People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

University of 8 Mai 1945 – Guelma.   جامعة 08 ماي 1945ـقالمة

Faculty of Letters and Languages   كلية الآداب واللغات

Department of Letters and English Language   قسم الآداب واللغة الإنجليزية

Option: Linguistics

Exploring the Impact of Gamification on EFL Students' Communicative Competence in Oral Expression Classes: The Case of First-year Students at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of 08 Mai 1945- Guelma-

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Language and Culture

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June 2024

DEDICATION

With greatest gratitude and heartfelt appreciation, I express my deepest gratitude to 'Allah',

the most merciful and the most gracious.

I dedicate this research to those whose unwavering support, encouragement, and belief in me.

This has kept me motivated and inspired.

To my father 'TAHAR' , my mother 'MALIKA, to my brothers 'LOUAY and ' MOUHAMED

' , my sister 'INES ' , and my family.

This achievement would never be true without their support.

To my partner in this work 'ASMA', a specific thanks for her invaluable contribution

To my roommates 'SOUNDOS , 'RAYAN' , and 'ISMAHAN ' , thank you for being with me

in my hardest time throughout this journey.

A special dedication to my teachers, Mrs. 'Ilhem CHEKATT' , 'Miss HEGHEGUE Nabila",

,and Mrs.' Fatima ABDAOUI ' Who always helped me complete my research.

Last but not least, I want to thank myself for overcoming all the challenges and the hard work

throughout my academic career.

Djouad Malek

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated with genuine admiration and thankfulness to:

My beloved father 'DJELLOUL' the source of support throughout my life

My mother 'NACIRA', my guiding light, forever missed .May Allah grant merci on her.

My brothers 'TAWFIQ' and 'KHALED' who were there in every step of my way

My dear sister, WAFA, who has been a constant source of encouragement and inspiration throughout my life, and her children 'ILYES' and 'IDRIS'

My dear aunt and her daughters, supportive of me in my academic journey.

My partner 'MALEK' who believed in me and in my abilities. Thanks, my dear

My respected supervisor, Mrs. 'Ilhem CHEKATT ', for her guidance and support throughout the whole research

My teachers 'Nabila HEGHEGUE', 'Fatima ABDAOUI', Who always helped me complete my research.

The great friends, friends of the journey and success "Zeyneb, Rayene, Soundous, Djihene, Maroi, Rita"

To all those who supported me whenever I was stumbling.

Asma Boureneb

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

Communicative competence is considered crucial in social and academic contexts in general, and in foreign language learning in particular. However, due to the lack of sufficient opportunities for practical applications, many EFL students encounter serious difficulties and challenges to enhance their communicative competence. Therefore, EFL teachers have to be aware about how to improve such fundamental students' needs. The present research aims to investigate the impact of communicative games on EFL students' communicative competence in oral expression classes. It is then hypothesized that the implementation of well -designed games in EFL oral classes may develop EFL students' communicative competence. In order to achieve the research aim, answer research questions, and test hypothesis, a mixed method research was adopted. More precisely, a questionnaire was administered to collect data from twenty oral expression teachers at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma. In addition to students' classroom observation of two groups of First-year LMD level in oral expression classes for the academic year 2023/2024. Based on the interpretation and the analysis of the results, the hypothesis is confirmed and revealed the positive impact of gamification on EFL students' communicative competence. Moreover, teachers have positive attitudes towards the use of games on the improvement of communicative competence of their students. The assessment of students' communicative competence before and after the use of games proves that this technique has a positive effect on their communicative competence. It is then highly suggested that oral expression teachers should incorporate games as an engaging teaching strategy or technique into their course content.

Keywords: EFL teaching / learning, communicative competence, games . gamification. Oral Expression Classes

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CC: Communicative Competence

CLA: Communicative Language Ability

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

EFLL: English Foreign Language Learners

ESL: English as a Second Language

et .al.: Latin for "and Others"

H: Hypothesis

L.M.D: License Master Doctorate

LL: Language Learning

OCC: Oral Communicative Competence

P: Page

PP: Page Range

Q: Question

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General Introduction

General Introduction

Learning and teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) is one of the unique challenges; where students need to understand and develop several skills such as grammar, vocabulary and fluency. Moreover, to develop confidence and skills necessary to communicate effectively in spoken English is another challenge. Therefore, one of the main important competencies that have to be mastered by EFL learners is "communicative competence"; for the crucial role it plays in language learning and academic achievements. It consists of a variety of abilities and knowledge that allow students to communicate effectively. Traditional EFL classrooms sometimes do not create an attractive environment for students to practice English, and this can lead to hindering the development and improvement of students' ability to communicate effectively.

In order to help students overcome their obstacles and improve their communicative competence, researchers have explored different strategies and methods that may enhance students' abilities to communicate effectively in different situations. Gamification is one of the suggested strategies and tools that emerge in the field of "Education" to overcome these obstacles, such as communicative games. The classroom environment will be motivated and dynamic encouraging students to communicate and improve their communication skills through spoken language use.

1. Statement of the Problem

The field of English as a foreign language has undergone significant developments since its inception. This is through a great focus on innovative approaches that play an important role in facilitating effective communication and language learning among students in different contexts. Furthermore, by promoting and developing their language skills, one of the most important things that each EFL learner must master is the four basic language skills: speaking,

listening, reading and writing; through which students' communicative competence can be judged. Developing strong communicative competence is crucial for EFL students, enabling them to express themselves confidently, engage in discussions, and foster cultural understanding. However, traditional methods often fall short in providing sufficient opportunities for practical application and engaging activities, leading to a significant gap between desired and achieved competency levels. Gamification can potentially address this gap by teaching foreign language in a way that suits students' needs.

As a valuable teaching strategy, games are designed to improve EFL learners' communicative competence by integrating different types of games into educational activities. This does not only improve their skills of the English language, but also creates an interactive atmosphere, increases students' participation in the section, as well as engagement in discussions during the course,i.e develops their communicative competence. Thus, the integration of gamification in the field of EFL education is a promising strategy or method to address the challenges in the development of EFL Learners 'communicative competence.

2. Aims of the Study

Developing communicative competence in oral English is a key goal and challenge during study and education that must be realized. Recognizing this, games have emerged as a promising strategy, leveraging various elements and methods, to address these objectives. It discusses the impact, importance, and effectiveness of gamified activities in EFL students' communication skills. In addition to investigating its role in enhancing fluency, vocabulary, accuracy, and comprehension within oral classroom settings. The aim of this research is:

 - To investigate the impact of incorporating games on EFL students' communicative competence.

  - To investigate teachers' attitudes toward the use of games and its impact on enhancing students' communicative competence.

3. Research Questions

The present study seeks to investigate the impact of gamification on EFL students' communicative competence at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma University; the case of first year students. It addresses the following questions:

-Can gamified activities improve EFL students' ability to engage in communication?

-Are oral expression teachers at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma aware of the use of games as a technique or tool to improve students' communicative competence?

4. Research Hypothesis

Gamification could be an important tool in enhancing EFL students' communicative competence. Low level of students' fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, etc. could be caused by the lack of EFL teachers' awareness about using this tool. Accordingly, we hypothesize that:

H_1: If EFL oral classes incorporate well-designed games, students' communicative competence will develop significantly.

H_0: If EFL oral classes incorporate well-designed games, students' communicative competence will not develop.

5. Research Methodology and Design

5.1. Research Method

The current research uses a mixed methods approach (both quantitative and qualitative) to collect data about the impact of gamification on EFL students' communicative competence

at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma. In order to test the research hypothesis and answer the research questions, two data collection tools are adopted: teachers' questionnaire and students' classroom observation. They aim to know about oral expression teachers' attitudes towards the use of games and its impact on students' communicative competence. Furthermore, to assess students' level of communication skills before and after the incorporation of games in oral expression classes.

5.2. Research Population and Sampling

The present study collects data from First -year LMD students at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma, during the academic year 2023-2024; as a first research sample. The reason behind choosing First Year LMD students is being novice English language students at the University. The researchers can assess their oral communication skills easily before and after the use of games. In addition, they have oral expression module where they practice their oral communication abilities. A random sampling method was employed; the selection of two groups from the whole population (First Year LMD students).

In addition, oral expression teachers at the same Department are purposively chosen as a second sample. The reason behind the choice of this sample is that their experience allows them to assess and evaluate students' level of communicative competence before and after the incorporation of games. In addition, the researchers need their perspectives toward the impact of integrating games on the improvement of EFL students' communicative competence.

5.3. Data Gathering Tools

The current study adopts questionnaire and classroom observation in order to gather data about the impact of gamification on the improvement of EFL learner's communicative competence. Teachers questionnaire was distributed to the oral teachers at the Department of

Letters and English Language, 8 Mai 1945 Guelma University. Furthermore, students' classroom observation was employed to observe and assess students' level before and after the use of games.

6. Structure of the Dissertation

This research work is divided into two main parts: theoretical and practical. In addition to the general introduction and conclusion. The section of "general introduction" includes the research problem, research aim, the research questions and hypothesis, methodology and design, research population and sampling, data collection tools, and structure of the dissertation.

The theoretical part addresses the two main research variables: gamification and communicative competence. Hence, a single chapter is devoted to the literature review relevant to each one of the chapters. The first chapter covers gamification in education, its definition, gamification in learning and teaching. Additionally, it summarizes historical emergence of the concept, how to use games and their elements in oral classes. It explores games and communication, types and importance of games in improving EFL students' communicative competence. While the second chapter of communicative competence deals with different definitions of competence, communicative competence, communication skills, oral communicative competence, and relevant theories. In addition, it discusses different models of communicative competence, strategies that help EFL students to develop their communicative competence and concludes with the importance of applying communicative competence in the field of EFL teaching.

However, the practical part is concerned with field investigation. It covers the description and analysis of the collected data from teachers' questionnaire and students' classroom observation at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma during the academic year 2023/2024. Through the obtained data, the

researchers answered the research questions and confirmed the research hypothesis. In the last section of general conclusion, the researcher states the main findings, some pedagogical implication, as well as limitations of the study, and some further suggestions for future researchers.

CHAPTER ONE

Gamification

Introduction

Effective communication usually requires the use of different strategies and skills. Therefore, English foreign language students have to develop their communicative competence; in order to increase their knowledge and communicative abilities, and to be able to send and receive messages easily when interacting with teachers or peers. Thereby, "Gamification" is one of the new emerged strategies for fostering educational benefits in classrooms. Thus, integrating it into EFL instruction can be a powerful mean to help students enhance their communicative abilities and create a more engaging learning environment.

This chapter provides a theoretical background of "gamification". It briefly examines different views and definitions of 'gamification'. Then, it discusses its emergence and application in teaching (classroom setting). Additionally, this chapter highlights the relationship between games and communication. Furthermore, it tackles different types of games that can be used in classroom for effective communicative competence. The chapter concludes with the importance of using gamification in EFL classroom for motivating and empowering students to communicate easily.

1.1. Gamification in Education

1.1.1. Definition of Gamification

Integrating games into the classroom can effectively enhance and improve students' communicative competence. According to some researchers, games are a process of applying and using game elements to real-world situations to help solve problems (Werbach & Hunter,2012, as cited in Huseinović, 2023, p.12). A 2015 review by Blanka stated that "game is a natural means for children to understand the world around them. Therefore, it should be part and parcel of their learning, including the learning of foreign languages" (as cited in Ben El Moudden, 2021, p.209). Elsewhere, Jassim and Dzakiria (2019) define a game as "an educational technique related to learning" (as cited in Ben El Moudden, 2021, p.209). However,

the term gamification involves incorporating gaming elements and aspects into conventional academic components. It is a successful approach unlike the traditional methods, by providing and offering a more interactive, engaging and motivating learning process. This technique encourages behavioral change, immediate feedback, and entertains learners (Sadiku, Chukwu, Majebi, & Musa, 2023, p.739).

According to the previous definitions, the concept of gamification plays a crucial role in enhancing EFL students' motivation, engagement, and entertainment. Unlike the traditional methods which lack keeping students engaged. Furthermore, games can be a tool for enhancing the competency of EFL students in picking up a foreign language. The majority of researchers argued that games are not just a source of fun but can be a technique for helping them develop their skills and abilities as well.

1.1.2. Gamification in Learning

Gamification is an approach in which a game strategy and its elements are applied in the field of learning to enhance students' engagement and learning outcomes compared to traditional methods. Gee (2003) considered that games, based on an implicit view of learning, undermine their use in the classroom (as cited in Bensaber &Touati, 2020, p.5). Hence, the traditional approach is preferable to gamification because it is based on external and direct instructions; such as memorization and lectures. However, other researchers argued that gamification can be a beneficial learning tool. For instance, Kirriemuir and McFarlane (2004) found that similar learning theories support assertions that games help people acquire and improve particular abilities like communication, number application and strategic thinking (as cited in Bensaber &Touati, 2020, p.5).

1.1.3.Gamification in Teaching

In English language teaching, according to Hadfield (1998), games are classified into two main parts. The first one includes two classifications: linguistic games which are based on

accuracy and communicative games which emphasize effective communication (as cited in Klimova, 2015, p.1158). The second part contains: sorting, ordering and arranging games, information gap games, guessing games, searching games, matching games, labeling games, exchanging games, board games, and role-play games (as cited in Klimova, 2015, p.1158).

To explain, Hadfield (1998) suggested two ways of classifying language games in teaching a foreign language. First, they are classified as linguistic and communicative games. Linguistic games shed light on the accuracy of language. Whereas, communicative games achieve effective communication between learners. She also proposes another classification for language games giving more types (as mentioned previously).

1.2. Historical Emergence of Gamification

While the term "gamification" is relatively a new term, it has existed for a significantly longer time. In fact, educators have recognized the power of gamification in the classroom since the early 20th century. Angst (2023) highlighted, in his work about the impact and importance of gamification that in the early 20th century educators began to see the possibility of using games as a learning and teaching tool for pupils. In 1907, Maria Montessori introduced her work 'Montessori method' which used games in order to make a more engaging and effective environment for children (p.10).

In 1980, Thomas W. Malone conducted the first academic study on gamification. He highlighted the potential benefits of video games in education because of their inherently stimulating elements, and their application in several other areas, particularly education. This focus on engagement in learning environments led to a turning point in 2002 with the coining of the term "gamification" by Nick Pelling. He used it to describe applying game-like elements to non-game contexts, and it has become more widespread and used in various fields. After many successes in introducing the elements of gamification in many fields, the beginning of 2009 witnessed the creation of "The Quest of Learning "; this game was done by placing a class

of sixth grade students in a stimulating educational environment in order to know the extent to which children retained and improved information. In the same year another application of location was emerged called 'Foursquare'. It broke new ground with its innovative gamified map, pushed the boundaries of the concept even further. It is not only used to find places but also to make it fun. This application provided competitions and rewards for people. This demonstrated how gamification can be used to collect valuable information about people's places (Christians, 2018, pp. 14 _17).

The number of educational services that used gamification have increased every year, schools, universities and educational institutions around the world are using this approach. For example, Lee wrote, in his book "The Multiplayer Classroom ", about his experience in creating a training course at an educational institution about multiplayer game that achieved great success and the results showed interest and good performance of students (Gamification in education, 2012. as cited in khaitova, 2021, p. 214) . Currently, due to the existence of many experiments and studies conducted in the field of education using gamification by researchers or students, gamified learning is expected to play a significant role in the future of education by offering flexible and interactive opportunities for students.

1.3. How to Use Games in Classrooms

Wright (2006) suggests two ways to use games in the classroom to enhance students' communicative competence through interaction and exchanging ideas and opinions with peers. Working in a team helps students overcome barriers to express their thoughts and reduce inhibition about making communication errors. This collaboration can significantly improve language learning outcomes. First, **pair work** is a beneficial method for organizing students in the classroom. It promotes collaboration and competition enhancing communication, listening, and discussion. This means that, when students engage and play in pair work, they can share ideas and thoughts, and communicate effectively. Consequently, they have a lot of attitudes that

allow them to use their language in a playful context. Second, **group work** requires collaborative tasks that involve teamwork to foster a sense of competition and motivation among students to be productive and creative. In addition, it promotes the exchange of ideas within a team, addresses challenges, solves problems, and accomplishes objectives. The teacher is allowed to assess individuals by engaging them in discussion and providing feedback. In other words, group work can make learners more innovative and excited about reaching and completing goals (p.3).

1.4. Elements of Games

Sadiku et al. (2022) conducted a study in which they categorized the elements of games used in the educational system. These elements include awards, point-based awards systems, badges, levels, quests, voting, ranking, and betting. Awards are received by the players upon the completion of the game, while point-based reward systems mean that after each successful task within the game, players receive a reward in the form of points. Badges these symbolize specific accomplishments that were reached by the player. Levels have an intertwined connection with the number of points; it means that the increase of the points of each player leads to the increase in his/ her level. Quests refer to the objective or the tasks which the player needs to complete. Voting means that the player can cast a vote on the player's actions in the game. The ranking is used in the game to increase the motivation of the players; the last one betting means setting a wager or gambling on the outcome of an event (p.739). In other words, a study by Sadiku, Chukwu, Majebi, and Musa explores elements used in educational games. These elements were classified into eight (8) categories: awards, point-based awards systems, badges, levels, quests, voting, ranking, and betting. These elements are used as a motivational tool to motivate players and encourage positive actions.

1.5. Games and Communication

Games are effective in developing students' ability to communicate. This idea was confirmed by Wright et al. In (2006). They claim that games provide a platform for authentic language use and interaction; which can help students develop their communication skills. This is in line with the communicative language teaching approach, which emphasizes the use of language to communicate in the real world (as cited in Zhu, 2012, p.803).

Similar to how the communicative teaching approach encourages the development of communication skills, playing games can help people learn to communicate better. Hadfield (1981) stated that "the emphasis in games is on successful communication and not on the correctness of language" (P.4). This idea prioritizes effective communication over grammatical perfection in language learning. Even if the sentences are not completely grammatical, games are designed to complete tasks through communication. This promotes interaction, reflecting the reality of communication, where the main emphasis is often on fluency and understanding without neglecting grammar, allowing students to overcome their fears, practice and improve communication. He added that games provide an opportunity for real communication. Although there are artificially defined boundaries, it serves as a bridge between the classroom and the real world. (p.3). Simply put, Hadfield's argument pointed out that games can be a useful tool in education because they enhance real-world communication skills that bridge the differences between the classroom and the complexities of the real world different situations.

1.6. Types of Communicative Games

1.6.1. ABCs Games

It is an activity which can be effectively utilized as a group competition or with the whole class. Students thinking of words related to different topics using pictures or cards. Subsequently, they list these vocabulary words starting with different letters of the alphabet. This game can enhance students' vocabulary. Students sit in teams of 2-4, then the teacher writes

the alphabet vertically and shows the pictures on the cards to the whole class .Then, the players start naming the pictures and listing them next to the appropriate letters in the ABC list ("ABCs",2013, p. 45)

Figure 1.1.ABCs game ("Activate: Games for Learning American English" , 2013, p.46)
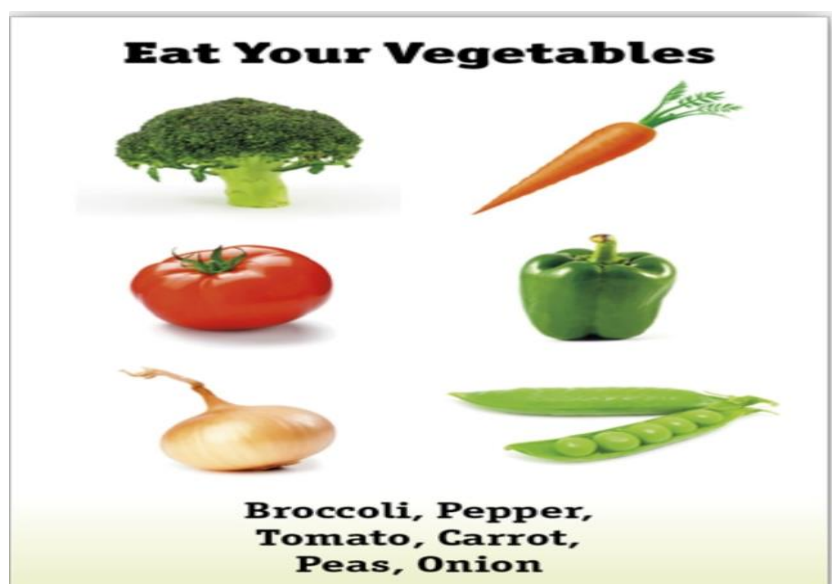
Image1.1. ABCs ("Activate: Games for Learning American English" , 2013, p.46)

1.6.2. Questions, Questions

In this game students hone their skills in making yes / no questions using pictures inside cards. One player selects a picture and the others ask yes / no questions to guess it. The students are divided into teams of 2-4, providing each group with cards containing 5-10 pictures. Next, one player from each group chooses secretly one picture without showing it to his/ her classmates. After that, he/she reads the card title aloud and answers "yes" or "no" to the other player's questions about the chosen picture. The player who asked the question gets one chance to guess the picture (Questions, Questions, 2013, p.47).

Figure 1.2. Questions, Questions(**"Activate: Games for Learning American English"**,2013, p.47**)**
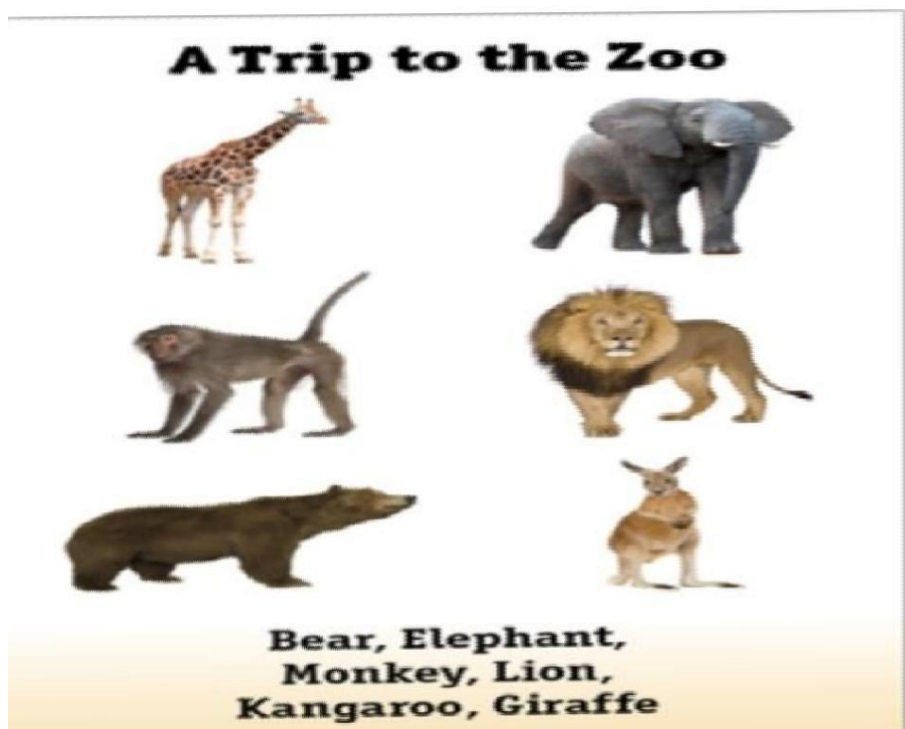
Image1.2. Questions, Questions (**"Activate: Games for Learning American English"**,2013,

p.47**)**

1.6.3. Guess Which Challenge

In this game, students work in teams of 2-4; each group receives a set of cards with pictures placed in a hidden container. A guesser should be selected in each group and the others become clue givers. Clue givers choose pictures from the cards and make sentences about the pictures omitting key word from each sentence. The guesser tries to guess the omitted words. Once the guesser completes all the sentences, he tries to guess the topic of the card ("Guess which challenge", 2013, p.51).
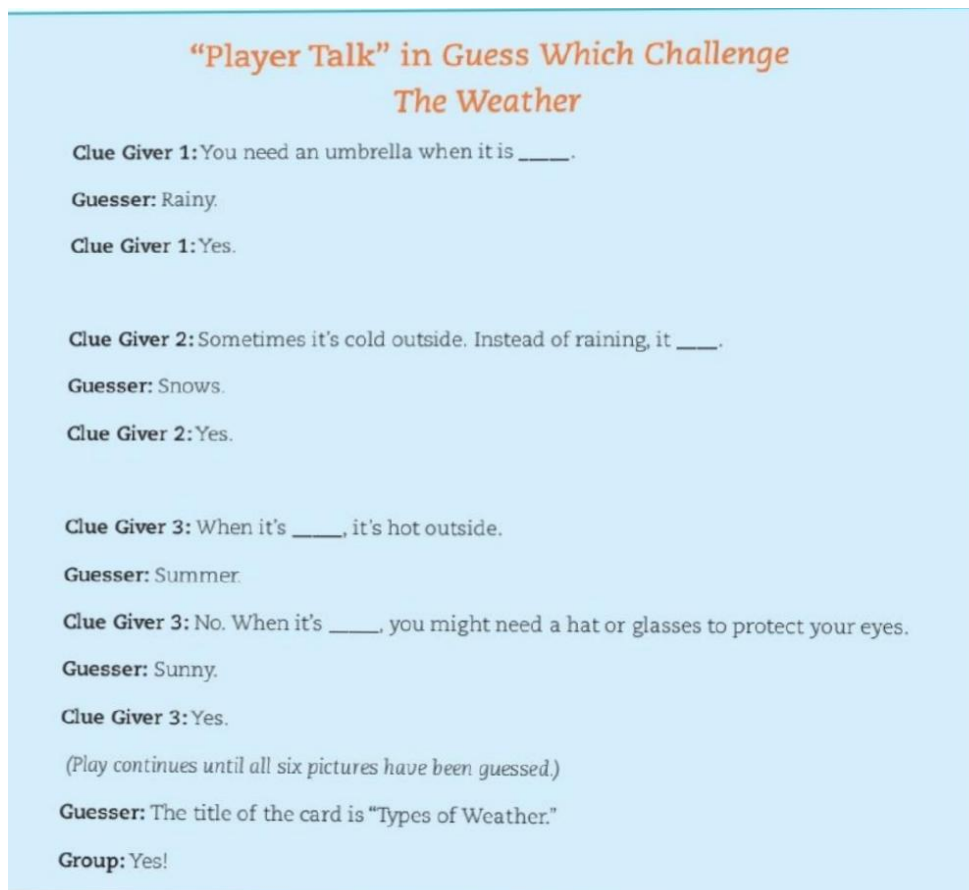
Figure 1.3. Guess which challenge ("Activate: Games for Learning American English", 2013, p.52)

1.6.4. Paraphrase It

This game encourages students to gain the ability to express the same idea in different ways. It does not only foster creativity with language but also strengthens their grasp of grammar, vocabulary, and various word forms. In this game, we divide students into groups of 3 or 4, and provide them with a certain picture in a box that contains sentences, or writing sentences on the board. Thus, the students work together to find ways to rephrase the sentence in another way, and give them time to think about the answer. For more competitiveness, teams can be formed and paraphrasing can be written in sheets and then groups exchange sheets among themselves to benefit and verify the answers ("Paraphrase it! ,2013, p.56).

"Player Talk" in *Paraphrase It!*
Beverages

Original Question:

Which drink on the card is the healthiest? Why?

Paraphrases:

Which is the best for you? Why?

Of these drinks, which is the healthiest? Why?

Which is the healthiest? Why?

Figure 1.4. Paraphrase It ("Activate: Games for Learning American English", 2013, p.57)

1.6.5. Longest sentence

In this game, students are asked to create the longest sentence possible using a set of 15–20 Word Bricks in just 3 minutes. Keeping the time limit short creates a fast - paced and entertaining atmosphere where teams compete to form the longest sentence. Therefore, in this game, students are divided into teams and are given from 15 to 20 words and a time is set to think about creating the longest sentence with these words, each team writes its answer on the board, the sum of all the words in each sentence is calculated, and the longest sentence is the winning team (longest sentence , 2013, p.104).

1.6.6. Debates

In this activity, a topic is given and two parties are established; one supporting the idea and the other disputing it. Then, they argue by presenting their evidence. This activity aims to encourage students to discuss and arouse their interest competitive spirit. It encourages students to think about their values and priorities. It is undeniable that this activity will help improve students ' communication. (Zhu, 2012, p.804).

All the games mentioned above are creative games used to improve students' communication. They target students' different learning styles and encourage them to express themselves effectively. Consequently, building communication skills and implementing them in teaching and learning process can be beneficial for learners to improve their communicative abilities.

1.7. Importance of Using Games in EFL Classrooms

Incorporating games into the educational process is essential as it can improve students' communication skills and proficiency in learning EFL. Various studies have shown that EFL students benefit greatly from using games in classrooms due to the nature of this teaching technique. The literature review and research results emphasized the positive impact of 'Games Based Teaching' on the attitudes of EFL learners. For instance, one study confirmed that the integration of games into the educational curriculum of Morocco, from the primary schools to the university level, can improve the learning of EFL (Ben El Moudden, 2021, p.229). Additionally, Gozcu and Caganaga (2016) study highlighted the pivotal role games play in EFL classrooms. It can foster enjoyment and engagement among students. Moreover, games are identified as highly effective tools for facilitating language acquisition, particularly in learning the English language (p.44). Another research indicated that the implementation of gamification strategies in English language classes has yielded positive results, including enhanced English language skills (particularly in speaking proficiency), increased students' engagement, and improved cognitive outcomes (Rahmani,2020, p.134).

Overall, these research studies show that incorporating games into EFL classrooms can enhance students' learning outcomes. These games make the EFL learning process more enjoyable and engaging; resulting in improved communication skills and language proficiency. Studies by Ben-El Moudden (2021), Gozcu and Caganaga (2016), and Rahmani (2020) have

emphasized the positive effects of using games in EFL education, including student engagement, speaking skills, and cognitive outcomes.

Conclusion

This chapter mainly focuses on the concept of gamification, at first it defines gamification in the field of education, then it highlights the evolution of games through time, it also proceeds to explain the use of games and its relationship with communication. In addition, the chapter introduces the different types of gamification and how to play them; ABC's game, Question, Question game, etc. Moreover, the chapter concludes with the importance of using games in education. So gamification remains a powerful tool to revitalize the educational field by promoting a more attractive, interactive and communicative environment between students and teachers, however, when implemented effectively gamification can transform classrooms into Dynamic spaces that ignite a passion for learning in all students.

CHAPTER TWO

COMMUNICATIVE COMPETECE

Introduction

Communicative Competence is one of the basic abilities that is highly required to be developed by language learners in general, and EFL learners in particular. Thus, it has always played a significant role in EFL teaching and learning process. In addition, it has gained an important value because it needs a deeper understanding of how language functions in real-world situations.

This chapter explores an overview of communicative competence; providing different definitions of the notion of competence, the concepts of communicative competence, communication skills and oral communicative competence. It examines the theories of Hymes and Chomsky, as well as the three influential models of communicative competence: Hymes, Canal and Swain, and Bachman models. Moreover, an examination of the various components that make up communicative competence is stated. The chapter ends by highlighting some strategies used to develop EFL learners' communicative competence; in addition to the importance of applying communicative competence in the EFL teaching context.

2.1. Basic Definitions

2.1.1. Definition of Competence

The term competence is defined by Chomsky as the grammar knowledge of native speakers about their language (Abdulrahman & Abu-Ayyash, 2019, p.7537). According to Hymes, competence goes beyond just knowledge; it is about the ability to use that knowledge effectively (Hymes, 1972, p. 64). Overall, understanding grammar alone is not sufficient for effective speaking. The ability to use language effectively in different situations is also crucial.

2.1.2. Communicative Competence

Communicative Competence (CC) was coined by Dell Hymes in 1966. It is not just focused on knowing the language but also emphasizing on how to use this language effectively in real world situations. It involves both understanding the language (knowledge) first then the ability to apply that knowledge in real world communication. (Hymes, 1972, as cited in Ahmed & Pawar, 2018, p.303). Another researcher, Dittmar (1976) clarifies that CC is the skills possessed by individuals to interact effectively with others in different situations under the linguistic, psychological, social, and pragmatic factors (p. 62). Terrell and Krashen (1983) stated that CC; as defined by Hymes, prioritizes the practical use of language in social settings rather than the grammatical proficiency (p.55). In other words, CC is the major role in second and foreign language learning, emphasizing the need to not only understand language rules but also be aware of how to use language effectively in different situations.

2.1.3. Communication Skills

Communication skills are one of the core components of communicative competence, as Al-alawneh, et al. (2019) highlighted that they are qualities necessary for individuals to achieve their communicative goals, including personal and social qualities such as confidence, teamwork, effective listening, etc. (p.1). Therefore, effective communication is not only about what you say or do, but it goes beyond that, it is also about how you transfer the message and how you interact with others. It is a combination of verbal and non-verbal communication.

According to Barowski and Gonzalez (2023), a communication skill is the ability of an individual to convey or transfer a message or information from one person to another in an effective way (para,1). Furthermore, Huamán,et al. (2022) stated the importance of communicative competence in intelligence and personal development; emphasizing knowledge, experience and skills that enable learners and teachers to develop their relationships and connections (p.690). Overall, communication skills are essential for each individual in

general, and EFL learners in particular to communicate effectively with others, build connections, and reach their language learning goals.

2.1.4. Oral Communicative Competence

Oral communicative competence (OCC) is a subset of overall communicative competence, which was introduced by Dell Hymes in 1967. It is one of the most important competencies that must be acquired. Hymes (1972), as well as some other researchers like Cassany (1994), argued that oral communicative competence involves more than just knowledge. It also includes skills and attitudes that help and allow the transmission of information effectively in various contexts (as cited in Monteiro, 2023, p. 612). In other words, it is the ability to communicate effectively through conveying and interpreting information. This idea was argued also by Perrenoud (1999), who claimed that the efficiency of oral communication is the ability to act in certain situations that are preferred by knowledge but not limited to them (P. 7).

Patiño et al. (2024) defined oral communicative competence as the ability of individuals to express themselves and their thoughts effectively through spoken English. It involves not just grammar and vocabulary, but also fluency, communication strategies, pronunciation and Comprehension, etc. (p.3451). In essence, researchers argued that oral communicative competence is the ability to communicate effectively across various situations using spoken language, and effective OCC is an important part that goes beyond knowing the information you want to share or say. It requires skills and attitudes to successfully exchange information in real-life situations.

2.2. Noam Chomsky's Theory of Competence

Chomsky presented his theory of "Generative Grammar" in 1957 as a model of linguistic competence before introducing the term competence (Taha & Reishaan, 2008, as cited in Abdulrahman & Abu Ayyash, 2019, p.7538). It is defined as a set of rules that can be generated to create an infinite number of sentences (Tienson ,1983, as cited in Abdulrahman & Abu Ayyash 2019, p.7538). Chomsky proposed a tree diagram to show a structural description of each sentence.
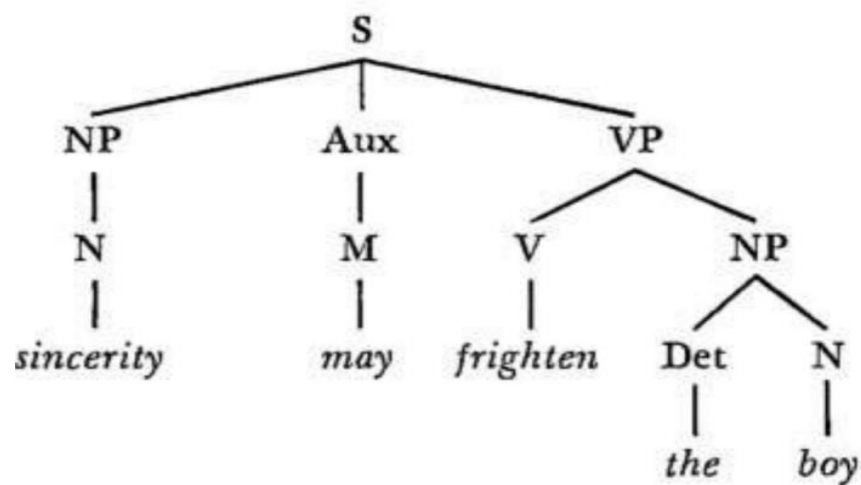
Figure 2.1: Chomsky's structural description of sentences(Abdulrahman & Abu Ayyash 2019, p.7538).

Later on, Chomsky supported Saussure's notion of 'langue and parole'. Thus, he introduced the terms 'competence and performance'; and then drew a distinction between them. Furthermore, Saussure, in his notion, distinguished between langue and parole and defined them as langue that refers to the structure of language, while parole refers to language use. However, Chomsky defined, on the one hand, competence as a structural knowledge of a particular language, and on the other hand, performance as the use of that knowledge in different real-world situations (Chomsky, 1965, as cited in Taş & Khan, 2020, p.87).

In 1980, Noam Chomsky further distinguished between grammatical competence and pragmatic competence. The former refers to a speaker's knowledge of a language including

rules, structure, and meaning of words; however, the latter focuses on using language effectively in a specific context. He described language as a tool. Grammatical competence is like understanding the mechanics of the tool, while pragmatic competence is knowing how to use it effectively for a particular task (Chomsky, 1980, as cited in Lehmann, 2007, p.12).

2.3. Hymes' Theory of Communicative Competence

Hymes theory was introduced as a result of Chomsky's point of view on communicative competence. Hymes argued that CC does not just emphasize how to form correct sentences grammatically but it is about understanding social and cultural aspects of language use. He criticized Chomsky's definition because he focused just on how to form well-structured sentences instead of focusing on sociocultural aspects of language. For Hymes, knowing how to form sentences is not enough for effective communication. He further argued that the differences in language use such as register, lexicon, syntax, and communication styles can affect communication even though the sentences are fully correct. (Ahmed & Pawar, 2018, p.303). Generally speaking, communicative competence, in his regard, is more than just grammar; hence, it includes social and cultural skills as well. To explain, it is important to know when, where and how to speak. Structure and context are involved in language acquisition; consequently, communication involves more than words.

2.4. Models of Communicative Competence

2.4.1. Hymes' Model of Communicative Competence (1972)

Hymes introduced the term CC (1972) which gained significant importance and consideration in the field of learning-teaching second and foreign languages. According to him, linguistic theory is divided into two main parts: linguistic competence and linguistic performance. Linguistic competence means understanding language structure; while linguistic performance refers to using this language effectively. He believed that performance alone can not represent competence because assessing someone's language abilities should exist in both

the understanding of knowledge and how to use this knowledge in particular situations. Furthermore, he highlighted the importance of sociocultural factors that can influence language use and argued that language is not just a set of rules and structure, but it is also about how, when and where to use this language (Ahmed & Pawar, 2018, p.304).

Moreover, Hymes proposed four different ways of using language in social context for effective communication. First**, 'what is possible'** which refers to the correct application of grammar rules to get well-structured sentences. Second, '**what is feasible'**; Hymes suggested that the speakers' abilities can be affected by psychological factors such as: memory limitation and comprehension of language. Third, '**what is appropriate';** which is defined by Hymes as the correct use of language in different social contexts. Fourth is '**what is actually done';** in which Hymes argued that the three previous different ways of using language in social contexts (what is possible, what is feasible, and what is appropriate) are decided by probabilistic rules**. (**Hymes, 1972, pp.66-67).

2.4.2. Canal and Swain's Model of Communicative Competence (1980)

Canal and Swain's Model (1980) is related more to Hymes' model. Their model emphasized on the interaction of both grammatical and sociolinguistic competence and criticized Hymes to that point because he focused just on the use of language and ignored grammatical rules (as cited in Ahmed & Pawar, 2018, p.305). Canal and Swain model became widely used and aimed to develop and improve learners' communication skills. This can be achieved through an organized syllabus including real-world language to make the process of communication more effective (Tas & Khan, 2020, p.89). Their model highlights that grammatical knowledge is not enough in communication. True communicative competence requires knowing both how to use grammar correctly and how to use language appropriately in different social contexts.

2.4.2.1. Canal and Swain's Components of Communicative Competence

Canal and Swain introduced four components in their model of communicative competence; which are: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence (1980, p. 31). First, grammatical Competence encompasses phonology, lexical items, morphology, grammar, and syntax. It involves understanding the structure of the language and using correct sentences grammatically. Second, sociolinguistic Competence, a crucial element, refers to the knowledge of social and cultural rules that govern how language is used in different contexts. This knowledge, as highlighted by Hymes' model, is essential for interpreting and producing speech that is appropriate for the social setting. By understanding these social norms, individuals can effectively choose words and comprehend the intended meaning behind utterances, fostering successful communication. Third, strategic Competence is another component of Canal and Swain model that includes verbal and nonverbal strategies employed to overcome communication breakdowns. It is used to adapt and employ different ways to ensure the message is successfully conveyed and understood. The fourth one is discourse Competence; Canal and Swain (1983) introduced the concept of discourse competence as another crucial component of communication competence. This refers to the ability to seamlessly integrate language structures (grammar and vocabulary) with language functions (purposes); to create a text that is both clear and well-organized. Discourse competence ensures that sentences flow logically together, ideas are connected, and the overall message is delivered effectively (Ahmed & Pawar, 2018, pp.305- 306). Besides, true communicative competence goes beyond grammar. It requires not only sociolinguistic awareness to use language appropriately in different contexts but also strategic and discourse competence to navigate communication breakdowns and construct clear, organized messages.

Figure 2.2: Canal and Swain's components of communicative competence (Khan & Tas, 2020, p.90)

2.4.3. Bachman's Model of Communicative Competence (1990)

The linguist Lyle Bachman (1990) developed a model of communicative competence which is more detailed than Canal and Swain model. His model known as Communicative Language Ability (CLA). He defined it as the combination of language competence, and the ability to use that competence effectively in different situations. This framework includes three main components; language competence, strategic competence, and psychophysiological factors . According to Bachman (1990), **language competence** is the actual knowledge of an individual about the language system. It includes two sub-competencies: Organizational competence and pragmatic competence. '**Organizational competence'**, the first component of language competence, deals with the structure or the form of a language system. It refers to those abilities to control or recognize the structure of language. In turn, these abilities are, first, **'textual competence'**; which is about knowing the conventions related to the text to link words and ideas together to form an organized text according to the rules of cohesion and rhetorical organization. Second, **'grammatical competence'** includes independent abilities like vocabulary, morphology, syntax and phonology. The other sub-competence, '**pragmatic**

competence', deals with the relationship between language use and functions that speakers intend to accomplish or perform through these utterances. It includes sociolinguistic competence which ensures the language is used appropriately in different social situations, and '**illocutionary'** which enables learners to analyze speech and express a variety of functions (express different meanings). **'Strategic competence'**, the second component of CLA, is defined as the mental ability to use knowledge of language appropriately. Whereas, **'psychophysiological mechanisms'**, the last component of CLA, is about the neurological and psychophysiological processes that involve the brain to interpret the deeper and purposeful meaning of a message. (pp. 85_ 107). In essence, Bachman's Model of Communicative Competence known as 'Communicative Language Ability'. It is a framework that goes beyond grammar and vocabulary, it emphasizes on real world application of language knowledge. It is made up of three main components; language competence, strategic competence, and psychophysiological factors.
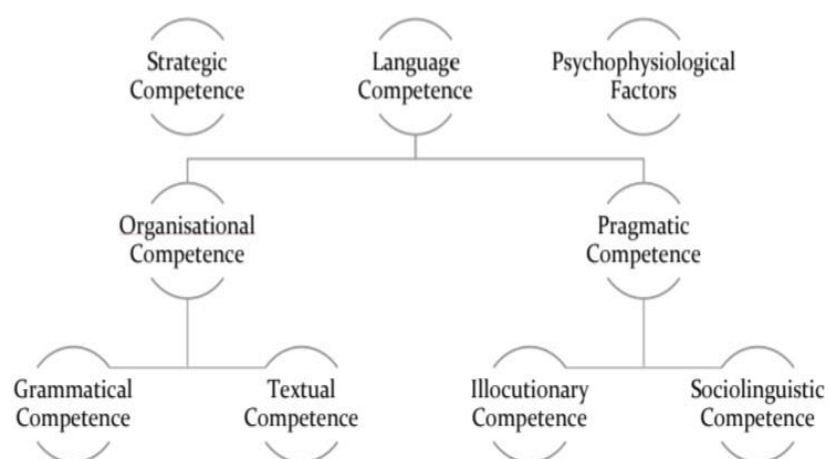
Figure 2.3: Bachman's model of communicative language ability (Khan&Taş, 2020, p.91)

2.5. Strategies for Developing Communicative Competence for EFL Learners

Strategies are techniques that help EFL learners achieve their goals or desired outcomes. Oxford (1990) stated that these strategies aimed to improve and develop the communicative competence of EFL learners (as cited in Bhusal, 2020, p. 272). Elsewhere, Ellis suggested that

people who learn a foreign language (L2) use strategies to develop their communicative ability to overcome their limitations in vocabulary and grammar (as cited in Regina &Chinwe, 2014, p. 77).

Regina and Chinwe (2014) suggested different strategies in their study that are found useful in the development of EFL learners' communicative competence. **Oral conversation and dialogues** are important communicative activities that encourage students to exchange ideas and opinions with their colleagues and teachers, either in pairs or in group work. They are an effective way in improving EFL students' communicative competence. Furthermore, communicative efficiency is also achieved through **consistent reading** by continuous and correct reading in English of books, magazines, etc. It develops the language balance and therefore its use in building effective conversations. **Asking questions for clarification and cooperation** is another strategy that supports the achievement of CC where the learner asks to repeat or re-explain the idea in order to clarify; and thus, produces an interactive discussion or conversation between parties. Moreover, **repetition** is another way for EFL learners to develop their CC through repeating with native speakers or teachers (p.77).

According to Hadfield (1981), games also play an important role in providing opportunities for real communication (p.3). They allow students to overcome their fears, practice, and improve their communication in their classes. Overall, when all of these strategies implemented effectively, it can greatly contribute in the development of EFL learners' communicative competence.

2.6. Importance of Communicative Competence in the Field of Teaching

Teaching a foreign language is not just focusing on grammar or the structural knowledge of the language. It is important for the teachers of EFL to encourage their learners to understand the cultural context; where, when, and how to use this knowledge in the real world situation (Savignon, 1997, as cited in Tarvin, 2015, p.7). Communicative competence plays a crucial role in helping learners to interact and engage more; whether in the classroom or in other situations. To improve communicative competence of learners, teachers can use different techniques; such as, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). This helps them understand the language and when, where, and how to use it. (Tarvin, 2015, p.7). Generally speaking, communicative competence plays a significant role in making learners understand the linguistic and sociocultural knowledge of the language and participate in different real-world settings.

Conclusion

This chapter focuses on the notion of 'communicative competence'. First, it defines the basic concepts of oral communicative competence, communication skills, and competence. Then, it highlights theories of communicative competence proposed by Chomsky and Hymes. This chapter examines the evolution of communicative competence models developed by Hymes, Canal and Swain, and Bachman that have emerged through time to distinguish between their different components. Moreover, it provides the strategies for enhancing EFL learners that affects positively their development in communicative competence. It concludes by discussing the importance of communicative competence in EFL teaching context.

CHAPTER THREE

FIELD INVESTIGATION

Introduction

This chapter serves as the practical part of the research study. It focuses on investigating the impact of gamification on the communicative competence of EFL students in oral classes. The chosen data collection tools include teachers' questionnaire and students' classroom observations. It involves a detailed analysis and interpretation of data gathered from these research tools to answer the research questions and test the research hypothesis. This part of the dissertation encompasses the methodology, data collection tools, and discussions of the results. Additionally, It provides a general conclusion, pedagogical implications, study limitations, and recommendations for future researchers.

3.1. Research Method

To achieve the research objectives of this study, a Mixed Methods Approach (including both quantitative and qualitative methods) has been adopted for data collection and analysis. On the one hand, the qualitative method, a means to study and understand the quality of relationships, activities, situations, or materials (Fraental et al.,2015, as cited in Islam & Aldhaihani, 2021, p.4),was used for students' observations. On the other hand, the quantitative method was applied through administering teachers 'questionnaire.

3.2. Data Collection Tools

The current study opted for a questionnaire and classroom observation as research data gathering tools. The questionnaire was distributed to twenty (20) teachers of oral expression classes at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma. Teachers' questionnaire aimed to collect data regarding teachers' perceptions of the impact of using games on EFL students' communicative competence in oral classes.

Classroom observation was conducted to observe the impact of gamification on EFL students' communicative competence in oral classes and assess their level before and after the use of games. This observation involved two groups of first year LMD students in oral

expression classes, at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma.

3.3 Research Population and Sample

According to Islam and Aldhaihani (2021), "population" is a large group of people that a study focuses on, they have similar characteristics; while a sample is a small group from the whole population you study to learn about a larger group (p.4). Hence, the chosen sample of our study is two groups of first-year LMD students during the academic year 2023/2024 at the Department of Letters and English Language University 08 Mai 1945, Guelma. The reason behind selecting first-year LMD students is that they are considered as beginners and their oral communicative competence is not highly developed yet. Consequently, they are a suitable sample for assessing the impact of gamification on their communicative abilities. Furthermore, they have a separate module for "oral expression" where they can hone their speaking skills. Thus, a random sample of two (2) groups was selected from the total population.

In addition, a sample of twenty (20) oral expression teachers from the Department of Letters and English Language at the University of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma were purposively chosen because they usually integrate games into their classes. Their perspectives are essential for understanding the effectiveness of using games in language learning and its impact on students' communicative competence. Moreover, experienced oral expression teachers are best suited to assess and evaluate students' communication skills and speaking proficiency.

3.4. Teachers' Questionnaire

3.4.1. Aim of Teachers' Questionnaire

The teachers' questionnaire was used in this study to examine their perspectives concerning the role of games in enhancing EFL students' communicative competence. It aims to collect data regarding teachers' perspectives on the significance of incorporating

games in their classes. Furthermore, the questionnaire explores teachers' opinions toward communicative competence and the obstacles students encounter to enhance it. Finally, it ends with the investigation of teachers' attitudes towards the integration of games to enhance students' communicative competence.

3.4.2. Description of Teachers' Questionnaire

This questionnaire contains twenty (20) questions divided into four sections starting from general to specific. It includes different types of questions, most of them are closed-ended; such as multiple choices and yes\no ones. However, few of them are open-ended questions seeking clarifications, explanations, and justifications.

3.4.2.1. Section One: Background Information (Q1- Q5)

This section includes five (5) questions (Q1-Q5) to compile general information regarding teachers' gender (Q1), qualifications (Q2), whether they are full-time or part-time teachers (Q3), and how long have they been teaching English at the University (Q4). In addition to whether they faced difficulties while teaching it or not (Q5).

3.4.2.2. Section Two: The Importance of Using Games in Oral Classes (Q6_ Q11)

Typically, the reason behind setting the questions in this section is to highlight the importance of using games in oral classrooms, and to what extent are they effective. More precisely, in (Q6) teachers are asked to determine whether using games is important or not and to justify their answers. (Q7) and (Q8) ask teachers whether or not they have incorporated games in their classes and, if 'yes', how often they do so. (Q9) is designed to determine how they assess or evaluate their students' performance while using games. In (Q10) teachers are asked to select the type of games they used in classes and to add any other possible types that are not mentioned and they have used them in their classes. The section concludes with (Q11) that seeks to explore the objectives behind using games according to teachers' perceptions.

3.4.2.3. Section Three: Communicative Competence (Q12-Q16)

This section includes five (5) questions (Q12- Q16) that seek to investigate teachers' perspectives toward communicative competence. It opens with (Q12) in which teachers are requested to define the term "communicative competence". (Q13) is about the description of the EFL students' level of communicative competence. Additionally, (Q14) is designed to question teachers whether they motivate their students to enhance their communicative competence or not. (Q15) which is planned to highlight the problems students may face when trying to improve their communicative competence. The section ends with (Q16) which is opted for which skills they provide them with as advice to fix these problems.

3.4.2.4. Section Four: The Impact of Using Games on Students' Communicative Competence (Q17_Q20)

The objective of this section is the treasure of the research condition, it is the crux of the research. It includes four (4) questions that aim to determine the impact of using games on students' communicative competence. It aims at knowing about teachers' beliefs and perceptions about the effectiveness of gamification and how it may impact students' communicative skills. More precisely, in (Q17) teachers are asked about their opinions about whether games can affect students' communicative skills or not. Additionally, (Q18) seeks to determine whether teachers have observed any improvement in students' communication or not; following their answers by a full explanation. In (Q19), teachers are required to indicate how they evaluate the effectiveness of games compared to traditional methods. Eventually, the last question (Q20) looks for teachers' suggestions or comments concerning the topic under investigation.

3.4.3. Administration of Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire was distributed to EFL oral expression teachers at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma. The administration was given hand to hand to twenty oral expression (20) teachers, from 25th of April to the 24th of May 2024.

3.4.4. Data Analysis and Interpretation of Teachers' Questionnaire

Section One: Background Information

Question One: Teachers' Gender

Table 3.1

Teachers' Gender

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Female	18	90%
Male	2	10%
Total	20	100%

As it is revealed in Table (3.1) above, (90%) of the teachers are females and only (10%) are males. This indicates that the overwhelming majority of oral expression teachers at the Department of Letters and English Language, Guelma University are females.

Question Two: Teachers' Qualifications

Table 3.2

Teachers' Qualifications

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Doctorate	11	55%
Master\Magister	9	45%
Total	20	100%

As it is shown in the Table (3.2), (55%) of teachers stated that they have Doctorate degree. While (45%) of them claimed that they have a Master\Magister degree. This means that the sample teachers hold high qualifications.

Question Three: Are you a full-time or part-time teacher?

Table 3.3

Teachers' Job Profile

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Full-time teachers	16	80%
Part-time teachers	4	20%
Total	20	100%

Table (3.3) shows that (80%) of teachers are full-time, while only (20%) of them are part-time teachers. This indicates that most of the teachers, at the Department of Letters and English Language, Guelma University, are full-time and they have a certain degree of professional development which can ensure a good quality of teaching skills.

Question Four: How long have you been teaching at the University?

Table 3.4

Teachers' Teaching Experience

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
More than 10 years	14	70%
Less than 10 years	6	40%
Total	20	100%

Through the Table (3.4), it is found that (70%) of participants have been teaching English for more than 10 years. However, (30%) of them have been teaching English at the university for less than 10 years. This means that they are experienced teachers. According to

their long experience, they can effectively provide significant answers to the variety of the asked questions.

Question Five: Have you faced any difficulties while teaching oral expression?

Table 3.5

Difficulties faced by Teachers

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	9	45%
No	11	55%
Total	20	100%

According to findings presented in the Table (3.5), (55%) of teachers claimed that they never faced difficulties during teaching oral expression. Whereas, the rest of the participants (45%) declared that they faced difficulties. These difficulties are the result of certain factors; such as students' shyness, lack of engagement and motivation, and poor vocabulary, among others. Consequently, they refuse to speak and participate. Lack of authentic materials and differences in students' level of proficiency are other influential factors. These factors show that teachers should provide their students with a supportive learning environment and use suitable strategies; where all students feel comfortable and motivated to take part in their learning process.

Section Two: Importance of Using Games in Oral Classes

Question Six: Do you think that using games in oral classes is important? Why?

The results obtained demonstrate that all the teachers (100%) declared that using games in oral classes is important. Overall, this indicates that the teachers have positive attitudes toward using games, and then they are willing to use them in their classes to create a positive

learning atmosphere. Teachers have provided different justifications for their answers, here are some of them:

➢Using games breaks the routine, makes learning more exciting, motivates students, and improves the learning atmosphere.

➢ I find that games are an effective way to engage learners and motivate them to speak.

➢They raise tensions and provide a comfortable atmosphere.

➢It is very important because games provide students with fun factors in the classroom.

➢It is very important, gamification helps students acquire vocabulary and enhance their oral English.

➢It reduces many psychological barriers like stress, shyness, and anxiety.

➢ I found them effective in EFL students' improvement as far as communication is concerned. They reinforce grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency.

➢ It is a useful way to engage students in different tasks unconsciously.

➢It increases motivation in learning language, adds comprehension and ability to express oneself in English.

➢ It is important, especially in the first sessions where students might not know each other.

Question Seven: Have you ever incorporated games into your oral classes?

Table 3.6

The incorporation of Games

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	17	85%
No	3	15%
Total	20	100%

Among the whole sample and as indicated in the Table (3.6), (85%) of the participants confirmed that they incorporated games in their classes.However, only (15%) of them answered with "No". These results imply that the majority of the teachers are conscious about the positive impact of using games can have on increasing students' and lessening their anxiety or shyness. Consequently, they can be encouraged to engage more in their courses.

Question Eight: If yes, how often do you incorporate them?

Graphs 3.1:

Frequency of Games Incorporation
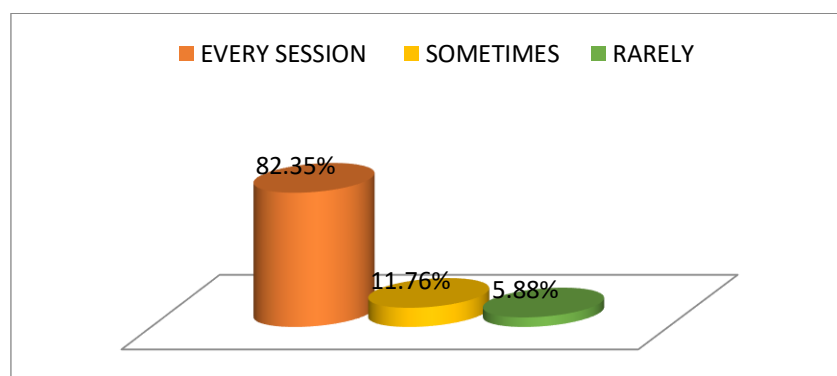
According to the results of the Graphs (3.1), the majority of teachers (82.53%) declared that they sometimes incorporated games in their classes, and (11.76%) of them stated that they used games every session. Whereas, (5.88%) used them rarely. These results may indicate that teachers are selective in their use of games, and that it may be conditioned by certain factors as course objectives, students' level of motivation, etc.; aiming at making learning more enjoyable and effective.

Question Nine: How do you assess students' performance when using games?

Table 3.7

Teachers' Assessment of Students' Performance While Using Games

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Excellent	10	50%
Very Good	6	30%
Good	4	20%
Average	0	0%
Below Average	0	0%
Total	20	100%

As it is displayed in Table (3.7), (50%) of the participants claimed that students' performance, when using games, is excellent. (30%) of them described their students' performance as being very good. However, (20%) of the teachers stated that students' performance is good when using games. Based on these results,games can be an effective way of providing a more supportive and interactive learning environment for students to practice the language; hence enhancing their oral performance.

Question Ten: Which one of these following games do you prefer to use in your classes?

Sector 3.1

Teachers' Preferred Games to Use
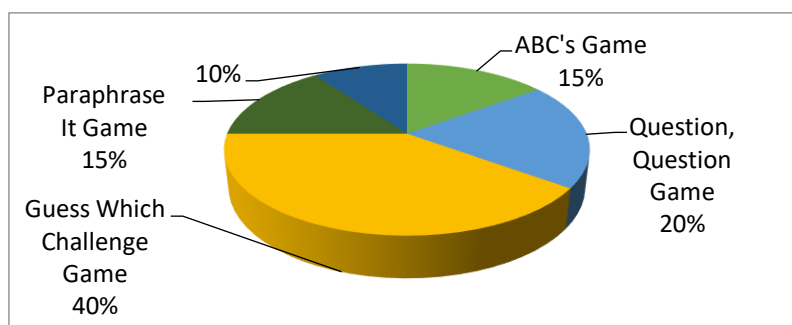
According to the findings presented in sector (3.1), (40%) of the teachers asserted that the "Guess Which Challenge" game is the most used one. However, (20%) of the them opted for "Questions/Questions" as their preferred game. (15%) declared that "Paraphrase it Game" is the best for them. Only a few of the participants (15%) incorporated ABC's game in their classes. The rest (10%) mentioned other games such as Role play, Puzzles, Guess Who, One Fact Two Lies, Cross Words, Storytelling, Taboo Words, Charades, Chess game, 7 Mistakes Games, Hidden words, and Card Games. As a fact, all teachers have ensured the integration of a variety of games in their classes;which can create a dynamic and active learning environment suitable to different students' learning styles, motivation and abilities.

Question Eleven: In your opinion, what is the objective of using games in oral classes?

Sector 3.2

Objectives behind Using Games in Oral Expression Classes
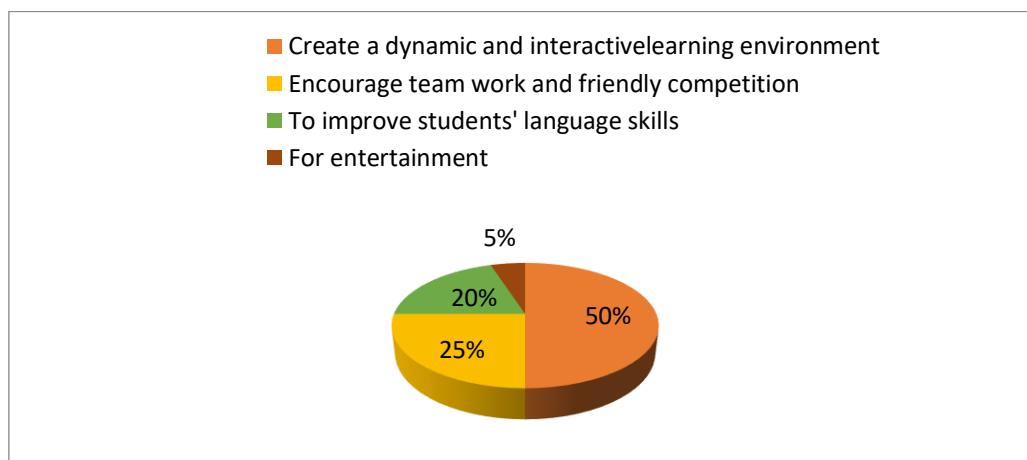
Sector (3.2) shows that (50%) of the informants agreed that they used games in oral classes because it creates a dynamic and interactive learning environment, and (25%) of them are using games for the reason that they encourage team work and friendly competition. In addition, (20%) of them declared that using games in oral classes improves students' language skills. Only few of them (5%) incorporated games just for entertainment. This indicates that integrating games in oral classes does not only promote individual learning, but it also fosters

collaboration and makes students more engaged and interactive with their classmates. Thus, they make the learning experience more effective and enjoyable.

Section Three: Communicative Competence

Question Twelve: According to you, what is "communicative competence"?

All the sample (100%) agreed about a common definition for the concept of "communicative competence" as being the ability to communicate effectively in a different social context. Thus, teachers' definitions of this concept are summarized as follows:

➢ It is the ability and the skills to communicate effectively.

➢ It is the ability to communicate by speaking and understanding messages of a language effectively.

➢ It is the ability to use English in a fluent, grammatical, correct way and to achieve goals in different social settings.

➢ The skills to communicate fluently in a given language.

➢The ability to master a codified system of a particular language.

Question Thirteen: How could you describe EFL students' communicative competence?

Table 3.8

Teachers' Description of EFL students' Communicative Competence

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
High	2	10%
Average	17	85%
Low	1	5%
Total	20	100%

According to Table (3.8), the greater part of the teachers (85%) described the level of students' communicative competence as being "average". However, (10%) of them claimed that EFL students' level of communicative competence is "high". Only one teacher (5%) believed that EFL students' communicative competence is "low". All these results ensured that students under investigation possess an average level of communicative competence; which may prevent them from communicating and exchanging their ideas, thoughts and opinions effectively.

Question Fourteen: Do you motivate your students to develop their communicative competence?

Sector 3.3

Teachers' Motivation for Students to Develop their Communicative Competence
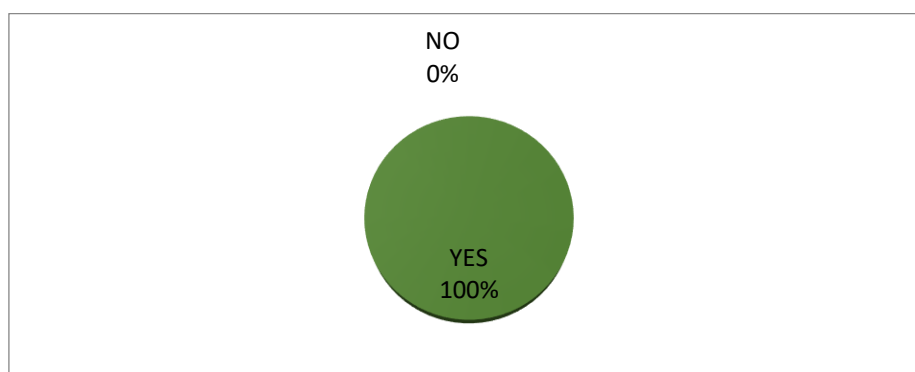
Sector (3.3) indicates that all participants (100%) asserted that they motivated students to develop their communicative competence. They provided the following explanations of how they do so:

➢ By engaging them to speak

➢ By varying the tasks that should be real-world related.

➢ Through planning pair/group work each session and allowing them to do oral presentations to give each other instructive feedback.

➢I give them the freedom to choose topics that they like, and I encourage them to talk about choosing peers they like working with.

➢ Through active participation inside the classroom and peer and student-teacher discussion.

➢ Encourage them to correct their mistakes and bring real-life situations to the classroom.

➢ By providing them with more practical exercises and fun games.

➢ Practicing the language through conversations, listening, and speaking.

➢ Through reading novels and stories, watching movies, and chatting with native speakers.

➢ By provoking their critical abilities and choosing interesting topics for debates to make them engaged.

➢ By using various technological tools.

In regard to the previous results, teachers recognized the importance and effectiveness of developing students' communication skills. Therefore, engaging students to enhance their ability to express themselves lead them to succeed academically, professionally, and personally.

Question Fifteen: According to your teaching experience, what problems do students face while trying to improve their communicative competence?

Teachers mentioned a set of problems students encounter when developing their communicative competence. These problems are determined by teachers as follows:

➢ Feeling shy, lack of motivation and vocabulary.

➢ Lack of understanding of cultural aspects and pragmatic failure.

➢ Lack of setting to communicate using the language, fear of committing mistakes among others and being judged by their classmates.

➢ Especially psychological barriers: anxiety, stress, and shyness.

➢ Negative attitude to learn / low self-esteem.

➢ Lack of confidence is the enemy of the majority. The fear of freely expressing their ideas and language also is an obstacle.

➢ Among the difficulties faced by students in improving their communication skills: are insufficient comprehension of English words, and lack of experience.

➢Limited exposure to authentic language, difficulty with pronunciation and intonation.

➢Inappropriate class setting; either too early or too late sessions.

The results above ensured that students face common challenges and problems while developing their communicative competence. This may then imply that teachers need to provide students with some strategies and techniques to overcome them.

Question Sixteen: What advice you would give to your students to achieve effective communicative competence?

Teachers' pieces of advice come as follows:

➢ Practice frequently, speaking a language with peers and teachers, reading novels listening to audiobooks.

➢ "Practice makes perfect", they should communicate.

➢ Practice is key, overcome fear, and shyness, take risks and create your opportunity to communicate.

➢Get rid of those psychological barriers.

➢ To be exposed to the target culture.

➢ Read a lot, and engage in discussions about different topics.

➢ Listening to native speakers (the more they listen the more they learn).

Overall, all participants (100%) provided pieces of advice that they believe to be helpful for students to achieve communicative competence. This indicates that teachers are active in supporting, engaging, and encouraging their students to positively address obstacles while improving their communicative competence.

Section Four: The Impact of Using Games on Students' Communicative.

Question Seventeen: According to your teaching experience, do you think that incorporating games in oral expression classes can affect students' communicative competence?

Graphs 3.2

The Effectiveness of the Incorporation of Games in EFL Oral Expression Classes
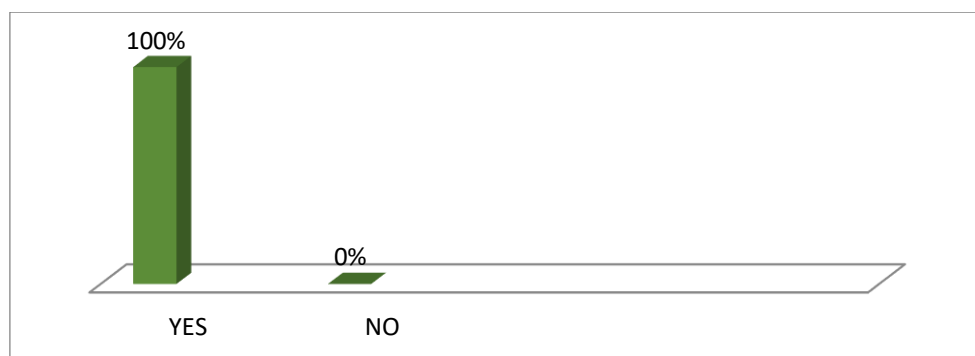
Graphs (3.2) represents teachers' perception of the effect of incorporating games in their oral classes on students' communicative competence .All teachers (100%)asserted that incorporating games in oral classes can affect students' communicative competence ,(75%) of them confirmed their answers by providing the following justifications:

➢ They get to practice while entertained

➢ The use of games highly motivates students, they find them interesting and appealing.

➢It gives them a judgment, free space to practice English/ foreign language they won't focus on accuracy but rather on fluency and like with other exercises there is less pressure which encourages the use of language

➢ Motivate them, help in creating relaxing environment, stress-free more engaging and entertaining.

➢ Yes to some extent, if the games are purposeful and the students are motivated and interested.

➢ Group work, interaction, and the material dealt with when using games improves Learners ability to speak, express opinions, make arguments and communicate effectively

➢ They encourage speaking and understanding, improve fluency in English

➢For sure it invites learners to be more interactive with one another

➢Because they act in a free way and they are motivated all the time

➢They don't concentrate on their language when playing the game

➢Games make learning easier, as it encourages students to use language without thinking how to use it.

➢ The majority of games involved quick/ short responses, which may reduce anxiety, prepare the students for longer speeches, increase/ raise their cultural awareness and sociolinguistic competence, etc.

➢Positively! They make the learning easier, learners become active

➢As a certain extent, in terms of interaction and using specific words in the right situations, contexts

➢They might gain students attention and raise their motivation

Teachers' answers confirmed the research hypothesis. Therefore, incorporating games in oral classes benefits EFL learners' communicative competence by motivating and engaging them, and promoting collaboration to practice English. They improve students' speaking, understanding and fluency. In addition, using games can facilitate learning, also reduce anxiety and stress. Moreover, strengthen their cultural understanding and sociolinguistic competence. Incorporating games in oral classrooms can affect students' communicative competence positively. They created dynamic learning environment that strengthens their communication abilities.

Question Eighteen: When using games in your oral classes, have you noticed or tested if this results in any improvement in students' communicative competence?

Sector 3.4

The Improvement of Students' Communicative Competence
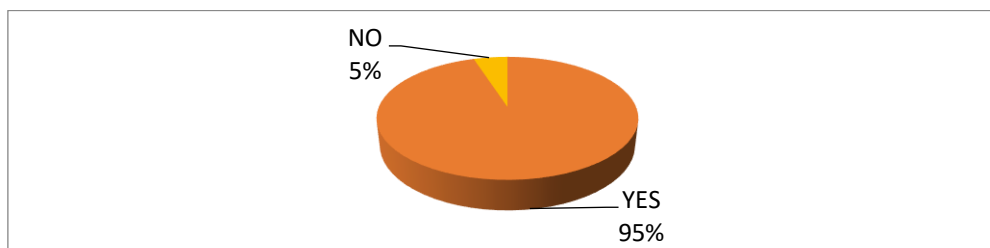
This Sector (3.4) represents teachers' observations towards the effect of gamification on the improvement of students' communicative competence. The majority of them (95%) confirmed that they noticed that using games in the students' communicative competence improvement. However, only (5%) of them stated that they did not notice any improvements through this method. To highlight their answers discussed above in sector (3.7), teachers provide the following explanations

➤They tend to learn faster new vocabulary and grammar rules

➤ When using games, my learners show enthusiasm to participate.

➤ Teaching students especially for a long time using games, can enhance their

communicative competence, we sense a great difference by the end of the year

➤ Students don't hesitate as much when speaking foreign language in a game, they feel

empowered to ask questions because it is a game

➤ Because I didn't use them a lot

➤ Due to the big numbers of students in one group it is somehow difficult to assess their

communicative competence after each game

➢ Improvements can be seen at their ability to speak, to discuss different topics, and their self-confidence

➢ I noticed especially for those who are shy, they start to engage and give answers

➢ They are less shy to communicate, their thoughts and emotions, more confident

➢ I compare their previous classroom engagement with the new session

➢ They start to be more motivated to speak

➢ They become more talkative, fun makers

➢ Games improve students' communicative competence, especially when it has to do with psychological barriers that prevent them from getting engaged in the lecture

➢ For oral performance, those students who do well in games show better scales.

➢ These results were better, because they were engaged and motivated.

From those who responded with yes previously, (80%) of teachers stated that they have noticed an improvement in students' communicative competence using this method through acquiring new vocabulary and grammatical rules more rapid. Also, these improvements appeared when students feel confident and comfortable to participate in different conversations and ask questions, so they become more talkative. Games enhance students' speech performance, as they help to overcome psychological obstacles that hinder them from participating in lectures.

Question Nineteen: How could you measure the impact of gamification, as a teaching technique, on students 'communicative competence improvement compared to traditional teaching methods?

Teachers provide different answers about measuring the impact of gamification on students' communicative competence improvement in comparison to traditional methods that can be summarized as follows

➢By applying both ways and comparing the results before using any game

➢I design rubric to assess my learners, and which aspects to focus on

➢ I always opt for qualitative assessment for example observation

➢Through tests of performance (communicate in real life situations) role plays _ tests of communicative competence

Few teachers (5) employed different ways to measure the effectiveness of gamification in comparison to traditional methods. They claimed that they apply the two methods, then they compare between them, or create a rubric or tests of performance to evaluate their students to determine which aspect to concentrate on. In essence, teachers praised the positive power of gamification, especially after measuring its impact, they considered it as an effective teaching method that create and interactive and engaging learning environment. It is very useful in improving students' communicative ability.

Question Twenty: If you have any further suggestions, comments about the topic or feedback, please feel free to add them below

In this space teachers were free to suggest anything about the topic or comment on it, only two teachers (10%) added the following comments

➢Gamification is used with limited status it is and will never be a method of teaching, it is one of the several tools in classrooms but it is not necessary

➢ For me, I think that gamification is very important when it comes to First Years but for master one or two gamification is not crucial.

3.4.5. Summary and Discussion of the Results and Findings from Teachers' Questionnaire

The analysis of the data obtained from teachers' questionnaire about 'the impact of using games on EFL students' communicative competence' shows that the majority of teachers (90%)

are females with a high level of qualification ranging from Master \ Magister (45%) to the PhD (55%) degree. Additionally, most of them are full-time teachers (80%) with an extensive experience in teaching English that goes for more than 10 years (70%). Furthermore, the majority (55%) reported having no difficulties in teaching it.

Based on the compiled data in section two "The Importance of Using Games in Oral Expression Classes," teachers emphasized the significance of integrating games into their classes. Therefore, (100%) of them ensured having incorporated games into their teaching process, with the majority of (82.35%) indicating that they use them sometimes. Moreover, half of the correspondent teachers (50%) assessed students' performance when using games as 'excellent'. Additionally, in comparison to the other games, the vast majority of teachers (33%) preferred using the "Guess Which Challenge" game, and most of them (32%) declared that games can create a dynamic and interactive learning environment.

Section three aims to collect data about teachers' attitudes toward communicative competence. All the respondents (100%) provided different answers about the communicative competence definition. They all agreed that it is how to use language effectively in different social contexts. In addition, more than half of teachers (85%) assumed that students' level of communicative competence is average. Therefore, they are using different techniques and strategies to increase students' level; through active participation inside the classroom and peer and student-teacher discussion and encourage them to correct their mistakes and bring real-life situations to the classroom. In addition to providing them with more practical exercises and fun games. According to teachers' answers, first-year EFL students at the Department of Letters and English Language at Guelma University faced many challenges while attempting to improve their communicative competence; such as lack of vocabulary, motivation, and confidence. In addition to the psychological barriers as anxiety, shyness, and stress. Thus, teachers suggested pieces of advice for their students to overcome these challenges.

As a direct response to one of the important and main research queries (**Q16**) the overwhelming majority of oral teachers (95%) confirmed that there is a positive effect of gamification on students' communicative competence in several different ways. This is consistent with the researcher Wright (Chap1,p.12).Teachers ensured the effect of communicative games in motivating students to speak fluently, understand and discuss in conversations. They added that gamification creates a dynamic atmosphere that helps strengthen students' oral communicative competence. Teachers also declared that the effect of gamification is noticed in students' performance when they speak well and acquire new vocabulary, gain more confidence and feel comfortable in participating in the class. Finally, teachers confirmed the research hypothesis considering gamification as a very useful technique for English language students in enhancing their communicative competence by improving their fluency when speaking, raising their participation in the class, and easily expressing their ideas. It is better than the traditional method in improving communicative abilities, and this is consistent with the idea of the researchers Kirriemuir and McFarlane (chap1,p.8)..

In conclusion, the current study aimed to investigate the impact of gamification on improving EFL students' communicative competence in oral expression classes. The results showed that using games to improve students' oral communicative competence is a useful method for helping them communicate effectively. Consequently, the results obtained from teachers' questionnaire analysis confirmed the hypothesis that states "The implementation of gamification in EFL learners by oral expression teachers has a positive impact on the improvement of EFL learners' communicative competence".

3.5. Classroom Observation

3.5.1. Sample choice

The present study's target sample is first -year students enrolled in the academic year 2023/2024 at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of 08 May 1945,

Guelma. The reason behind choosing this level is because first -year is the level for building the basics of communication skills as grammar, vocabulary, fluency, etc. to enhance their oral communicative competence. Games provide a fun interactive and engaging environment to address these areas. In addition, at this stage, teachers can pinpoint areas that need improvement, and games can offer such opportunities to address them well and create a positive language learning environment. First-year students often feel apprehension and under pressure when speaking English language. Therefore, games are considered as a solution that creates a low-pressure environment; where they can practice communication skills and overcome their fears. Typically, two classes out of ten first-year groups were randomly selected as a sample for this observation which was organized in oral expression classes.

3.5.2. Description of the Observation

Classroom observation was used as a second data collection tool in this research. First year students were observed throughout their oral sessions to describe their communicative competence aspects. This observation aimed to determine the effectiveness of using games to improve students' communicative competence in oral classes, in addition to how they can influence their communicative ability. It is based on a checklist which includes criteria such as grammar, accuracy, vocabulary use, strategic competence, comprehension and pronunciation, fluency, participation and interaction.

Two first year groups were subject to classroom observation; which was conducted during the second semester for four (4) sessions for each group; before and after the implementation of games. The observation period started from 22 April to 30 April.In this study observation various criteria of communication skills were taken into account to achieve its objectives. The checklist consists of two sections. The first section provides a general information; such as the names of the observer and the teacher, the class being observed, the setting (time and date), the second outlining the criteria and a description of the class sections,

and additional notes. The same checklist was used for both classes before and after using games to avoid any inconsistencies that might occur. (see Appendix)

3.5.3. Analysis of the Results and Findings

3.5.3.1. Analysis of the First Class (Before and After Using Games)

The observation follows a checklist that includes a set of criteria to gather data and gain deeper understanding of the impact of gamification on EFL learners' communicative competence. Moreover, since students are at the heart of the learning process, this observation will describe how well their communicative competence develops before and after implementing games in the oral expression classroom. During the pre-game activity, the teacher asked her learners to tell their stories about the reason behind choosing their names. In the other session, students were asked to describe some pictures; whereas during the use of games we gave students different communicative games such as; guess which challenge, paraphrase it, longest sentence, and Question/ Question game

3.5.3.1.1. Vocabulary

During the pre-game activity, we noticed that students' vocabulary was limited, using short and simple sentences. Most of them repeated the same adjectives and same words in describing pictures and telling stories behind their names. They took few seconds in each task and hesitated to speak. However, after the incorporation of games like Question, Question, guess which challenge, paraphrase it, and longest sentences; a significant improvement was observed in both written and spoken communication their vocabulary. They started using a wide range of vocabulary through exposure to new terms and words in the clues, and explored other synonyms.

3.5.3.1.2. Fluency

Before incorporating communicative games, students' speech and ideas were characterized by some pauses and hesitations. They frequently answered using (like, umm) and struggling to find the correct words to express their ideas. Following the implementation of games, students became more encouraged and motivated to express their thoughts especially in discussions. They attempted to elaborate their ideas and tried to participate as much as they can in discussions. In addition, their speech showed a noticeable improvement, it was smoother than in the pre-game activity.

3.5.3.1.3. Interaction and Participation

Interaction and participation in the class 1 was minimal during the pre-game activity. Few students dominated the discussion, and the teacher relied on volunteers in participation to appoint another colleague. Most students did not engage with peers in discussions, exchange ideas or ask questions due to shyness and anxiety. According to what is observed, students fear to speak in front of their colleagues and teachers; while others did not pay attention to their classmates' contributions. However, after using games, like "Guess which Challenge" and "Question, Question game", the participation significantly increased. Collaborative tasks encouraged students to interact, participate, and exchange ideas, etc.

3.5.3.1.4. Pronunciation and Comprehension

In fact, students did not face any problems in understanding the tasks and the instructions of games; mainly because the teacher used some paralanguage features like gestures and body language to be understood. In addition, their pronunciation was clear, there were just a few words that had been mispronounced because of anxiety or unfamiliarity with the words. Nonetheless, the meaning was clear for their peers since they pronounced them in the same way. After using games, students' pronunciation and comprehension improved;

students became more familiar with vocabulary, more confident and feel comfortable when using language.

3.5.3.1.5. Grammatical Accuracy

During pre-game activities, most students faced problems with subject-verb agreement. For example, they said "my mother chose this name; then, they replace mother with "it" unconsciously. Similarly, students either mixed verb tenses or shifted from one another. For instance, they talked about the past action and used present, omission of third person "s" with she or he. Even in their writing, they have problems of choosing the appropriate words or verb tenses. Whereas in post – game; like "paraphrase it", and "longest sentences", they became aware of their grammatical errors; especially, when they were asked to write their answers on the board, and attempted to correct them at the same time. The teacher also corrected their errors and highlighted some basic rules of grammar to use them correctly and appropriately. These activities helped in improving of their grammatical accuracy.

3.5.3.1.6. Strategic Competence

Before the introduction of communicative games, students rarely used paraphrasing to express their ideas in different ways. In the task "story of their names" all students stood without using body language or gestures. They just told their stories briefly because of limited vocabulary and limited use of strategies or techniques that can help them overcome their difficulties in conveying the precise information or repairing breakdowns to keep discussions goinghead.

Following the incorporation of games like "paraphrase it" and "longest sentence", students improved their communication strategies through participation in the tasks to compensate for their limited language skills. Therefore, their ability to elaborate and speak more in discussions increased. These activities can develop their communicative strategies beyond just grammar knowledge and vocabulary.

Overall, the analysis of these sessions before and after using games, suggested that implementing a variety of communicative games; like longest sentence, guess which challenge, debates, paraphrase it, can effectively engage and support students to participate in discussions. Moreover, these communicative games or activities can enhance their oral communication skills in terms of fluency, grammar, strategic competence, vocabulary and interaction, etc.

3.5.3.2. Analysis of the Second Class (Before and After Using Games)

Students in class two , similar to class one , faced challenges with their communication in the classroom, the activities before incorporating games and the types of games were the same as class 1.

3.5.3.2.1. Vocabulary

Before implementing games, it was noticed that most students struggled to formulate a kind of long or complex sentences; due to their limited vocabulary. They described the presented pictures in the same way, using same words, and their verbal performances were limited. However, after using games their discussions had significant improvement. For example, they had different ideas and gained more information about the topic, exchanged ideas with their peers and teacher. It is noticed that these improvements were mainly occurred after the game "longest sentence" and "Paraphrase it"; where students used a wide range of vocabulary to explain environmental pollution problems. In addition, the support of their teacher helped them attempt to use complex and long sentences in their discussions.

3.5.3.2.2. Fluency

Before the incorporation of games, it was observed that most students' speech was similar to the previous class (class 1). To illustrate, they spoke with frequent hesitations, struggling to find the needed words to complete their ideas while speaking because of anxiety and shyness. However, after the introduction of games they became more motivated to speak fluently in discussions, using different smooth responses without stress, showing more

confidence and a taking few pauses. Thus, these games provided an engaging environment to participate and practice communication which results in an improved fluency.

3.5.3.2.3. Interaction and Participation

Before using games, students rarely interacted and participated in class. They did not participate even as volunteers, and the teacher was forced to appoint them following the list of names. Students did not engage in discussions or exchange ideas because of shyness, anxiety and low self -confidence. However, after implementing games, students' interaction and participation showed a significant improvement. The majority of them participated and engaged in discussions; especially when it was a group discussion.

3.5.3.2.4. Pronunciation and Comprehension

Before using games, students did not face any problem of comprehension. They understood the instructions of the tasks clearly; while for pronunciation they sometimes mispronounced some words especially new ones. After using games, a gradual improvement in their pronunciation was noticed. They became more familiar with the words' adequate pronunciation since they were corrected by their peers or teacher.

3.5.3.2.5. Grammatical Accuracy

Similar to class one, students in class two, before using games, had frequent grammatical errors like subject -verb agreement and verb tenses. For instance, they did not pay attention to tense markers; when they wrote some notes to use them in the task of the story of your names. Whereas; after "paraphrase it" and "longest sentences" the teacher drew her students' attention towards the rules of grammar. Grammatical errors then decreased. They became more conscious about which tenses to apply for their speech.

3.5.3.2.6. Strategic Competence

Equal to class one during the pre-game phase, it was noticed that students rarely used strategies to clarify or to elaborate their ideas. Just few students expressed themselves in different ways. In contrast to class one, it was observed that they used nonverbal clues like gestures and body language; trying to convey the information and deliver the message using non-verbal communication in their discussions. After using games, students' strategies increased each time they try to elaborate their ideas; especially after the game of "paraphrase it".

All in all, students, before using games, were disengaged and reluctant to participate in discussions and tasks. However, with the incorporation of games in the classroom students' communicative competence improved. The environment was so interactive and motivated, reducing anxiety and shyness. With this class, the results of the observation suggests that implementing games can be a strategy/technique that improves students' communicative competence; in terms of fluency, grammar, communication strategies, vocabulary, interaction, pronunciation, etc.

In conclusion, to help students communicate effectively, it is essential for teachers to use a variety of tools, techniques and methods; such as, implementing games in the classroom to enhance students' communicative competence. In fact, students appreciated this technique, using games, which provided them with an opportunity to enhance their communicative abilities. They considered it as a funny and engaging way.

3.5.4. Summary of the Results

The observation of the two classes, before incorporating games, reveals that students in both classes encountered many challenges in their communication. They were anxious and lacked confidence. Both classes required encouragement and support to develop their communicative competence. They lacked many communication aspects; such as, fluency,

vocabulary, grammar, interaction and participation, and strategic competence in their speech. However, after implementing games all of these aspects improved significantly; as a result, their communicative competence improved too. The findings of this observation highlighted the importance of gamification as another method that can positively affect students' communicative competence. Furthermore, it can also lead to creating a more supportive, engaging and interactive learning environment suitable for improving communicative competence.

Conclusion

This practical chapter describes data analysis gathered from teachers' questionnaire and students' classroom observations. It confirmed that there is a positive impact of using games on the improvement of EFL students' communicative competence. The results of integrating games in oral expression classes can be an effective tool in enhancing students' performance and making learning more engaging and interactive; as it helps EFL students improve their communication skills and increase their motivation to take part in classroom discussions. Based on the analysis of students' classroom observations and teachers' questionnaire results, the research hypothesis is confirmed. Therefore, using games in oral expression classes has a positive impact on EFL students' communicative competence and thus leads to its improvement.

GeneralConclusion

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Concluding Remark

This research was conducted during the academic year 2023-2024 to explore the impact of gamification on EFL students' communicative competence. The study is composed of two major parts. The first stated the theoretical ground of the research, which is further divided into two chapters; while the second is devoted to the practical part. The first chapter discusses the definition and historical background of games, games in teaching-learning process, and how to use them in classrooms. It tackles also game elements to be included in each game, the relationship between games and communication, game types, and concludes with the importance of using games in the classroom. The second chapter covers communicative competence. It deals with definitions of different terms such as competence, communicative competence, communication skills, oral communicative competence. In addition to Hymes and Chomsky theories of communicative competence, Canal and Swain Model of Communicative Competence and its components, and Hymes Models. It ends with the strategies for EFL students to develop their communicative competence and the importance of developing communicative competence in the field of teaching EFL. The third chapter refers to field investigation and represents the practical part of this research. It tackles data gathering tools, teachers' questionnaire and first-year students' classroom observation at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma. It further exposes the analysis and interpretation of the obtained results. Thus, the collected data from teachers' questionnaire and students' classroom observation agreed that integrating games in oral expression classes helps EFL students improve their communicative competence. Furthermore, according to the obtained results, the three key research questions were answered and the research hypothesis was confirmed. The first question was set to figure out to what extent

gamification may contribute in the development of EFL students' communicative competence. The majority of teachers claimed that the implementation of games improves EFL student's communicative competence. First-year students' communicative competence after the use of games was improved. The second raised question was precisely set to determine to what extent does the application of gamification in EFL oral expression teaching and learning compared to traditional methods can enhance students' aspects of communicative competence. Both teachers' questionnaire and student 'classroom observation results affirmed that the application of gamification enhanced students' fluency, accuracy, understanding, and communication compared to the traditional methods. The unlimited research question sought to whether oral expression teachers at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma are awareof the use of games as a technique or tool to improve students' communicative competence. Consequently, it was evident that teachers recognized the importance of the incorporation of their classes.

Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

The aim behind the current research is looking for the effectiveness of gamification on the EFL students' communicative competence at the Department of Letters and English language, University of 08 May 1945, "Guelma. The findings of the study confirmed what was hypothesized; the implementation of gamification in EFL oral classes by oral expression teachers has a positive impact on the improvement of EFL students' communicative competence. the study shows that teachers and students under investigation have positive attitudes toward the use of games and that their incorporation in oral expression classes leads to a more engaging, positive, and interactive environment that can increase students' opportunities to improve their communicative competence. As a result, significant pedagogical implications for teachers and students are offered.

Teachers

Teachers should move from traditional methods that focus only on teacher-centered to apply more interactive and engaged methods that are student-centered. Using games or combining them with traditional methods will better serve students' needs and skills. They should also plan to develop various activities, and select games that are effective and accurate in line with what students want or lack. Moreover, teachers can share gamified activities with other teachers; this can foster a supportive learning environment. In fact, when educators acknowledge the importance of using games in oral expression classes, they can empower their students to become more effective in their communicative competence. As a result, they can actively notice improvements in their communicative abilities.

Students

It is better for students to be integrate into such games because such an opportunity allows them to practice and improve communication skills and learn from mistakes. Educational games enhance their English language fluency. Hence, it promotes their use of different communication strategies; thereby, reducing fear, shyness, and encouraging them to speak to achieve the goal. Consequently, it increases their motivation, course engagement, and then improves their communicative competence. Furthermore, learning through games encourages students to speak and then to apply communication skills in a practical and interactive context. After each game, they must take time to think about their communication in the class; to improve the main skills and overcome the missed ones.

Research Limitations

Conducting a research can be a challenging and time-consuming journey. In this study, time constraints affected data collection and research progress. Starting with the theoretical part, accessing the needed sources was very difficult due to their cost, just few of them were available for free. Concerning the practical part, even though the time was limited, the process of obtaining responses from oral expression teachers, concerning answering and giving back the

questionnaires, took nearly a month and few of them did not respond at all. Additionally, conducting data from classroom observation coincided with the end of the academic year, resulting in students' absentees. Furthermore, time limitation also led the researchers to rely on the observation instead of doing experiment (pre- post -tests). Moreover, the limited sample size makes it difficult to generalize the research findings on all groups and levels.

Suggestions for future research

For further exploration of the integration of games and its impact on EFL students' communicative competence. Researchers are introduced some suggestions that may help future investigators. As the present study solely relied on two data collection tools, and knowledge about the topic are larger; subsequently, the inclusion of additional tools like experiment and interview would provide more data about this topic. Future investigators could examine the impact of types of games on specific aspects of communicative competence or other skills.Therefore, future researchers should prioritize the integration of a specific game to obtain more meaningful and reliable assessment outcomes. To explain, when it comes to evaluating a particular skill; it is crucial to focus on applying the games themselves rather than only relying on game elements. However, game elements can certainly enhance engagement and motivation, they may not necessarily facilitate skill development. By designing games that directly target the skill being assessed, researchers can ensure a more accurate and effective evaluation. This method allows for a more authentic and immersive experience, providing valuable insights into the actual skill acquisition and performance of the participants.

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Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear Teachers,

This questionnaire is designed as part of an academic research; for the fulfillment of a Master degree .It aims to investigate the Impact of Gamification in Improving EFL Learners' Communicative Competence, Department of Englishat08 Mai 1945, Guelma University.

You are kindly requested to answer the following questions by either ticking the appropriate option/answer or by filling the blanks with full statements when necessary. Your answers are important for the validity of our research and will be treated with a high level of confidentiality and anonymity and will be used only for research purposes. We greatly appreciate your interest and help.

Thank you in advance for your time, effort and collaboration.

Boureneb Asma

Djouad Malek

Second- Year Master Students

Department of Letters and English Language

University of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma

Section One: Back ground Information

1. Gender

Male ☐

Female ☐

2. Degree of qualifications

License	
Magister/ Master	
Doctorate	
Professor	

3. Are you a full-time or part-time teacher?

………………………………………………………………………………………………

4. How long have you been teaching at the university?

……………………………………………………………………………………………..

5. Have you faced any difficulties during teaching oral expression?

Yes ☐

No ☐

- If yes, can you cite the main ones.

....…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………….........

Section Two: Importance of Using Games in Oral Classes

6. Do you think that using games in oral classrooms is important? Why?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………..…………………………..

7. Have you ever incorporated games in your oral classes?

Yes ☐

No ☐

8. If yes, how often do you incorporate them?

Every session	
Sometimes	
Rarely	

9. How do you assess students' performance when using games?

Excellent	
Very good	
Good	
Average	
Below average	

10. Which one of these following games you prefer to use in your classes?

ABC's	
Questions/Questions	
Guess which challenge	
Paraphrase it	
Others	

- If others, please mention them.

…………………………………………………………………………………………………...

11. In your opinion, what is the objective of using games in oral classes?

Create a dynamic and interactive learning environment	
Encourage teamwork and friendly competition	
To improve student's language skills	
For entertainment	

- If others mention them, please.

……………………………………………………………………………………

Section Three : Communicative Competence

12. According to you, what is "communicative competence"?

....

....

13. How could you describe EFL student's communicative competence?

High

Average

Low

14. Do you motivate your students to develop their communicative competence?

Yes

No

If "yes", please would you explain how?

………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………….…………………………………….....................

....

15. According to your teaching experience, what problems do students face while
trying to improve their communicative competence?

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

16. What advice you would give to your students to achieve effective communicative
competence?

………………………………………………………………………………………….

……………………………………………………………………………………….…

Section Four: The Impact of Using Games on Students' Communicative Competence

17. According to your teaching experience, do you think that incorporating games in oral
classes can affect students' communicative competence?

Yes   ☐

No   ☐

-   If "yes", please explain "How"?

………………………………………………………………………………….

………………………………….. …………………………………………………..

18. When using games in your oral classes, have you noticed or tested if this results in any
improvement in students' communicative competence?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Please, justify your answer

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

19. How could you measure the impact of gamification, as a teaching technique,

on students 'communicative competence improvement compared to traditional

teaching methods?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………… …………………………………………………………………...

20. If you have any further suggestions, comments about the topic or feedback, please feel free

to add them below

……………………………………………………………………,…………………..

………………………………………………………………………………………..

………………………………………………………………………………………..

Thank you so much for your collaboration

Appendix B

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION CHECKLIST(before and after incorporating games)

Teacher: Date:

Observer: Time:

Class Observed: Department:

Criteria	Description of Classroom 1	Description of Classroom 2
Grammatical accuracy		
Vocabulary use		
Fluency		
Pronunciation		
Comprehension		
Interaction		
Strategic competence		

Additional notes :

Classroom 1:

....

....

Classroom 2:

....

....

Résumé

La compétence communicative est considérée cruciale dans les contextes sociaux et académiques en général, et dans l'apprentissage des langues étrangères en particulier. Cependant, en raison du manque de suffisamment de possibilités d'applications pratiques, de nombreux étudiants EFL rencontrent de sérieuses difficultés et défis pour améliorer leur compétence communicative. Par conséquent, les enseignants EFL doivent être conscient de la façon d'améliorer les besoins fondamentaux de ces élèves.La présente recherche vise à étudier l'impact de la gamification sur la compétence communicative des étudiants en anglais langue étrangère dans les cours d'expression orale.On émet alors l'hypothèse que la mise en œuvre de systèmes bien conçus les jeux dans les cours oraux peuvent développer la compétence communicative des élèves EFL.A fin d'atteindre l'objectif de la recherche, de répondre aux questions de recherche et de tester l'hypothèse, une méthode de recherche mixte a été adoptée. Plus précisément, un questionnaire a été administré pour collecter des données auprès de vingt enseignants d'expression orale au Département de Lettres et de Langue Anglaise de l'Université du 08 Mai 1945, à Guelma. En complément, une observation en classe d'étudiants de deux groupes de première année LMD en expression orale pour l'année académique 2023/2024 a été réalisée. Sur la base de l'interprétation et de l'analyse des résultats, l'hypothèse est confirmée et révèle l'impact positif de la gamification sur la compétence communicative des étudiants en anglais langue étrangère. De plus, les enseignants ont une attitude positive vis-à-vis de l'utilisation des jeux pour améliorer la compétence communicative de leurs élèves. L'évaluation de la compétence communicative des étudiant savant et après l'utilisation des jeux prouve que cette technique a un effet positif sur leur compétence communicative. Il est donc fortement suggéré aux enseignants d'expression orale d'intégrer les jeux entant que stratégie ou technique d'enseignement engageante dans le contenu de leur cours.

Mots-clés : Enseignement/apprentissage de l'anglais langue étrangère, compétence communicative, jeux, gamification, cours d'expression orale.

الملخص

تعتبر الكفاءة التواصلية ضرورية في السياقات الاجتماعية والأكاديمية بشكل عام وفي تعلم اللغة الأجنبية بشكل خاص. ومع ذلك ، بسبب عدم وجود ما يكفي فرص للتطبيقات العملية ، يواجه العديد من طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية صعوبات كثيرة و تحديات لتعزيز كفاءتهم التواصلية. لذلك ، يجب أن يكون معلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية إدراك كيفية تحسين احتياجات الطلاب الأساسية. يهدف هذا البحث الحالي إلى دراسة تأثير التلعيب على الكفاءة التواصلية لطلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في فصول التعبير الشفوي. ثم يتم افتراض أن تطبيق التلعيب في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية الشفوية قد يؤثر على الكفاءة التواصلية لطلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. لتحقيق هدف البحث والإجابة على أسئلة البحث واختبار الفرضية ، تم اعتماد منهج بحث مختلط. على وجه التحديد ، تم استخدام استبيان لجمع البيانات من عشرين معلما للتعبير الشفوي في قسم الآداب واللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة 08 ماي 1945 ، قالمة. بالإضافة إلى مراقبة طلاب الفصل الدراسي لمجموعتين من مستوى السنة الأولى لمرحلة الليسانس في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في فصول التعبير الشفوي للعام الدراسي 2024/2023. وبناءً على تفسير وتحليل النتائج ، تم تأكيد الفرضية وكشف التأثير الإيجابي لتلعيب على الكفاءة التواصلية لطلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. علاوة على ذلك ، لدى المعلمين مواقف إيجابية تجاه استخدام الألعاب على تحسين الكفاءة التواصلية لطلابهم. يثبت تقييم الكفاءة التواصلية للطلاب قبل وبعد استخدام الألعاب أن هذه التقنية لها تأثير إيجابي على كفاءتهم التواصلية. لذلك ، يُقترح بشدة أن يدمج معلمو التعبير الشفوي الألعاب كإستراتيجية تدريس أو تقنية في محتوى مقررهم الدراسي.

الكلمات المفتاحية : تعليم / تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ، الكفاءة التواصلية ، الألعاب، التلعيب ، فصول التعبير الشفوي.