Gamification in the improvement of speaking competences in the English as a Foreign Language classroom: a case study

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Abstract: The aim of this investigation is to study the influence of gamification methodology in the improvement of speaking competence. The study has implemented a gamified experience for 6th grade of Primary: "A trip to Japan", in which travelling has been the main topic of interest. Thus, 50 students have worked with real speaking situations that could possibly occur during a trip. In order to observe the progress of the students, a pre-test post-test method has been used applying a quantitative approach. These scales have considered the student's perceptions towards their communicative skills and competences in the spoken language, as well as their motivation for employing English as a foreign language at school, before and after the implementation of the gamified experience. The results have shown a huge improvement in the students' perception and in their motivation towards English as a Foreign Language (EFL) as a subject, as well as a significant interest in speaking activities through dramatized dialogues. Following these results, gamification methodology appears to be a relatively appropriate option in order to improve speaking competences and motivation for EFL in 6th grade classes.

Keywords: gamification, speaking competences, English as a Foreign Language (EFL), motivation, Primary

1. Introduction

Today, there is no denying the existence of a completely globalised world, where the boundaries between cultures, languages and nations are becoming increasingly blurred. Among all this amalgam of cultures, English stands out for its enormous growth in the number of speakers, becoming a lingua franca in many fields. As a result, language learning and, in particular, the mastery of the English language is becoming essential in our society (Chávez-Zambano et al., 2017).

Unfortunately, English proficiency in Spain is somewhat more limited than in some of its neighbouring countries. Thus, Spain is in 35th place in the world ranking of countries with the best command of English (EF, 2021). At the same time, it is in 25th place with respect to other European countries, lagging far behind the proficiency of countries such as Austria and Germany. This suggests the need to promote the teaching and learning of this language in education, although there is already an increase in the application of integrated bilingual learning programmes in Spanish classrooms (Atkinson, 2011). According to data published by the

Ministry of Education for the 2017-2018 academic year, 33.2% of primary school pupils are participating in some kind of integrated learning programme. In turn, 34.7% of primary schools offer such programmes. Although the percentages are not excessively high, we do find an increase with respect to previous years, where the values were around 15%. We therefore consider it necessary to continue promoting the teaching of English in Spanish compulsory education classrooms. We also consider it necessary to apply certain methodologies that are attractive and motivating for students, always within the communicative approach. This approach has proved to be the most effective in language teaching and learning (Moreno et al. 2017).

Taking into account the above, the purpose of this paper is to present a research on gamification in the English classroom in Primary Education. Firstly, a review of the most relevant and recent literature on the teaching of English as a foreign language in the classroom and the application of gamification as a teaching methodology will be presented. Subsequently, the research carried out is presented, outlining the objectives, methodology, context, instruments and procedures applied. Finally, the results obtained, and the discussion and conclusions of this work are analysed.

2. Teaching of english and gamification

2.1. The teaching of english as a foreign language

Language teaching, specifically English language teaching, has become a field with multiple research perspectives (Chávez-Zambano et al., 2017). Early perceptions of language teaching differentiated between a) learning English as a mother tongue, or English as a native language; b) co-official language, English as a second language; c) and finally, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) (Rautionaho, 2018).

However, following recent contributions, this differentiation is completely blurred, with English as a Foreign Language (EFL) finally coming to the fore. The same is true for the theoretical underpinning of the English language learning process. Until not so long ago, cognitivist theories were postulated as the basis for virtually any approach to EFL (Ellis, 2020). Prominent among these theories, based on the cognitive approach, was Krashen's Monitor Theory (Sulistiyo, 2017). However, recent research shows a shift away from the cognitivist approach (b, 2011). Some examples of this shift are the Complex Dynamical Systems Theory (Freeman and Cameron, 2008; de Bot et al., 2017), or the Multilingual Turn (May, 2013; Ortega, 2019). However, despite efforts to find common ground, there is still no clear unanimity on the theoretical basis of the English language teaching-learning process (Ellis, 2020).

For the purposes of this work, of all the methodological approaches studied, we particularly emphasise the communicative approach. This approach is based on the premise that all language is a social phenomenon "which is used for the exchange of messages between individuals in a given group, and such communicative transactions are the basis of the learner's practice" (Moreno et al., 2017, p. 3). From this approach, the activities proposed to students for language teaching should always be focused on a specific purpose and objectives, giving priority to the communicative function and meaning of the activities, rather than grammatical content. In addition, it also increases the possibilities of communicating with other speakers outside the classroom online (Carless, 2012). Finally, there is also an undeniable increase in learner motivation and participation, especially for those learners who are initially somewhat reluctant to engage in communicative tasks (Albino, 2017).

In relation to this methodological line, we find the so-called Task-Based Learning approach. According to this model, learners acquire the competences referred to language learning through a series of activities and exercises, presented as communicative tasks (Bygate, 2016; Doughty and Long, 2003; Ziegler, 2016). In this sense, we highlight the effectiveness of this approach in

the development of oral competence. The tasks posed from these methodologies become educational tools, which help learners to focus on meaning, learn real linguistic forms and stimulate the language acquisition process in a natural way (Albino, 2017). The main benefit of using such methodologies arises from the enormous similarity between discourse originating from a task, properly contextualised in the classroom, and discourse originating from a real communicative situation outside the classroom (Hismanoglu and Hismanoglu, 2011).

On the other hand, it is worth mentioning Dale's (1967) so-called learning cone. This model shows how we learn. For example, verbal stimuli produced by activities such as the traditional classroom (basically reading and listening) can only generate a recall of 10-20% after two weeks. On the other hand, what we say and do will be remembered by more than 70%. These types of activities are therefore much more meaningful than the former. The highest learning rate will therefore be achieved with students who are active and who are confronted with simulations or real situations, aspects that are present in games.

In addition, Task-based learning can nowadays be combined with ICT resources, leading to the so-called "Technology-mediated Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT)". The inclusion of digital technology in this case brings about the creation of authentic communicative environments in today's classroom (Azar and Tan, 2020; Cabero-Almenara, 2020; Chong and Reinders, 2020).

2.2. Gamification

Games are a fundamental element in education with a long tradition. However, its direct application in the teaching-learning process is somewhat newer and has come to be known as gamification. Although there is no unanimous definition by the various authors, we can point out that gamification is the use of game design elements and techniques in non-game contexts (Werbach and Hunter, 2012 article gamification phases). According to Kapp (2012), one of the main goals of gamification is to create a system where learners participate in a challenge, initially abstract, but defined by clear rules, with a high degree of interactivity and measurable feedback. This will result in an emotional response from the students, as well as a very likely improvement of the skill worked on in the gamified experience, as indicated by Kapp (2012). According to this author, gamification in the classroom requires the presence of concrete elements:
- Mechanics: the gamification experience must contain a clear scheme of points, rewards and phases to be overcome by the students.
- Aesthetics: the creation of gamified content with an attractive design and elements will facilitate student involvement.
- Game thinking: turn a daily experience into a competitive, cooperative and exciting activity.

For Kapp (2012), these three characteristics are essential to create a complete gamification experience. In turn, they will encourage student engagement with the content being taught. In addition to this, it is worth mentioning the elements necessary to gamify our classes proposed by Werbach and Hunter (2015). According to these authors, the following elements should be taken into account when designing a gamified experience:
- Clear specification of the educational objectives of the activity.
- Precise definition of the behaviours we intend to encourage in the students.
- Identification of the interests of the participants, with the intention of adapting the activity to their tastes.
- Establishment of the timing of the activity, as well as its structure, objectives, phases and rewards.
- Inclusion of humour and fun elements.
- Use of resources and tools necessary for the activity.

Once again, no clear unanimity exists regarding the elements that a game should have. On the one hand, rules, objectives and results are mentioned as necessary features, which tend to be variable and uncertain (Contreras-Espinosa, 2017). On the other hand, authors such as Werbach

and Hunter (2015), present a more extensive classification, differentiated into three levels of abstraction.

The first level is the dynamics of the game, the implicit structure, the emotions, the progress, the narrative, the relationships and the limitations. The next stage is the mechanism, the basic process of action and the mechanism to try to involve students in the activities that are carried out (such as challenges, cooperation, competition, rewards and feedback) through learning goals. Finally, in the third level are those specific elements of the game, such as achievements, levels, badges, leaderboards, etc. In this context, digital technology can serve as a common thread and integrator of the gamification sequence (Vives and Coiduras, 2021).

From a psychological perspective, gamification responds to the link between dopamine and the regulation of learning and memory (Bogacz, 2020). Dopamine is not about pleasure per se, but about reward-seeking, i.e. the pursuit of that pleasure which increases motivation to work towards that reward. If we can get a person to raise their neuronal levels of dopamine, we will obtain an increase in their attention, motivation and, ultimately, greater learning (van der Schaaf et al., 2011). It has been proven that playing games produces dopamine (Koepp et al., 1998), hence the interest of gamification in the classroom.

On the other hand, gamification is an enormously broad concept. In particular, it is worth noting the existence of various sub-concepts within it, such as game-based learning and serious games. The main difference between gamification and game-based learning is that, as mentioned above, gamification is about implementing specific elements typical of games, not only for entertainment but also to enhance the acquisition of specific content. However, game-based learning aims to include games in the process, as a support to the teaching-learning process and regardless of whether the educational content of such games is truly meaningful (Contreras-Espinosa, 2016). For their part, serious games are those games that are based on concrete real-life situations, such as role-playing games (Fernández et al., 2018). This last variant within gamification is the one that best fits the intervention-action proposal that will be presented later.

2.3. Gamification and the teaching of english as a foreign language

For many students, learning a foreign language is a complex and difficult task. However, if done in a motivating way, through new methodologies that help create more meaningful learning, learning can be much easier (Cordero and Núñez, 2018). Gamification can help learners practice language in situations very similar to reality (Fung and Min, 2016).

Oral communication is one of the most difficult aspects of English language learning for learners, especially in the case of spontaneous speech (Girardelli et al., 2016). This may be due to specific deficits in language proficiency such as: lack of language skills, lack of vocabulary; limited oral skills; skills related to public speaking; and the ability to organise discourse (Girardelli et al., 2016).

Improving all of these skills depends largely on providing students with opportunities to participate in class. However, there are limitations in the number of sessions dedicated to the subject of English, the length of the sessions and the poor match between what is proposed in the curriculum and its relation to the reality in the classroom (Damaris and Martín, 2018). In our case, we consider that one way of increasing the use of language in the classroom to improve students' language and speaking skills is to design and apply gamified activities, such as serious games. In addition, it is considered important to actively involve the students (Sevy-Biloon, 2016).

With all of this, we have developed the proposal in this paper (Fung and Min, 2016). The main objective of this research is to evaluate whether the application of a gamified experience contributes to a significant improvement in the communicative skills and competences of English in the 6th year of Primary School. As a result of this general objective, we can point out the following specific objectives:

- To evaluate possible changes in students' self-perception of their own communicative competences and skills in a gamified experience.
- To assess the motivation of learners to learn English as a foreign language as a result of the implementation of the gamified experience.

Thus, the research questions are the following:

- Do students' communication skills improve after the application of the gamified experience?
- Do students' self-perceptions of their own communication skills change after the application of the gamified experience?
- Does students' motivation to learn English as a foreign language increase with the implementation of the gamified experience?

3. Method

In this work we have implemented an action-research methodology, which is widely used in the educational field, given that it combines theory with practical application in the classroom. The research is carried out in situ, in the classroom itself, combining teaching action and interaction with students. The focus has been quantitative, which constitutes "a real methodological option" for action research (Rodríguez, 2005, p. 24).

3.1. Context and participants

The study was conducted with a convenient sample of 50 students of 6th grade of Primary. The school chosen was CEIP L'Horta, located in Sant Vicent del Raspeig. This institute is located in the western part of the town, in a mainly residential area, without any remarkable commercial activity and not very close to the town centre.

The school, which is public, includes the three levels of Infant Education and the six levels of Primary Education. L'Horta is not an excessively large school, as there are only two classes for each grade. The school is 30 years old. However, its long past does not make it an obsolete and outdated school today. Fortunately, various management teams have been able to keep it updated and renewed over the years.

The socioeconomic context in which the L'Horta school is framed can be considered standard, that is, the vast majority of the families which populate the school are middle or lower-middle class. The cultural level of the families living in this area is medium (according to the PLC), 18% with Primary Education, 34% are Graduates, 24% hold Secondary Education, 16% obtained Higher Education and 8% gave No Answer. There is no record of illiterate parents in the center.

The vast majority of the population is Spanish speaking, as the residents of the area are the children of immigrants from other parts of the country. Likewise, the total number of immigrant students at the school is not very high, but rather low: foreign students do not reach 2%. Consequently, the school does not have a great cultural diversity, with a predominance of the autochthonous culture. As for the sociolinguistic context of the center, as stated, the predominant language is Spanish.

Within this general context of the school, we must refer to the two classrooms selected to carry out the research. The participants of the study were the 6th grade students, distributed between two classrooms of 25 students each. These two classrooms well- reflect the characteristics of the school explained above. The vast majority of the students come from families with a standard socioeconomic background. However, we find certain cases of

economically depressed families, which is clearly reflected in the student in question. Curiously, the students from these families with economic problems were grouped, practically in their entirety, in one of the two classes, accentuating the differences in performance between the two classes. A priori, these differences were seen as a difficulty in carrying out the project and the study. However, as the project and activities were carried out, the differences became practically imperceptible and both classrooms showed enormous interest and participation in the study.

The students selected for the study are between 11 and 12 years old. To illustrate the developmental characteristics of the study participants, we will use Piaget's developmental theory. These students are on the borderline between the end of the stage of concrete operational, which is from 7 to 11 years of age, and the stage of formal operational, which begins at 12. Taking into account this transition, we can affirm that the vast majority of the students will have completely acquired all the characteristics and achievements of the stage of concrete operational. Among these features, we highlight the ability to classify, correspondence, operational thinking and conservation. On the other hand, the main milestones of the formal operational stage, among which formal thinking, hypothetical reasoning or error recognition stand out, are still in the process of acquisition (Joubish and Khurram, 2011). At the same time, when carrying out the project, we must be aware of the implications that these traits have on their academic performance. Considering that the concrete operational stage is practically over, its academic implications will not be as significant as those of the formal operational stage, which is still in clear development. Nevertheless, we emphasize the need to make use of examples familiar to the students, to present problems involving logical reasoning, as implications referring to the stage of concrete operational. Given the transition moment in which the students find themselves and following Joubish and Khurram, (2011) the content selected for the gamification project is highly related to the interests and experiences of the students, thus facilitating their understanding and participation in the study.

3.2. Instruments

This research is limited to two groups of 6th grade primary school students taking English and Communicative English. As mentioned above, we observed socio-economic and academic achievement differences between the two groups. However, it should be noted that these differences were not shown to have a significant impact on our research.

The method used follows a mixed approach, combining a quantitative perspective to measure the variable of gamification as a facilitator of learning and as a generator of motivation and positive attitudes towards learning English, and a qualitative perspective to analyse the feelings and sensations of the children towards de gamified experience. As for the qualitative perspective, genuine children's reports with drawings and sentences have been collected. Regarding the quantitative perspective, a validated questionnaire, initially proposed by Lee and Lee (2021), has been applied. This questionnaire has been structured into two parts: sociodemographic data and 28 self-perception statements concerning learning English. These statements have been assessed on a Likert scale of 5 (1= Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree and 5= Strongly agree). An example of a statement that illustrated perceptions is "I can imagine myself living abroad and using English effectively for communicating with the locals".

We translated the questionnaire into Spanish as it was to be used with primary school children and they might not understand the items well. Before administering the questionnaire to the children, 4 experts were asked to evaluate it. These experts were: a psychologist, two pedagogues and a philologist. They confirmed the content validity of the questionnaire items. We then piloted the questionnaire with 5 children. Based on their comments, we made some minor adjustments and developed the final questionnaire. We printed this final questionnaire on sheets of paper: we printed twice as many copies as children because there is a pre-test and a post-test. This printed format made it easier to fill in. We then transferred all the printed questionnaires to Google Forms, in order to work on the excel provided with all the answers entered.

Of course, the students had voluntarily consented to take part in the study. We explained the aim of this research and they willingly answered all the children, both in the pre-test and in the post-test. The data collection took place in two of the class sessions with the children and we explained verbally at the beginning what the questionnaire consisted of.

3.3. Stages

In the first phase, an identification of the students' prior knowledge was carried out. First, one week before implementing the gamification activities in the classroom, we applied the L2 Motivational Self System questionnaire. This scale assesses items such as, the students' willingness to speak English, their use of English in their adult life, their perception of their ability to hold conversations in English or the importance of English for them, which were measured on a Likert scale. The vast majority of items revolved around the oral use of English in their future. Consequently, after the application of this initial scale, it was possible to corroborate the need that drives our research: the students showed extremely low values in the items related to their ability to use the language orally; consequently, very few of them saw themselves capable of using spoken English in their professional or social future.

In the second phase, gamification was introduced in the classroom. Thus, after the completion of the initial test, the sessions of the remaining subjects in that week were carried out with the usual schedule, without introducing any changes. At the beginning of the following week, we started with the gamified experience: A trip to Japan! The main theme of our project is a route through Japan, visiting 4 of the major cities in the country. In each of the destinations, we found a challenge to overcome by carrying out a specific dialogue. The experience was organised into 4 sessions, which will be explained in detail later, with each of the group classes, divided between the subjects of English and Communicative English. Both classes were divided into groups of 4 students (six teams in total), as previous studies (Vergara, 2012; Camilli et al., 2012; Herrada and Baños, 2017; Villanueva and Selene, 2005; Vergara et al., 2019) have shown that the use of this learning methodology favours peer work to a greater extent than traditional large groups. The groups were not created randomly, but rather, by analysing the students' performance in the previous assessments of the subject, we tried to balance the groups, thus facilitating the participation and involvement of all students.

The main resources extracted from the game elements used in the research were:
- Narrative (storytelling): from the first session, the objectives and functioning of the game are introduced in the context of adventures that take place within a journey, with their respective characteristics, dates, luggage, etc.
- Progress: with each new city visited, the problem situations and, above all, the dialogues to solve them increased in difficulty. As they completed the challenges, the teachers gave them stickers representing each city, with a maximum of 4 stickers and a minimum of 1. These stickers were placed in the team's passport, on the page corresponding to the city visited.
- Feedback: following the line explained in the previous component, the stickers were given immediately after the small group dialogue. In this way, students are aware of their progress in the project.
- Freedom to fail: the aim was for students to experiment and build collective learning without fear of making mistakes and without negative consequences throughout the 4 different communicative situations.
- Game components: specially designed for these gamified sessions included stickers, passports, train tickets, money, real Japanese food, medical prescriptions.
- Digital thecnology: we have used both technological and non-technological resources. In this way, we have achieved a balance adapted to the classroom conditions (Alfallaj, 2020). In terms of technological resources, we have used the interactive whiteboard as

hardware; as software we have used Genially. Regarding non-technological resources, we have used colours, stamps, printed sheets, sweets, etc.

In the third phase, a collection of quantitative and qualitative data was carried out. This third phase is divided into two parts: a quantitative evaluation through the L2 motivational system questionnaire, again applied as a post-test. We will re-apply the L2 Motivational System questionnaire, with the intention of analyzing the possible progress of student motivation. At the same time, we will add a last item where students will express other ideas or feelings they have had during the experience. By applying the two methods mentioned above, we will be able to extract more than enough results to evaluate the students' performance, both in terms of their oral command of the language and in terms of their motivation to learn it.

4. Results

Below, the results obtained from a series of graphs extracted from the data collected in the pre-test and post-test of the L2 Motivational System scale (Lee and Lee, 2021) are summarised. We only attach those items which have undergone a very significant change, and which help us to illustrate the effect of the gamified experience on students' speaking skills and motivation towards English. We attach, however, all the results obtained in the questionnaire.

The following graphs represent the responses to the questionnaire, measured on a Likert scale: blue represents "strongly disagree"; red, "disagree"; orange, "neutral"; green, "agree"; and purple, "strongly agree".

In this first item, "I can imagine myself living abroad and having a discussion in English" (fig. 1), we observed a large increase in the "strongly agree" column. In particular, initially, 8 students felt able to live abroad speaking English. Subsequently, the number increased to 14, showing a positive increase in this item.
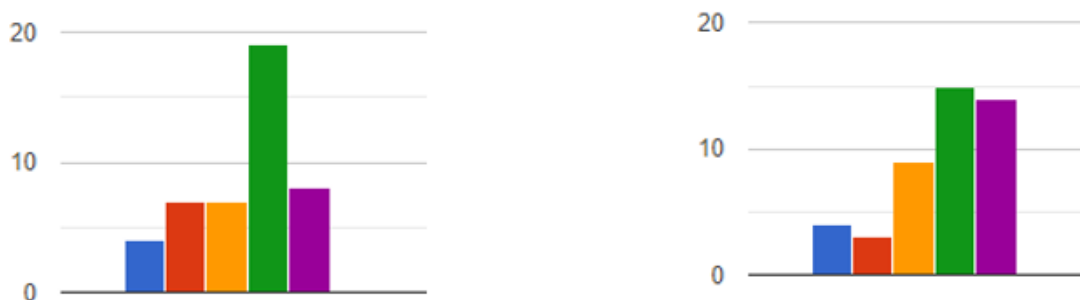

Fig. 1. Pre-test (left) and post-test (right) results for item "I can imagine myself living abroad and having a discussion in English".

Regarding item "I can imagine a situation where I am speaking English with foreigners" (fig. 2), we again observe an increase in the "strongly agree" column. Starting initially with 12 students and rising to 19, nearly 50% of the sample feel able to speak English with foreigners.

Fig. 2. Pre-test (left) and post-test (right) results for item "I can imagine a situation where I am speaking English with foreigners".

In the item "I can imagine myself speaking English with international friends or colleagues" (fig. 3), although we do not see such a noticeable increase, we do observe a slight increase in positive values in response to the situation posed. In addition, there is a significant decrease in negative values, with only 3 and 2 students answering, "totally disagree" and "disagree" in the post-test.

Fig. 3. Pre-test (left) and post-test (right) results for item "I can imagine myself speaking English with international friends or colleagues"

In this item "I imagine myself as someone who is able to speak English" (fig. 4), we observed a really significant change in several columns. Firstly, in the "strongly agree" column, there were initially 12 students and finally 21, which represents almost 50% of the sample. Similarly, the "strongly disagree" and "disagree" responses reduce their values to only 2 students in each of

them in the post-test.

Fig. 4. Pre-test (left) and post-test (right) results for item "I imagine myself as someone who is able to speak English".

The item "I can imagine myself writing English e-mails fluently" (fig. 5) serves to corroborate that not only do students consider that their oral skills have improved, but also their written competence. There is a clear increase in positive values, while negative values tend to decrease.

Fig. 5. Pre-test (left) and post-test (right) results for item "I can imagine myself writing English e-mails fluently".

In this case of item "I have learned interesting things in English classes" (fig. 6), although we were already starting from very high positive values, we continue to experience a slight increase. The "strongly agree" response reached 27 responses, representing 60% of the total sample. In the same way, the negative values practically disappear.

Fig. 6. Pre-test (left) and post-test (right) results for item "I have learned interesting things in English classes"

5. Discussion and conclusions

The proposal for classroom intervention through gamification has been carried out with the intention of supporting the scientific evidence on the effects of the application of this methodology in English classrooms. The main objective was to evaluate the effects of the application of a gamified experience, whose main theme was a trip to Japan, on the oral skills and competences of 6th grade students in a public primary school in San Vicente del Raspeig, Alicante. In addition, we have also assessed the effects on the motivation and participation of students in English classes, before and after applying the gamified experience. To do so, we have used a validated questionnaire based on the proposal of Lee and Lee (2021) to collect the data and produce the results.

With respect to the general objective of our research, "to evaluate whether the application of a gamified experience contributes to significantly improve communicative skills and competences in English in the 6th year of primary school" and the first research question "do students' communication skills improve after the application of the gamified experience?", these has been fulfilled on the basis of the results presented above. It should also be noted that a number of existing studies on the use of gamification in the classroom have also shown positive results.

For example, Díaz and Troyano (2013) conclude in their study on the potential of gamification that it is possible to improve the attitude and behavior of students thanks to the use of this methodology. However, there is little scientific literature supporting a significant relationship between this type of methodology and the improvement of students' speaking skills. Likewise, there is little evidence on the factors that contribute to the improvement of speaking skills, such as motivation or anxiety. In this sense, the study carried out by Sari et al. (2016) showed students' increased self-confidence, as well as a greater motivation towards the language.

With regard to the specific research question "do students' self-perceptions of their own communication skills change after the application of the gamified experience?", we looked at items 1, 4, 5 and 9 of the questionnaire, which are directly related to learners' self-perception. We observe that all of them show a significant increase in positive responses, with very high values with respect to the total sample.

With regard to the research question "does students' motivation to learn English as a foreign language increase with the implementation of the gamified experience?", we again look at the results of the previous items, to which we add item 24, which shows a clear increase in motivation and positive attitude towards learning English.

Despite the positive outcome of the experience and research, this work also has certain limitations that must be taken into account. The most significant limitation we found is the time of the sessions and the total number of gamification sessions available to us at the beginning of the research. We had the opportunity to apply only four sessions: although we recognise a positive impact of this methodology on the students, we also recognise that the time was relatively short.

Another limitation we highlight is the influence of interpersonal relationships among students. As explained above, the work has been carried out entirely in working groups. Although we recognise the balance between the levels of language proficiency among the different members of the group, we are also aware that the social relations between them may influence the final performance of the fictitious communicative situation. Moreover, as the environment is more playful and novel than usual, students' performance and involvement may vary greatly depending on who their peers are.

An important limitation of our research is also the size of the sample: a total of 45 pupils in the 6th grade of primary school. On the one hand, this is a significant representation of the school where the experiment was carried out. However, we must be aware that, under these circumstances, it is not possible to generalise the results, as a larger sample would be necessary. In any case, we recognise the possibilities of the study as an introduction to the investigation of this methodology and its relationship with the improvement of students' oral proficiency in English. Finally, it should be emphasised that the proposal presented has measured the self-perception of learners in terms of their improved motivation towards English or their future perception of English language use. However, the degree of improvement in learners' speaking skills has not been measured directly.

On the other hand, it must be said that this study opens up new lines of research in relation to the incorporation of fully gamified experiences in Primary English classrooms. A good example of future research could be the application of gamification to other skills such as listening, reading or speaking. Consequently, the work could be extended to carry out a comparative study of the impact of this methodology on the respective skills. In the same way, it could be interesting to adapt it for an online programme, in situations of social distancing.

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