces that relates volunteer tutors, or monitors among the students to scaffold the less knowledgeable students
- As it can contain rewarded competitions for the best piece of writing of the semester, depending on the level; paragraphs for first and second year, and essays for the other levels. Where the rewards could be related to expending knowledge; as a full access to an international online library for a certain period, or free access to an online certified

course. These suggestions, work in parallel with the scholarship programs, especially for the students who would not have the opportunity to fulfil the requested conditions to obtain scholarships, but have the potential to study further, they will have these as an alternative.

The recommendations above can work both with or without a website, i.e., in class.

3 Limitations of the Study

This research study was done in a very limited period, due to the researcher's professional responsibilities, which hindered a little the data collection procedures.

The limited number of participants in the interviews, as some teachers had their motives not to participate in this study, can be counted as a limitation, because a larger number would share more views. Though, this lost opportunity would not impede the obtained results of this research.

4 Suggestions for Further Research

According to the findings of this research, the following studies might be proposed to be investigated in the future:

- An investigation of the applicability of game elements in a university course.
- Experimental research of the applicability of rewarded competition and challenges in a university course
- Experimental research to see to what extent the use of game elements fosters the students' motivation and engagement.
- An investigation of the use of game elements. A comparative study, between the application of gamification at the university and in high school; or it can be between the latter and the middle school.

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Appendices

Appendix 01: Questionnaire for EFL Students

Dear Students,

This questionnaire is a part of a Master thesis entitled "Teachers' and Students' Perception towards Using Gamification in Teaching English Language. You are kindly requested to select the answer(s) that you think is (are) more appropriate, and provide full answers whenever necessary. Your answers and personal opinions will be of great assistance in gathering data and making the current research valid and reliable. Your answers will be treated anonymously and confidentially.

Thank you very much for your collaboration.

***Obligatory**

1. You are *

- Male
- Female

2. Specify your academic level *

- Licence 01
- Licence 02
- Licence 03
- Master 01
- Master 02

3. How do you prefer your lessons to be? *

- Short
- Long
- Others: _____

4. Do you play games? *

- Yes
- No

If your answer is yes, how often? *

- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

5. What makes you play games? *

- Competition
- Rewards
- Feeling of achievement
- Socialising

6. Werbach and Hunter (2012) stated that "Gamification is the use of game-like elements and techniques in a non-game context". In education, Gamification uses competition, rewards, feedback, tracking mechanism and other game elements to deliver information and assert its acquisition. Have you ever heard about Gamification? *

- Yes
- No

7. According to the given definition, would you like your teacher to use gamified Lessons? *

- Yes
- No

Please justify your answer *

8. What do you like to have as a source of information? *

- Teacher only
- Technology only
- Both of the above
- Others: _____

9. Is the nature of tasks important to make you active to participate in class? *

- Yes
- No

If your answer is yes, explain how? *

10. What are the elements that make a learning experience enjoyable? *

- teachers' feedback
- Use of technology in class
- Rewards
- Peer interaction
- Others: _____

11. Which elements would you like to have to get engaged in a lesson? *

- Competition
- Rewards
- Challenges
- Others: _____

12. Please select to what extent do you agree with the following?

Make sure to see all the available options (swipe left) Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Neutral (N), Agree (A), Strongly Agree (SA). *

| | SD | D | N | A | SA |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Technology should be integrated in the teaching/ learning process | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| The use of technology hinders your EFL learning | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Your teacher's feedback enhances your engagement in the learning process | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| The use of game elements in a university lesson | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Using game elements promotes your motivation to learn EFL | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| The use of game elements distracts you from the lesson's objectives (as you might focus on the elements themselves and not on the lesson) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| A gamified lesson provides amusement and entertainment | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| The use of game elements has no significance in a university lesson | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Gamified lessons are more challenging | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

than a conventional
(classical) one

A lesson full of
challenges decreases
your motivation to
participate in class

Gamification makes
your interaction with your
teachers and classmates
more active

Rewarded competition
is useless in a university
lesson

To boost your
autonomous learning,
teachers should not be
spoon-feeders
(Who provide you with
ready information)

13. Please feel free to add any other comments you may have related to this topic.

Appendix 2: University teachers' Interview

Q 01: What is/are the levels that you are/have been teaching?

Q 02: How long have you been teaching EFL?

Q 03: How do you deliver your lessons?

Q 04: What do you do to motivate your students to complete a given task?

Q 05: How do you make your students engaged in the instructional process?

Q 06: Do you encourage autonomous learning?

If yes, how!

Q 07: What do you think of the use of technology (mobile learning through electronic devices) in education? Are you with or against? Explain why!

Q 08: Have you ever heard about a teaching technique named *Gamification*?

-If YES; would you explain it, or describe the way it is done

-If NO, what do you think it is about?

Explaining Gamification:

According to Werbach & Hunter (2012), "Gamification is the use of game-like elements and techniques in a non-game context". In Education, gamification uses rewarded competition, levels, badges, leaderboards, tracking mechanism, feedback, points, challenges, avatars, and other game elements to deliver information and assert its acquisition.

Q 09: Considering this definition, have you ever used one of these elements in your classes?

Yes: which one or ones? How was it!

Q 10: Which game element (s) would you like to use to enhance your students' motivation?

(Choose from the previous definition)

Q 11: If you are told that, providing your students with feedback (comments, advices, corrections...etc.) promotes the students' engagements, would you adopt it?

Q 12: To what extent do you think integrating /using ranking leaderboards in the EFL instruction will foster the students' autonomous learning? How!

Résumé

L'enseignement est un processus dynamique, qui s'actualise avec le temps. Enseigner l'Anglais comme langue étrangère doit suivre ce développement, car les étudiants d'aujourd'hui ne sont pas ceux d'hier. Les digital natives procèdent un cerveau distinct, ce qui leur permet d'absorber les informations différemment, en outre, leur durée d'attention est considérée limitée, ce qui empêche l'acquisition des connaissances lorsqu'ils sont exposés aux formes d'enseignement classiques ; ainsi ils deviennent démotivés et n'ayant aucune intention de s'engager dans ce processus, ce qui prévient leur apprentissage autonome. Afin de résoudre ce problème, la technique de gamification peut être intégrée dans l'enseignement. La partie théorique de cette recherche met en évidence les avantages de l'utilisation des éléments des jeux dans l'enseignement, ainsi que les résultats positifs obtenu de cette dernière. Cette recherche a pour but d'investiguer l'efficacité de la gamification autant que technique d'enseignement pour augmenter la motivation, l'engagement et l'apprentissage autonome des étudiants. Cette recherche a pris lieu au niveau de l'Université de Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia, au département de langue Anglaise, ou un questionnaire était administré aux étudiants, ainsi que des entretiens semi-directifs, réalisés avec les enseignants du même département. Les résultats révèlent que ces enseignants étaient largement d'accord avec l'intégration de cette technique, car ça pourra être engageant pour leurs étudiants. Les étudiants de leur côté, partagent le même avis que et favorisent l'application des éléments des jeux dans, et hors de, la classe, car ils trouvent que cette technique leur motivera et renforcera leur apprentissage autonome. Cette recherche a conclu que la technique de gamification aidera à motiver les étudiants et augmenter leur niveau d'engagement ainsi, renforcer leur apprentissage autonome.

يعتبر التدريس عملية ديناميكية تتطور بمرور الوقت. باعتبار أن طلاب اليوم ليسوا كما كانوا في السابق ، وجب تحسين عملية تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية وفقاً للتطورات المزامنة. يتمتع الجيل الجديد أو ما يدعى بالجيل الرقمي بتركيبة دماغية مميزة تسمح لهم باستيعاب المعلومات بشكل مختلف؛ حيث أنهم نشأوا باستخدام الأجهزة الرقمية، بالإضافة إلى مدى انتباههم المحدود، الذي يعيق عملية تعلمهم عند استخدام المدرسين للطرق التقليدية، مما يحبط عزيمتهم نحو التعلم والمشاركة بالإضافة إلى احباط تعلمهم الذاتي. لحل هذه المشكلة، يمكن دمج التلعيب في عملية تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. سلطت البحوث السابقة التي تمت مراجعتها في هذه الدراسة الضوء على فوائد استخدام التلعيب في التدريس والنتائج الإيجابية التي تم الحصول عليها من دمج هذه التقنية في التعليم. يهدف هذا البحث في طياته إلى التحقق من فعالية التلعيب كأسلوب تعليمي لتعزيز تحفيز الطلاب ومشاركتهم وتعلمهم الذاتي المستقل. تم إجراء هذا البحث في جامعة محمد الصديق بن يحيى ، بمشاركة أساتذة وطلاب قسم اللغة الإنجليزية، من خلال استخدام استبيان للطلاب ومقابلات شبه منظمة مع الأساتذة. أظهرت النتائج أن الأساتذة اتفقوا، إلى حد كبير، على فعالية دمج التلعيب في تعليمهم، حيث أنها تحفز إشراك الطلاب في العملية التعليمية. على نفس المنوال، يفضل الطلاب تطبيق عناصر الألعاب داخل القسم وخارجه، حيث أن هاته العناصر عند دمجها في التعليم تحفزهم وتعزز تعلمهم المستقل. خلص هذا البحث إلى أن تقنية التلعيب ، إذا تم دمجها في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، ستعزز تحفيز الطلاب ومشاركتهم وتعلمهم الذاتي.