




AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF NON-TECHNOLOGICAL GAMIFIED LESSONS IN A LITHUANIAN ESL CLASSROOM



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ABSTRACT

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The primary goal of this paper is to promote the use of gamification as a teaching tool in English language teaching and learning by emphasizing its worth and that gamified lessons can be utilized as a significant didactic tool by teachers to accomplish many learning objectives, including introducing, reviewing, and evaluating didactic topics while simultaneously raising students' motivation, focus, and learning autonomy. This qualitative case study investigated how non-technological gamified lessons enhanced English language learning in a Lithuanian English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom. Non-technology gamification is an understudied area but has the potential to offer valuable insights into English language learning. Qualitative data were collected from interviews and unstructured observations to identify participants' positive and negative experiences. The emerging themes were identified based on Self-Determination Theory (SDT). However, certain challenges were noted during activities that involved touching another participant, unhappy with the materials used and blurred learning outcomes were identified. The unstructured observations indicated that the participants were making attempts to speak in English, engaged and motivated during the activities and were involved in teamwork. The study makes a relevant contribution to scholarship by showing the positive potential of non-technological gamification in English language learning particularly in listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Based on the findings, the study provides certain pedagogical implications to encourage teachers to integrate gamified lessons into their pedagogical practices.

Contribution/ Originality: This study has uniquely contributed in presenting the positive potential of non-technological gamification in English language learning particularly in listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills and encouraging teachers to include gamified classes into their pedagogy practices.

1. INTRODUCTION

Gamification is a well-established educational approach that uses game elements in a specific non-game context (Lopez & Tucker, 2019; Werbach & Hunter, 2012). In the educational context, it is generally observed that gamified lessons are often rivetingly engaging, motivating, and able to offer cognitive, emotional, and social benefits for

learners (Chou & Ting, 2003; Dehghanzadeh, Fardanesh, Hatami, Talaei, & Noroozi, 2021; Hamari & Keronen, 2017; Hashim, Rafiq, & Yunus, 2019; Hung, 2018; Huyen & Nga, 2003; Yanes & Bououd, 2019). As Sigala (2015) points out, the integration of *funware* (i.e., points, badges, challenges, and leader boards) via gamification can motivate learners and enhance meaningful experiential values which eventually lead to significant and distinguishable behavioral outcomes.

Despite many studies on the potential of gamification, there have been debates on the success and effectiveness of gamification (Hanus & Fox, 2015). It appeared that the actual findings on gamification and students' learning are fairly weak and the majority of these studies were focused on surveys to measure outcomes (Rapp, 2014). In fact, many of the existing studies on using gamification in an educational context lack careful and rigorous research design (Xi & Hamari, 2019) and were not adequately observed and resolved. Ding, Er, and Orey (2018) suggested that a more reliable and wise-designed approach is necessary when innovative and complex gamified lessons are tested. In addition, Hwang, Sung, Hung, Yang, and Huang (2013) asserted that it is pertinent to a carefully designed approach and thorough investigation of the approach when reporting the results of gamified lessons.

According to previous studies (Kim, Rothrock, & Freivalds, 2018; Mora, Riera, González, & Arnedo-Moreno, 2017), the success of gamified lessons differs at an individual level. Gamification studies have acknowledged the importance of the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Mekler, Brühlmann, Tuch, & Opwis, 2017) which will be discussed in the following section. SDT explains how people are motivated when their psychological needs are achieved. Nevertheless, the fulfillment of these psychological needs depends on learners' perception and not on an objective judgment (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

However, only a few studies have investigated the needs, preferences and views of the learners to develop meaningful gamified lessons. The existing studies on gamification have ignored in-depth analysis of gamified lessons that can be effective in teaching and learning activities (Hamari & Keronen, 2017). There is a need to identify the experience of the gamification process, which this study aimed to achieve.

A qualitative study is particularly critical at this point to provide a descriptive account of participants' use, experiences, views and preferences. It is pertinent to cater to the voices of all learners and to meet learners 'where they are at' (Beavis, Muspratt, & Thompson, 2015). Thus, this study describes research that understands the students' and instructors' voices, from the interviews, in which participants record their thoughts and feelings in response to their learning experience in a specific area and to facilitate an improved understanding of students' experiences. The purpose of this study is also to respond to calls made by Mora et al. (2017) that there is still a lack of studies that focus on the educational area that could be a guide for instructors to plan and deploy gamified pedagogy. Similarly, Buckley and Doyle (2016) highlighted that qualitative studies are pertinent to understand how an effective learning intervention can be designed.

Finally, Dicheva and Dichev (2015) observes that the literature on gamification is more often related to technology and there have been relatively few studies that have investigated non-technological gamification which shows the lack of verified studies. Rapp, Hopfartner, and Hamari (2019) importantly point out that as most gamified lessons are enclosed in the virtual environment, it is time to move to the physical world and pay more focus to the physical elements and interaction opportunities. In this study, non-technology gamified lessons are considered.

In other words, the gamified lessons in this study are not bound by technology or delivered online. However, participants are allowed to use any technology (Smartphones, Internet, laptops) to complete the task given to them, such as finding appropriate vocabulary, pronunciation and meaning of words, and constructing sentences, besides their writing and speaking tasks. A more contextualized understanding of non-technological gamified lessons using simple gaming elements, such as point collection and incentives, is used in carrying out effective and interesting English language teaching activities. The gamified lessons in this study allowed face-to-face interaction between the teacher and students, enabling the teacher to guide the students. Furthermore, the proposed activities were planned with simple materials and without expensive software or technological tools. As a result, this study tried to fill the

gap by introducing non-technology gamified lessons into the exploration of students' and teachers' voices, thereby helping researchers and practitioners to consider more effective and acceptable gamified lessons, which also acted as the main premise of this study on which conclusions were drawn.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

SDT elaborates on how socio-contextual factors support or hinder an individual's motivation via the fulfillment of their basic psychological needs (Ryan & Deci, 2018). Moreover, the achievement of basic psychological needs has been associated with boosting learners' "joy of learning" and achieving learning objectives. These psychological needs refer to competence, autonomy and relatedness. Autonomy is concerned with people's universal urge to causal agents, experience volition, and act with their integrated sense of self. To be autonomous meant to be willing to perform an act, whether an action is independent or in response to a request from significant other (Ryan & Deci, 2000). It is suggested that a more autonomous form of motivation will result in improved students' engagement and learning.

Competence is illustrated as the desire to be effective when dealing with an environment while relatedness refers to the universal propensity to interact and experience working with other people (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Relatedness explains experience or attachment to another individual and demonstrates the importance of interaction and meaningful communication (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

2.1. Gamification in English Language Learning

An increasing emphasis on the potential gamified lessons as an effective approach is well documented. For example, Hung (2018) integrated flipped classroom approach with gamified lessons to enhance the learner's engagement. The findings suggest that the approach is a worthwhile attempt for English language learners to increase their confidence and motivation when engaging in classroom activities. Yanes and Bououd (2019) employed a Delphi method to gather computer science learners' opinions of two different game-based learning to learn English. The study reported a list of important do's and don'ts in considering gamified lessons in English language learning. Hashim et al. (2019) conducted a quasi-experimental method to compare the results after three interventions with Socrative, PowerPoint Challenge Game, and Kahoot. The findings reported that participants improved their English language grammar as no learners achieved Grades D and E in the post-test. Recently, Purgina, Mozgovoy, and Blake (2020) investigated English language grammar via the smartphones application, Word Bricks. The application helps grammatical construction through experimentation. The study concluded that certain features of game-based learning helped in encouraging English language grammar learning and also highlighted the challenges in English language grammar learning.

Despite the spike in studies related to gamified lessons and English language learning, literature that support non-technology gamified lessons in English language learning is somewhat sparse. In addition to this, Deterling, Dixon, Khaled, and Nacke (2011) assert that studies related to gamification should move from issues related to 'why' and 'what' to more mature investigation on how, when and when not. Furthermore, Dicheva and Dicheva (2015) have indicated that the implementation of gamified lessons is not an easy task and demands careful planning and implementation (Burke, 2014). More studies are needed because different settings and personalities will influence and alter the learners' experience of games (Mekler et al., 2017). Therefore, the present study intends to conduct an in-depth qualitative study to detail students' experiences based on the SDT and other themes that emerge. These qualitative findings are pertinent to design pedagogical practices that will result in positive learning outcomes.

Gamification does not necessarily depend on technology and it can be implemented easily without much cost in a non-technology environment. Furthermore, the non-technology gamified lessons in this study were planned for participants to be physically active and at the same time to make learning more fun and enjoyable. Gamifications are

employed to boost learner motivation and engagement activities (Dicheva & Dichev, 2015). These activities allow face-to-face interaction and teamwork that help them improve their language and understand each other's gestures and communicate more effectively. However, such features are not observed when technology-gamified lessons are integrated into pedagogical practices. Participants experience restricted movement and are glued to their technology devices. In addition to this, the technology devices and platforms are expensive and at times participants experience technical problems. According to Zainuddin, Zhang, Li, and Haruna (2019) non-technology gamified lessons applying game elements to encourage and engage learners can be done anywhere, in any grade and any topic. Therefore, the researchers believe that it is appropriate to opt for non-technology gamified lessons during English language lessons. With such features, it is hoped that participants are able to perform independently, (autonomous), be effective in dealing with the environment (competence) and able to interact and collaborate (relatedness) to achieve positive learning outcomes.

The current study attempts to address, in a meaningful way, our understanding of undergraduate students in terms of English language learning and motivation. In this study, the tenets of autonomy, relatedness and competence suggested by SDT are examined in order to find out whether learners' motivational experience influences their actual behavior and helps them in learning. Hence, the research questions that guided this research are the following:

1. What are the motivation aspects (autonomy, competence and relatedness) experienced by the students during non-technology gamified lessons?
2. What are the challenges experienced by students during the non-technology gamified lessons?

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Design of the Study

The current study is based on a case study of a classroom project using gamified lessons with undergraduate students. A case study is adopted due to the "rationally empowering nature" (Yin, 2009) and "thick descriptions" (Merriam, 2009). It allows a researcher to study the complexity of a single event and understand its activities (Stake, 1995). Hence, this study used an exploratory case study research design and drew on interviews and observations provided by students. Convenience and purposive sampling were utilized in this study. Two-stage sampling is often required in qualitative studies (Merriam, 2009).

3.2. Participants

The data were collected from 15 undergraduate students from Psychology, International and Intercultural Communication, and Digital Marketing and Communication degree programs. These participants were a group of international students studying at a public university in Lithuania and their English language courses were traditional lecture-based. It was a predominantly instructor-oriented program, without learners' active participation. A brief interview with the three English language course instructors in the university revealed that students were fairly weak in the English language due to mother tongue interferences and limited opportunities to interact in English. Therefore, the instructors were anxious and positive about implementing gamification with the hope that students would be engaged and motivated in English language lessons. These three instructors were also interviewed at the end of the study. These instructors were teaching in the university for the past five years. They were teaching English courses for undergraduate students from Social Science faculties and were willing to try the new approach with their students during their English language course lessons.

The six-hour credit English language course was a compulsory subject to complete their degree program. The study was carried out for two weeks during the Erasmus staff exchange teaching program. Participants were briefed on the nature of the study, consent forms were given and they were informed about the freedom to

withdraw from the study at any point of the research process. Teaching was undertaken for eight hours over two weeks, involving four two-hour-long classes.

The demographic data of the participants are presented in Table 1. All participants were given pseudonyms. For example, S1, S2, S3.

Table 1. Demographic data of participants.

Students	Country	Age	Gender	Semester	Programme
S1	South Korea	27	Male	2	Psychology
S2	Georgia	20	Male	2	Psychology
S3	Pakistan	24	Male	2	Psychology
S4	Lithuania	19	Male	2	Psychology
S5	Lithuania	20	Male	2	Psychology
S6	Turkey	22	Male	2	Psychology
S7	Turkey	25	Male	2	Psychology
S8	Malawi	25	Female	2	International and Intercultural Communication
S9	Lithuania	20	Male	2	Communication and Digital Marketing
S10	Nigeria	23	Male	2	International and Intercultural Communication
S11	Malawi	26	Female	2	International and Intercultural Communication
S12	Ghana	21	Male	2	International and Intercultural Communication
S13	Lithuania	20	Male	2	Communication and Digital Marketing
S14	Lithuania	21	Female	2	Communication and Digital Marketing
S15	Lithuania	20	Female	2	Communication and Digital Marketing

3.3. Research Procedure

The students worked in groups of three as well as in pairs. Their learning objectives, which included engaging in conversations and discussions (speaking skills) and writing about a variety of themes in English (writing skills), guided the planning of the activities. The repetition of a number of gamified lessons helped to support previously identified data, fill the gap in conducting gamified lessons, and improve weaknesses. Students were briefed on the nature of the activities. Social Construction Theory suggested by Vygotsky (1978) guided the lessons planned for the present study. This theory emphasizes interaction and collaboration for knowledge construction. Therefore, when designing the gamified lessons, the students were put in small groups to encourage interactions. Table 2 provides an overview of the gamified lessons.

The instructors were briefed on the nature of the study and were guided on how to conduct the activities before the gamified lessons classes. The instructors concluded each activity by highlighting certain mistakes related to language learning. Students were given points for their activities and also for their accuracy in speaking and writing skills upon completing each activity. The marks were in the form of colorful stickers. Previous studies have highlighted that the use of points, badges and leaderboards in gamified lessons was to encourage and engage learners in their learning activities (Gibson, Ostashevski, Flintoff, Grant, & Knight, 2015; Harms, Seitz, Wimmer, Kappel, & Grechenig, 2015). For the present study, badges and leaderboards were not used and colored stickers were given which could be changed with gifts. All participants obtained gifts based on the points that they had achieved. Therefore, all students had the opportunity to receive gifts.

3.4. Data Collection and Analysis

3.4.1. Qualitative Data Trustworthiness

The present study's trustworthiness is evaluated based on the criteria for qualitative studies suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985). These criteria include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. To achieve credibility, data triangulation was conducted. The interviews were triangulated with classroom observation. The in-depth description of the setting and participants allowed transferability, dependability was achieved with data triangulation (interviews and observation) and confirmability via audit trail, and member checking. In this study, written observations of the lessons were undertaken by the researchers to further help understand student

experiences during the gamified lessons. The emerging themes from the interviews writing responses were considered alongside these observation notes.

Table 2. Gamified lessons.

Activity	Gamified Lessons	Learning Activity
Placing pieces of paper between different body parts	Students worked in groups and the team had to wisely think about how to place colored papers among parts of the body. For example, putting the paper on the head and holding it. In this situation the head and the hand were the parts of the body. They were given a specific duration and told to place as many pieces of paper.	Participants spoke in English when they negotiated ideas, instructed their team members. Students were called to the front of the class to share their experiences to speak individually on their experiences.
Eiffel Tower construction	Participants were told to build the Eiffel tower with whatever material found in the classroom. The highest tower construction in the limited time was awarded the most points.	Participants interacted in English to get the materials around the class. This involved speaking and writing skills. They had to speak on why they chose such materials to build the tower. Once the lesson was over, they had to write a paragraph on Eifel Tower individually
Guided drawing	Participants worked in pairs and were provided with an object or scenery. One of the participants was blindfolded and the other was not.	The participant who could see the picture guided the blindfolded participant to draw the picture.
Model costume design	Participants worked in pairs. Newspapers were used by the designer to prepare the costume for the model.	Participants were required to write a text in the past tense to explain their experiences in designing the costume. In future tense, they were asked to mention where the model will best go in a boutique.

3.4.2. Interviews

According to Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2006) interviews help to discover and investigate participants' responses and information about their "attitudes, interests, feelings, concern and values more easily" (p. 418). The question for the interview was designed based on the existing literature on gamification. The first section of the research question tapped into the students' general experience of the activities. The second section invited them to share their positive and negative experiences.

The face-to-face interviews were conducted a day after completing all the gamified lessons to identify positive and negative experiences. The interviews were carried out in a secure, comfortable and confidential room (Neuman, 2004). All recordings were transcribed for the analysis. Apart from that, the researchers took notes during the interview to capture extra information to assist in analysis. The interviews were conducted in English. The interviews lasted for 30-45 minutes. The interview questions were: (1) What are your positive experiences during the non-technology gamified lessons? Please explain with examples. (2) What are your negative experiences during the non-technology gamified lessons? Please explain with examples. The following practices suggested by Gay et al. (2006) were considered in this study:

- i. Listen more and talk less as listening is the most important part of interviewing
- ii. Follow up on what participants say and ask questions when you do not understand
- iii. Avoid leading questions
- iv. Do not interrupt. Learn how to wait
- v. Keep participants focused and ask for concrete details
- vi. Tolerate silence. It means the participants are thinking
- vii. Do not be judgmental about participants' views or beliefs; keep a neutral demeanor. Your purpose is to learn about others' perspectives, whether you agree with them or not

viii. Do not debate with participants over their responses. You are a recorder not a debater

Thematic Analysis by [Braun and Clarke \(2006\)](#) was considered to identify, analyze, interpret and report the open-ended questions. The six steps of thematic analysis used were: 1) Becoming familiar with the data and transcribing all data; 2) Generating codes; 3) Classifying codes into themes; 4) Reviewing and refining themes; 5) Concisely defining and naming themes; and 6) Producing a report from the emerging themes which is descriptive, analytical and argumentative narrative.

4. FINDINGS

The emerging themes from the interview were categorized based on competence, autonomy and relatedness. Other themes that emerged were categorized into separate themes. This section discusses these emerging themes.

Table 3. Participants' quotations with theme and sub-themes.

Examples/ Excerpts of Data	Sub Themes	Theme
<p><i>"It improves listening, speaking and writing too. First of all, we need to understand the instructions [...] introduce our ideas in speaking or writing, so having this type of lectures [Lecturers conducting gamified lessons] is beneficial for all students.</i> (S5)</p> <p><i>"It's a good practice for my vocabulary and I guess reading, listening speaking always helps</i> (S7)</p>	<p>Effective English language learning environment.</p> <p>Enhance their vocabulary as well as listening, speaking, writing, and reading skills</p>	<p>Gamification fostered their learning experiences and enhanced their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. The activities also enhanced their vocabulary and the participants experienced effective English language learning environment All these can be grouped under the common theme 'Competence'.</p>

Table 3 shows a sample of the participants' direct quotations. They were included to explain key themes and sub themes. [Miles and Huberman \(1994\)](#) inter-rater reliability was employed. Two coders were considered to code separately to ensure reliability. Another coder reviewed the existing themes with other coders before finalizing the themes based on the data. An agreement of 85% was obtained.

4.1. Competence

Learning a language demands commitment and effort. Students were more conscious of the process of meaning-making. Most of the participants engaged wholeheartedly in the gamified lessons, which made language teaching more interesting and productive. Participants believed that gamification had fostered real learning experiences and enhanced their English language learning skills. One participant wrote: *It's a good practice for my vocabulary and I guess reading, listening speaking always helps during gamification helps in language learning.* (S6, interview 8.06.2019)

Another participant wrote: *It improves listening, speaking and writing too, First, of all, we need to understand the instructions [...] introduce our reflection in speaking or writing, so having this type of lectures is beneficial for all students.* (S5 interview 8.06.2019) Gamification generated emotions involving feelings of joy, excitement and triumph. This aspect promoted greater participant investment and extra effort in the language learning experience. A comment from one participant highlighted that: *It's really useful technique for teaching because sometimes I was boring in the class. This technique more enjoyable.* (S11 interview 9.06.2019)

Another participant said: *I have no minuses to these activities. It best to entertain* (S14 interview 9.06.2019). The participants noted that it was a non-threatening authentic educational experience that further bolstered their interest in English language learning. One participant expressed the following view: *It would be useful of course, because there are very few times where university lectures are actually fun and you want to give your full attention in the whole lecture* (S13 interview 09.06.2019). The gamified lessons appeared to offer an effective solution to motivation problems that can occur in language learning. One of the participants concluded that: *The whole concept of*

"gamification" makes us involved in the activities better compared to 'traditional ways of teaching. There is a saying that we learn best when we actually do something' (S5 interview 8.06.2019).

4.2. Relatedness

Participants in this study demonstrated their ability to develop learning skills likely to be of critical importance in the 21st century and sub-themes related to communication and collaboration were evident. Gamified lessons gave the students greater agility in adapting and innovating to complete the activity given to them. One of the participants emphasized the importance of group work and collaboration: *Oh yes, the group has to think in 2D and 3D views in order to achieve the goal. Also, we had to keep in mind the positioning of the elements* (S12, interview 9.06.2019). Participants worked together, interacting, negotiating and applying the best ideas to solve problems and earn points. They showed that effective teamwork and collaboration involve the willingness to consider other ideas, which may mean sacrificing one's ideas, in determining which ideas are best for the team and to collect points. One participant emphasized that: *Teamwork was much important because I think one person couldn't be able to mount it, it needed a second hand or more in order to come out with perfect results.* (S7, interview 08.06.2019)

Another participant stated: *Students had to analyse and critically think about the next step to take in order not to fall down the tower. Students first and foremost imagined a tall tower before actually getting them built. Basically, critical thinking and collaboration played a major part not only in the Eiffel tower activity but all the activities.* (S8 interview 08.06.2019). Gamified learning in a way, is a common task where participants depend on each other and are accountable to each other. When the instructor was interviewed about the activities she liked most, she pointed out that: *All the activities were really interesting because they are tailored to change the pace of the classes, provide a variety of activities; they involve creativity development, collaboration and group work.* (T2 interview 07.06.2019)

4.3. Challenging Issues

The challenges identified by the participants during the gamified lessons were classified into two sub-themes, namely, discomfort in touching others and hygiene during the lessons. One participant expressed the following concern: *The most notable thing was Parts and Body and Papers exercise. I think it gave me a little discomfort because we had to touch our bodies together during the exercise.* (S13 interview 09.06.2019). Another challenge was related to using their shoes for activities, as concern was expressed about hygiene. One participant wrote: *I think we can use other materials instead of shoes. We're 'playing' on shoes, so I think it can be a bit detrimental for our hygiene and things. There are some people who are very sensitive to hygiene. I think that could give them some degree of discomfort.*

4.4. Observation Notes

The observation notes were collected to investigate the phenomenon in its natural context to get first-hand information (Merriam, 2009). According to Merriam (1998) collecting data via observation notes very much depends on the purpose of the research. The observation lasted for an hour and was conducted during the gamified lessons (see Table 2). Students writing materials and their work during gamification were also collected. The observation notes in this study were guided by suggestions of DeWalt, DeWalt, and Wayland (1998). Their suggestions included: study what is happening and why; look at the event taking place from a variety of viewpoints and when behaviors exemplify the purpose of the observation. The observation notes were categorized into seven main themes: aim, engaging, fun, teamwork, expected outcome, competition, and learning effect. Table 3 illustrates the themes. These observations concerned what the students had learned and their reactions during the gamified lessons.

Table 4. Gamified lessons observation.

Themes	Strengths	Limitations
Aim	The study was conducted with undergraduates and most of them were eager to have such lessons and made attempts to speak and write in English during the lessons.	None
Engaging	The students were engaged in the activities. For example, they were eager, enthusiastic and were attentive during the gamified lessons. They were focused on what they needed to do. During the time given to prepare their speech, they were interacting with their friends and using their smartphones to find suitable vocabularies.	None
Fun	Students were motivated and engaged. They were laughing, and smiling while discussing with each other how to complete the activity. A more exciting learning setting was observed.	Students were engrossed with the activities and too much noise and shouting. Therefore, they were not able to listen to the instructors given between the activities
Team Work	There was teamwork in deciding on how to complete their tasks. Negotiation of ideas was observed.	Some students were reluctant to take off their shoes to build the Eiffel tower. During the body parts activity, some students preferred giving instructions and inserting pieces of paper and did not want to be touched.
Expected Outcome	Students completed their work and all the students participated in speaking and writing in English.	None
Competition	They were eager to know their scores and be the winner for each activity. Scores displayed on a board motivated them to perform better in speaking and writing.	None
Learning Effect	It was observed that students engaged in discussion on specific vocabulary and sentence structures that needed to be used in their presentations, and writing. Also, they searched on the Internet for better sentence structures. They were willing to accept other members' ideas.	None

Table 4 indicates the gamified lessons' observations in terms of the themes, strengths and limitations. Figure 1 shows the students' activities that they were involved in during the gamified lesson.



Figure 1. Illustrates the activities students were involved during the gamified lesson.

Students' materials were collected by the end of the lesson. Some of the materials are illustrated in Figure 2.

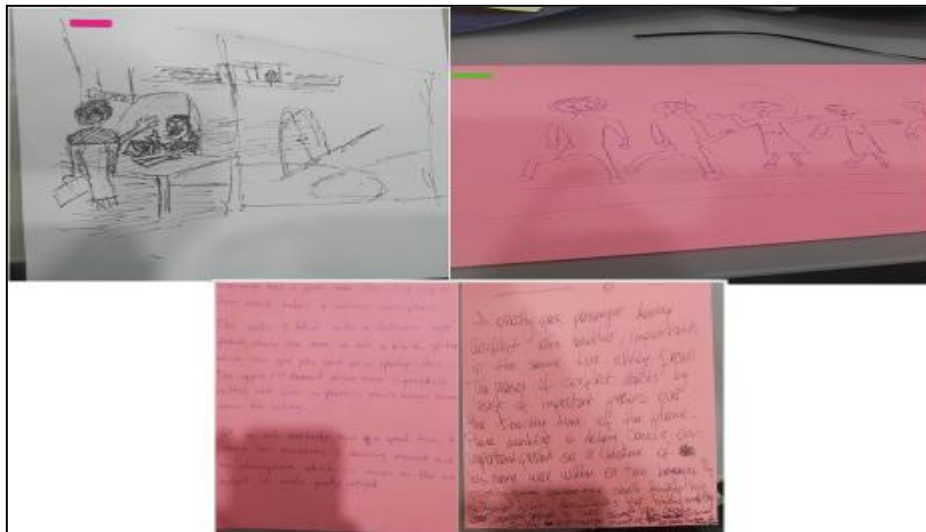


Figure 2. Students' writing task related to non-technology gamified lessons.

5. DISCUSSION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The study showed the positive potential of non-technology gamified lessons in English language learning. Nearly, all the students highlighted that the gamified lessons were valuable means to deliver the lesson content. In their interviews, they repeatedly mentioned that the gamified lessons were exciting and entertaining.

The observation notes confirmed that they were experiencing an environment that was fun, enjoyable and exciting which probably created an environment to retain information and drove human engagement. They were more competent and took ownership of their learning. It was observed that the students made an effort to use the correct vocabulary and sentence structures to complete the task given. They tended to be more competent and took ownership of their learning during the lessons. Gamified pedagogies are fun, entertaining, engaging and motivating (Chou & Ting, 2003) Studies recognized that gamified pedagogies were entertaining and engaging (Hamari & Keronen, 2017; Kapp, 2012).

Further, the competition among the teams was observed to motivate the students to become engaged in the activities to gain better scores. Overall, the observation notes were consistent with the results obtained from the interview responses. The findings of this study were in accord with previous research conducted by Hung (2018) in which it was found that gamified lessons generate tremendous motivation and interest which may enhance English language learning. The frequent interactions and collaborative team effort required collective responses to negotiate the most effective way to carry out the task given to them. The activities allowed room for explicit corrections. The interactions instilled confidence and dispelled certain fears and enhanced their negotiation skills while communicating in English. It also boosted their communication and cognitive skills.

When learners are given the freedom they embrace curiosity and motivate themselves to acquire knowledge without guidance. Being a language teacher/educator, it is pertinent to blend the 21st-century learning skills into their pedagogical practices to motivate students to a worthwhile learning experience. Learners should be driven by natural curiosity which lets them drive their learning. Therefore, the findings of this study are aligned with previous studies that emphasized that gamified lessons can promote interactions, collaboration, and find ways to solve problems among groups (Jagušt, Botički, & So, 2018; Rapp, 2014). Preparing students for interactive and collaborative learning activities can be achieved with simple materials and does not require sophisticated technology tools. It is the effort of the instructors to think creatively to engage learners.

Gamified lessons can bring students together to solve problems, question one's ideas, assumptions and values to enhance learning. This developed affinity among students helps to inspire learners to build their ideas and

knowledge for application in achieving their learning objectives. Therefore, it is pertinent to establish a learning environment that supports learners, in which students are active, where critical thinking skills are taken into consideration and where social interactions are supported. Overall, the findings witnessed that interactive collaborative lessons or tasks scaffold learners in their pursuit of English language learning not only with interesting activities but also via interactions and motivational support. It was evident that non-gamified lessons supported the two physiological needs mainly relatedness and competence as illustrated by SDT.

However, autonomy was not clearly evident in the interviews and how participants managed their learning (autonomy). Autonomy not only refers to being self-directed and self-sufficient but also explains an individual's own sense of self (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Autonomous learners have the freedom to determine and self-regulate their learning (Pintrich, 1999; Zimmerman, 2002). Such a feature was not evident in the findings because students were only engaged for two weeks and they were not able to reflect on how these gamified lessons can help them in English language learning in the future. Perhaps a more detailed investigation of self-regulated learning would be able to unearth these findings. According to Kolb and Kolb (2009) gamification may not be appropriate for some learning styles and for this reason it needs to consider other learning strategies such as reflection, experimentation and other approaches to build their skills and understanding.

From the findings of this study, the researchers were able to derive a model that was an amalgamation of pedagogical practices that would be able to enhance English language learning via non-technology gamified lessons. The emphasis is on the positive experiences of students in English language learning i.e., competency, relatedness and how the barriers to achieving autonomy and other relevant challenges can be considered when implementing non-technology gamified lessons. Figure 3 illustrates the suggested model for non-technology gamified English language learning for international students.

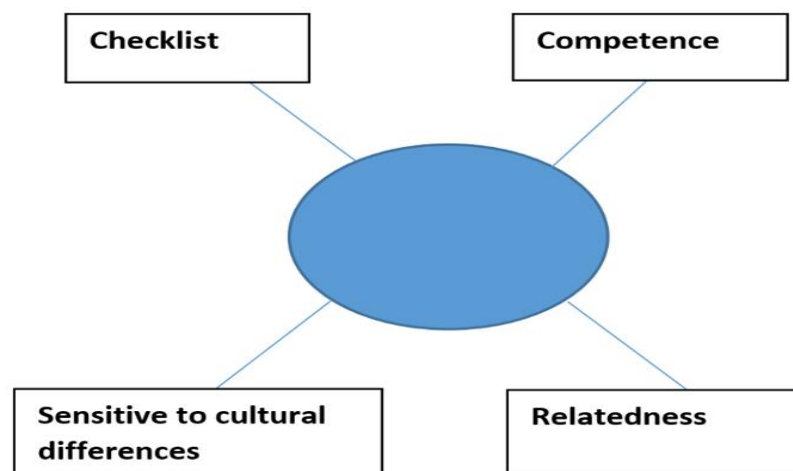


Figure 3. Pedagogical model for non-technology gamified English language learning for gamified lessons.

6. LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSION

With an increasing call for creativity and critical thinking in teaching and learning activities in teaching and learning, it is pertinent for instructors to find appropriate teaching tools to accommodate students' learning. In this study, the researchers believed that non-technology gamified lessons were wise and practical to arouse students' interest. Several limitations were evident in this study. First, it was a considerable short duration. Creswell (2015) highlighted that short duration-data collection allowed researchers to collect and analyze the data to identify whether intervention is workable before considering it for a longitudinal study. Therefore, future studies should consider gamification for a longer period. Future studies should also explore the differences between the students

based on gender, age, ethnicity and specialization. Cross-cultural studies can also be considered to understand the differences towards effective deployment of no-technology gamified lessons in higher education.

Despite the significant experience of the non-technology gamified lessons, some issues need to be considered while planning to implement non-technology gamified lessons. Students reported uneasiness when the activities required physical touch with other participants. Gamified lessons need to be structured while keeping in mind the complex relationships between culture, context and pedagogical practices especially when the participants are from different cultural backgrounds. Participants pointed out their dissatisfaction with the gamified lessons learning outcomes. To address this problem, instructors should be alert and understand cultural differences and plan activities accordingly.

To achieve effective learning outcomes, a checklist should be given to students to reflect on what they have learned at the end of each lesson. Furthermore, before the class ends, teachers should be able to conclude and reinforce the skills that they have acquired during the gamification lessons. In essence, this study contributes to the growing body of evidence regarding the contribution of gamification in language learning. There is limited research considering non-technological gamification in relation to English language learning. Any instructor who is interested in implementing gamified lessons need not wait until the snazzy devices are available. It can be achieved with powerful simulation pedagogical practices. These simple tools used in this study allowed students to enhance their language skills without spending time in cumbersome software modules.

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