Gamification in English Language Acquisition: Systematic Literature Review (2015-2024)

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Abstract
Gamification is one of the newest teaching methods for learning English these days. Gamification tends to have a diminishing effect over time, even though initial engagement is sometimes rather high. This poses significant problems about how to keep students engaged and guarantee that gamified learning has long-term positive effects on education. As a result, the influence of gamification on English language acquisition is methodically identified in this analysis. 25 articles were selected among 128 publications published between 2015 and 2024 using three databases: Web of Science (WoS), Scopus, and Educational Resources Information Centre (ERIC). Both inclusion and exclusion criteria were considered. First, the noteworthy results showed that gamification is being employed extensively in elementary schools these days, and that when students are given tasks that are specifically designed to be like games, gamification has an impact on their motivation and interest. Second, when gamification is added to the English curriculum, students' attitudes significantly improve. These two results suggested that gamification research in English language acquisition is still lacking. In general, practitioners can benefit from this review by learning how gamification affects students in language classrooms and by identifying research gaps on English language acquisition, which will help to sustain education over time.
Keywords: Gamification, Language Acquisition, Education, Motivation, Attitudes

Introduction
Education, especially English language training, is changing because of gamification, which is the integration of game mechanics into non-gaming environments. The fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4), which attempts to provide inclusive and equitable quality education and encourage lifelong learning opportunities for everyone, is globally aligned with this creative approach (Williams, L et al., 2020). Teachers can create dynamic and captivating learning experiences that enhance language acquisition by implementing gamification into

their English language instruction. This method meets the requirements and styles of a wide range of learners while also increasing student motivation and engagement (Mee et al., 2020). Students can receive tailored learning paths and real-time feedback using gamified learning tools, which are essential for language proficiency (Luo, 2023). We can close educational disparities, raise literacy rates, and give students all over the world more power by utilizing gamification, which will help create a more just and inclusive world community.

The influence of gamification on English language learning is becoming more and more apparent in our community's educational system. Schools and teachers are converting traditional classroom settings into dynamic and interactive spaces by incorporating game-like aspects into English language instruction. This method makes language learning more approachable and pleasurable by dramatically increasing students' motivation and engagement. The range of technological alternatives increases the appeal and refinement of education (Laar, Deursen, Dijk, & Haan, 2017). Local programs that use gamified techniques such as language applications, interactive tests, and competitive challenges boost the four fundamental language skills which are speaking, listening, reading, and writing (Dindar et al., 2021; Hashim et al., 2019; Idris et al., 2020; Kaur et al., n.d. & Lim et al., 2021). Pupils can monitor their progress in real-time and receive prompt feedback, which promotes a feeling of accomplishment and ongoing learning (Fotaris, P et al., 2016). As such, gamification is contributing to the reduction of language barriers, raising the rate of literacy, and giving students the fundamental communication skills necessary for success in both the classroom and the workplace in our community.

Recent study in education has focused a great deal of attention on the effects of gamification on primary school children' acquisition of the English language. Teachers can create environments that are both interesting and motivating for improved language acquisition by introducing game-like elements, such as points, badges, and leaderboards, into English language instruction (Kingsley & Grabner-Hagen, 2018). Gamification has been shown to dramatically increase student enthusiasm, motivation and engagement (Hashim et al., 2019; Morschheuser, Riar, Hamari, & Maedche, 2017; Tobar-Muñoz, Baldiris, & Fabregat, 2017; Tobar-Muñoz, Fabregat, & Baldiris, 2015). Furthermore, gamified learning experiences enhanced young learners' vocabulary acquisition and retention (Su & Cheng, 2015). But even with these encouraging findings, there is still a study gap regarding the sustainability and long-term efficacy of gamified learning approaches. According to Deterding et al. (2017), gamification can have a wear-off effect, which could lessen its influence over time, even though early engagement is frequently high. More research on how to sustain student attention and provide long-lasting educational gains from gamified techniques in primary school is necessary to address this issue.

This poses significant concerns with sustaining student engagement and guaranteeing long-term learning gains from gamified instruction. To close this gap, further research must be done on methods of maintaining interest and assessing the long-term effects of gamification on components of language learning other than vocabulary. To create and evaluate interventions that can sustain students' motivation over time and promote ongoing language development, more thorough study is required. There are various reasons why the suggested study on how gamification affects primary school pupils' English language learning is

important. It seeks to offer insightful information about sustaining students' long-term interest and engagement, both of which are essential for productive learning. Through the identification of sustainable gamification tactics, this research can assist educators in creating language learning activities that are both more effective and engaging, ultimately improving student results. Additionally, the research can help create cutting-edge teaching resources and provide guidance for curriculum and policy makers, ensuring that gamified learning strategies are long-lasting and successful. In the end, this research may improve teaching strategies, encourage pupils to acquire language over time, and boost their academic achievement in primary school. Thus, keeping the following two research objectives in mind, this systematic review attempts to investigate current trends and research in gamification on English language acquisition:

RQ1: How does the implementation of gamification in English language lessons impact the engagement and motivation levels of primary school pupils over an extended period?

RQ2: In what ways do pupils' attitudes towards learning English change when gamification techniques are incorporated into the curriculum, compared to traditional teaching methods?

Gamification in Education
Gamification education is the process of incorporating gaming elements into standard learning environments so that course objectives and curriculum become game-like scenarios (Legaki et al., 2020). Gamification uses components like badges, leaderboards, points, avatars, time limits, levels, competition, and three-dimensional environments to improve learning, in contrast to game-based learning, which uses actual games for instructional objectives (Al-Azawi, Al-Faliti, & Al-Blushi, 2016). These components improve student motivation and engagement by fusing extrinsic and intrinsic rewards (Ibhadode & Ugoji, 2019). Gamification is a relatively new concept, but it has gained appeal because it makes learning more fun and engaging while addressing issues in traditional educational environments. Many firms that offer gamified platforms for many disciplines are using gamification today in a variety of industries, including productivity, education, business, healthcare, and healthcare (Rabah, Cassidy, & Beauchemin, 2018). Due to the advantages of contemporary technology, gamification has gained popularity in education particularly among teachers and students, boosting the effectiveness and engagement of instruction. According to research, gamified courses frequently perform better for students than standard ones. For pupils of all ages and topics, gamification enables teachers to design captivating and dynamic lessons (Legaki et al., 2020). But even with all its benefits, gamification is not a panacea. Although there is room for improvement, detractors contend that gamified learning is not a cure-all and needs to be used with caution to avoid becoming overhyped and underutilized (Rojas-López, Rincón-Flores, Mena, García-Peñalvo, & Ramírez-Montoya, 2019).

Gamification in English Language Classroom
Making learning fun, useful, and relevant for students is the goal of gamification in education, which is acknowledged as a significant worldwide trend marked by cutting-edge technology (Tan, 2018; Desnenko et al., 2021). (Pazilah et al., 2019; Anak Yunus & Hua, 2021). Gamification ignites students' competitive spirit and promotes their active engagement in learning by incorporating game features like quests, clues, challenges, levels, and prizes (Poondej & Lerdpornkulrat, 2016; Kingsley & Grabner-Hagen, 2018). Avatars, leaderboards,

progress indicators, scoring systems, and other features improve this interaction even further (Desnenko et al., 2021). According to research, these game-like activities can successfully support a learner-centered instructional approach and encourage students (Tsay et al., 2018; Hashim et al., 2019). Points, badges, and leaderboards are the most often used gamification strategies. They make learning engaging and competitive, encouraging students to participate actively and think critically (Alomari, Al-Samarraie, & Yousef, 2019; Antonaci, 2019). By offering feedback and encouraging social comparison, these components improve learning outcomes in addition to raising engagement (Welbers et al., 2019; Antonaci et al., 2019).

To guarantee gamification's success, however, meticulous preparation is necessary, particularly when gamification is used in language learning environments (Buckley et al., 2017; Naggar & Berkling, 2020). By incorporating features like user-centered design, customization, and meaningful storylines, game designers and educators can consider the unique learning environment and audience (An, 2020). Notwithstanding its benefits, there are still issues that must be resolved, such as different language competency levels and the possibility of student overload (An, 2020; Kijpoonpol & Phumchanin, 2018). Improved engagement, English proficiency, and cognitive successes have all been associated with successful gamification deployment (Buckley et al., 2017; Ding et al., 2020; Hashim et al., 2019). To guarantee that gamification strategies properly support the intended learning objectives, it is crucial to carefully assess them prior to putting them into practice in the classroom (Hanus & Fox, 2015). To create effective gamified learning experiences, future research should concentrate on improving design components and taking contextual aspects into account (An, 2020).

Reviews on Gamification
Several reviews have explored the intersection of gamification and educational outcomes. For example, Dichev and Dicheva (2017) investigated how game design features could enhance motivation and engagement among students in educational settings through gamification. They evaluated these components' significant impact on achieving learning objectives, noting that only a small portion (13.7%) of the reviewed research focused on primary and secondary education (K-12 level), with the majority concentrated on higher education. While acknowledging the positive effects of gamification in learning environments, they highlighted the need for more rigorous research to substantiate these findings.

In their study focused on gamification at the university level, Mora et al. (2017) emphasized the framework for developing gamification considering the appropriateness for different age groups and various gamification features in higher education. They observed that gamification features are more prevalent in corporate settings compared to general applications such as health and education. They also pointed out the lack of systematic gamification design in higher education publications, relying instead on ad hoc approaches that limit the potential for comprehensive research and practice contributions.

Toda et al. (2020) proposed taxonomies to categorize and characterize gamification features, aiming to provide guidelines for future research and implementation in classrooms. Their taxonomy categorized gamification components into five groups and discussed the benefits and drawbacks of each category. Hamari et al. (2014) conducted a comprehensive literature review across various sectors, including education, to evaluate the effectiveness of gamification. They highlighted the psychological effects of gamification on motivation and its

potential benefits, noting the predominance of qualitative approaches in existing studies and advocating for more empirical research to validate these findings.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Nieto-Escamez and Roldán-Tapia (2021) examined the application of gamification in secondary schools and universities through eleven case studies across different disciplines. They found positive effects on learning outcomes and student motivation but emphasized the need for further research, particularly in comparison to traditional, non-gamified learning environments. Plantak Vukovac et al. (2018) surveyed educators to explore their attitudes toward gamification and its implementation in primary and secondary schools. They found that only a third of the participants were familiar with gamification, revealing significant gaps in knowledge and practice among educators.

In general, compared to higher education, there is still less study on the effects of gamification in elementary and secondary school. These reviews highlight the significance of carrying out thorough and objective research to determine the long-term advantages of gamification in the classroom. Although gamification typically increases students' zeal and involvement, drawing firm conclusions from many empirical investigations is made more difficult by their dependence on descriptive data. To determine whether gamification works in a variety of learning situations, more research is required. By looking at how gamification affects language training in the next sections of the paper, this review seeks to close this gap.

Methods

This systematic review follows the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) methodology, which encompasses four stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion, as depicted in Figure 1. PRISMA is extensively utilized by researchers because of its thoroughness and flexibility in application to various studies. Consequently, the objectives of this study and the systematic review process are outlined as follows:
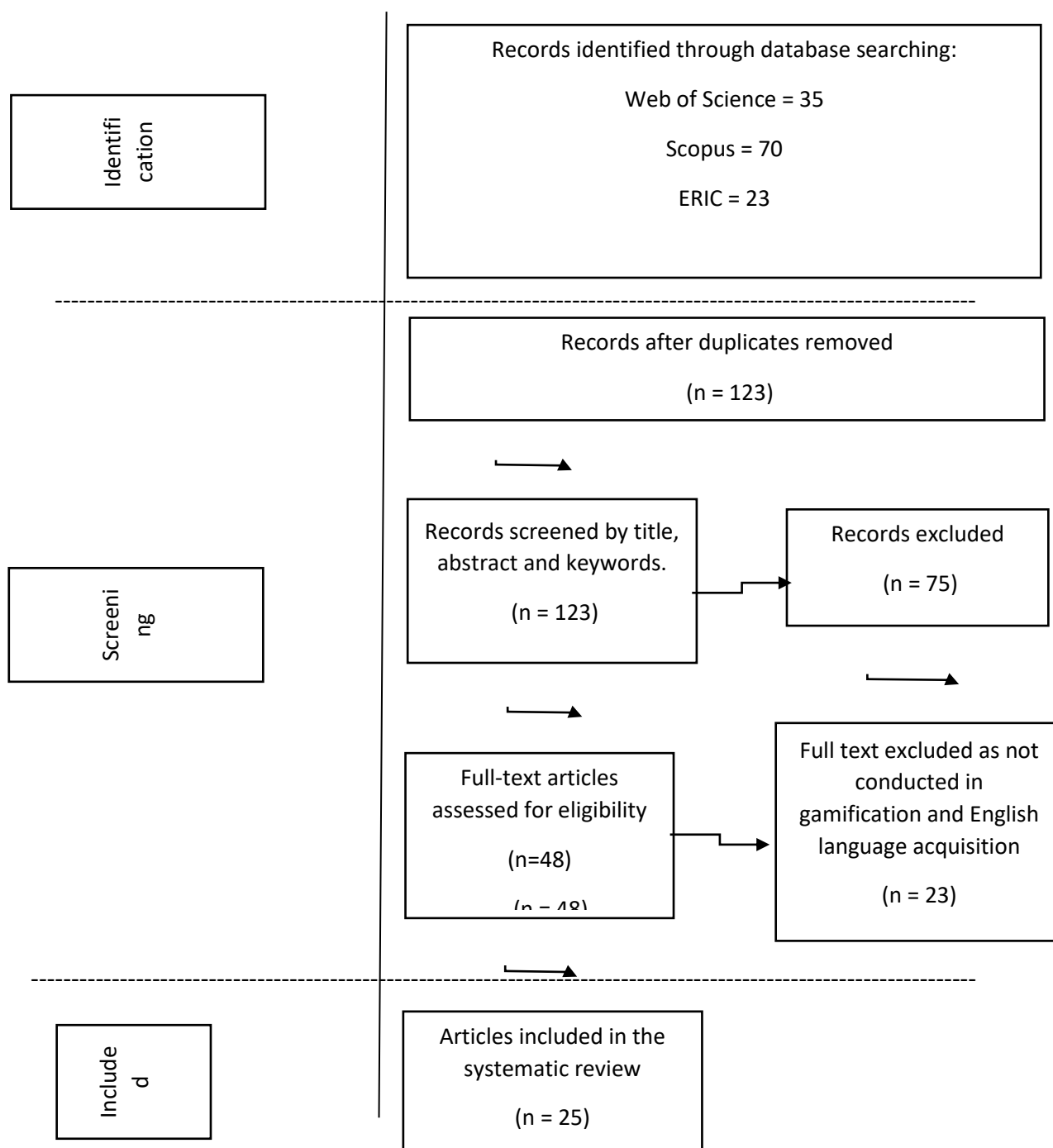
Figure 1. PRISMA systematic review adapted from BMJ 2021; 372: n71

Identification

The initial phase of the systematic review involves the Identification process, as outlined in the PRISMA guidelines. Three databases were selected for their relevance to the study's objectives: Web of Science (WOS), Scopus, and the Educational Resources Information Centre (ERIC). The key terms for this systematic review were meticulously crafted to accurately represent the constructs under investigation. Terms associated with gamification and English Language Acquisition were included. Table 1 below shows the search string used for each database in this study.

Table 1
Search String Used in this Study

DATABASE	SEARCH STRING
Web of Science (WoS)	("English Language Acquisition*" OR "Language" OR "English" OR "English Education" AND "Gamification*" OR "Gamified Learning" OR "Gamification in
Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY (("English Language Acquisition*" OR "Language" OR "English" OR "English Education" AND "Gamification*" OR "Gamified Learning" OR "Gamification in English Context*"))
ERIC	Gamification in English Language Acquisition

*: Search String

Screening
Following the identification of articles, the screening process begins. The first step in this stage involves removing duplicate articles that appear in multiple databases. This initial screening step led to the removal of 5 duplicate articles, leaving 123 articles eligible for further screening. These 123 articles were then screened based on their titles, abstracts, and keywords to ensure their relevance to English Language Acquisition and gamification. As a result of this screening, 75 articles were excluded for being unrelated to the study's aim. The remaining 48 articles were then assessed using the inclusion and exclusion criteria outlined in Table 2.

Table 2
Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Studies conducted between 2014 and 2024 (10-year timespan)	Studies conducted before 2014
Articles from journals	Conference proceedings, review articles, book chapters, reports
The text was written in English	Text not written in English
Related to gamification and English Language Acquisition	Not related to gamification and English Language Acquisition

After a thorough selection process based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 25 articles were considered for inclusion in this systematic review. However, conference proceedings and book chapters were excluded, as they were deemed less comprehensive.

Included
The articles included in this systematic review focus on gamification and English language acquisition. The selected studies are listed in Table 3. From this table, it is noted that eight articles were sourced from WoS, nine from Scopus, and eight from ERIC. These databases were chosen for their high-quality articles, especially in the field of education. The objectives

of all the studies pertained to the use of gamification in the context of English language learning. Most studies were conducted at the higher education level, encompassing universities and colleges. Conversely, only one study focused on pre-school, five studies on secondary education, and another five on primary education.

Table 3

Summary of the Selected Studies

STUDY	DATABASE	AIM	SAMPLE	FINDINGS
Nataliia V. Iaremenko (2017)	WoS	It specifically addresses the application of gamified learning in learning English as a second language, investigating the reasons that make language learners want to play a learning game and the influence of particular game elements on players.	The research was carried out with the group of 120 students (76 boys and 44 girls) from various universities.	The study suggests that online learning games can foster intrinsic motivation and help engage students in learning activities. It shows a direct relationship between a high energy level of fun competition and increased motivation in learning English as a second language.
Lynette Tan Yuen Ling (2018)	ERIC	The study aims to measure the impact of meaningful gamification on students' motivation to read background material and grasp key concepts, facilitating a flipped classroom approach.	The participants were undergraduates at the National University of Singapore (NUS), primarily first-year students enrolled in the module "Women in Film."	The study indicates that meaningful gamification has the potential to motivate students and aid their understanding of reading material, suggesting its viability for facilitating a flipped-classroom environment.
Seham Aljraiwi (2019)	ERIC	The study aims to identify the effectiveness of gamification of web-based learning on academic achievement and creative thinking among primary school students.	The sample comprised 60 primary school students in the academic year 2016/2017; 30 students in the control group taught by the traditional method, and 30 taught by gamification of web-based learning.	The study revealed a statistically significant difference between the means of scores of the experimental and control groups in the post-test academic achievement test and the Torrance test of creative thinking in favor of the experimental group.

STUDY	DATABASE	AIM	SAMPLE	FINDINGS
Muhammad Dafit Pitoyo, Sumardi, Abdul Asib (2019)	ERIC	The study aims to investigate the reduction of test anxiety through the use of game elements in the Quizizz platform.	The participants of this study were 14 students in an English course in Solo, Indonesia.	The study concluded that Quizizz successfully reduced test anxiety due to the incorporation of game elements, making it a good option for teachers to use in assessments.
Gabriel Indra Widi Tamtama, Paulus Suryanto, Suyoto (2020)	WoS	The study aims to develop a mobile application that uses gamification to teach English vocabulary to kindergarten children.	The sample includes kindergarten children in Indonesia.	The application was found to increase children's interest and motivation in learning English. The visually appealing design and game elements contributed to making learning more engaging and fun for children.
Ali Sorayyaei Azar, Nur Haslinda Iskandar Tan (2020)	Scopus	The study aims to understand university interns' perceptions of ICT technologies (MALL, Gamification, and VR) in teaching English to secondary school students during the COVID-19 pandemic in Malaysia. It also seeks to determine which of these technologies the interns prefer for teaching English.	The sample consisted of 63 university interns from a private university in Malaysia.	The study indicates that integrating these ICT technologies into teaching English during the pandemic can enhance students' learning experiences and motivation.
Edina-Timea Opriș, Éva Bálint-Svella, Iuliana Zsoldos-Marchis (2021)	ERIC	The study aims to present the knowledge and opinions of pre-service preschool and primary school teachers about gamification and its use in education.	The participants included 40 first-year students and 41 second-year students.	Gamification was seen as most effective for classroom activities aimed at exercising and maintaining students' interest in new knowledge.

STUDY	DATABASE	AIM	SAMPLE	FINDINGS
Karim Sadeghi Ece Sağlık Enisa Mede Yavuz Samur Zeynep Comert (2022)	Scopus	The study aimed to examine and compare the impact of gamified and non-gamified instruction on the vocabulary development and motivation of students enrolled in an English language preparatory program at a Turkish university.	The sample consisted of 32 intermediate (B1 level) students, divided into two groups: 16 students in the control group and 16 students in the experimental group.	The findings revealed that the implementation of gamified instruction positively influenced student motivation. However, there was no significant difference between the two groups in their vocabulary development, apart from a slight increase in the experimental group. The students perceived gamified instruction as an efficient way to learn and practice vocabulary.
Ahmad Ridho Rojabi, Slamet Setiawan, Ahmad Munir, Oikurema Purwati, Rizka Safriyani, Nina Hayuningtyas, Siti Khodijah, Rengganis Siwi Amumpuni (2022)	Scopus	The purpose of the study is to examine the effects of using Kahoot in vocabulary learning to increase exam scores, student engagement, and motivation.	The study involved 82 first-year students from the English Department at a government university in Jember, Indonesia.	These findings suggest that Kahoot is an effective tool for enhancing vocabulary learning by increasing student engagement and motivation, despite some challenges.
Ana López-Martínez, Lourdes Meroño, María Cánovas-López, Antonio García-de-Alcaraz, Luis Manuel Martínez-Aranda (2022)	Scopus	The aim of this study was to analyze the differences in intrinsic motivation of university students considering contextual variables when working with specific content through digital tools and virtual gamified strategies.	The study population consisted of 919 students (804 males and 115 females) between 18 and 21 years of age, belonging to the Bachelor's Degree in Physical Activity and Sport Sciences (CAFD) or the vocational training course in "Technicians in Teaching and Socio-sports Animation" (TEAS).	These findings suggest that gamified strategies using digital tools can effectively enhance intrinsic motivation among university students, with variations observed based on academic degree, gender, subject nature, and working language.

STUDY	DATABASE	AIM	SAMPLE	FINDINGS
Sumie Chan, Noble Lo (2022)	Scopus	It examines the effectiveness of game-based learning in motivating students and teachers, and explores the correlation between game-based learning and participation and engagement levels.	The study involved 76 respondents, including 69 university and college students and 8 English Language teachers in Hong Kong.	These findings suggest that gamification can effectively enhance student motivation and engagement in English Language learning, although there are practical challenges and limitations that need to be addressed to maximize its benefits.
Kavitha Palaniappan, Norah Md Noor (2022)	WoS	The aim of the study was to measure the effect of gamification on learners' academic performance, investigate their self-directed learning (SDL) levels within an online gamification learning environment, and identify the relationship between learners' SDL levels and their gamification learning experience.	The study involved 29 second-year undergraduate students from a non-major computer science course undertaking a basic programming language subject at a university.	These findings suggest that the gamification strategy used in the online learning environment effectively supported learners' self-directed learning and improved their academic performance.
Víctor Arufe Giráldez, Alberto Sanmiguel-Rodríguez, Oliver Ramos Álvarez, Rubén Navarro-Patón (2022)	WoS	The aim of this paper was to analyze how a multimodal learning environment based on gamification could affect the	The study involved 133 Spanish university students (average age = 19.60 years old, SD = 0.43).	These findings indicate that a multimodal gamified learning environment can positively influence the academic performance of

STUDY	DATABASE	AIM	SAMPLE	FINDINGS
		final grades of university students in a subject taught at the Faculty of Education in a Spanish university.		university students, highlighting the effectiveness of gamification in enhancing motivation and engagement in learning activities.
María-Carmen Ricoy and Cristina Sánchez-Martínez (2022)	WoS	The aim of the article was to examine the impact of a learning program designed for primary school students to broaden their ecological awareness and improve their digital literacy using gamification tools.	The research involved a qualitative approach with data obtained from 156 subjects, including teachers, students, and families.	The findings indicated that the children assimilated new habits regarding the better usage of water and electricity, and recycling paper and plastic. Additionally, they acquired more efficient strategies for finding information online, using apps, and developing content with digital tools. Gaming dynamics and resources were pivotal to students' learning, with tablets proving essential for boosting motivation, interaction, and problem-solving.
Derryn Jackson, M.S.IET (2022)	ERIC	The primary aim of the article was to investigate the effects of using a digital gamification tool called Bamboozle on memory recall and motivation among lower elementary Thai ESL students. Specifically, the study sought to determine whether digital gamification could improve students' engagement and their ability to recall English vocabulary.	The study involved 23 Grade 2 Thai ESL students at a private school in Thailand.	The research suggested that while digital gamification can significantly boost students' desire to learn, it does not necessarily translate to better memory retention compared to more traditional, less stimulating methods.

STUDY	DATABASE	AIM	SAMPLE	FINDINGS
Kriangkrai Vathanalaoha (2022)	ERIC	The aim of the article was to explore how gamification, through the Winner English program, affects student performance and perceptions in English language learning.	The study involved Grade 9 students from 16 local schools in Thailand.	The study found that the experimental group, which used the Winner English Program, showed significant improvement in their English performance compared to the control group.
Jerome G. Orejuela Marife R. Tolin Myla O. Soreta Darrel M. Ocampo (2022)	ERIC	The aim of the study was to determine the effectiveness of gamifying instruction in the English language proficiency of Grade 8 Filipino ESL students in one university in Bicol, Philippines, that offers Junior High School.	The sample consisted of forty-four selected Grade 8 Filipino ESL students from a university in Bicol, Philippines.	The findings revealed a significant difference between the pretest and posttest results of the respondents using gamification, indicating that gamification helped improve the English proficiency of the Grade 8 students.
Xiuhan Li, Qi Xia, Samuel Kai Wah Chu, Yuqin Yang (2022)	Scopus	The article investigates the role of gamification in facilitating self-regulation in e-learning environments among primary school students learning English as a second language.	The study used a gamified e-learning system in a quasi-experimental pre-test/post-test design involving primary level students in Hong Kong over a semester.	The findings reveal that the gamified e-learning system significantly enhanced students' self-regulated learning interests, strategies, and academic performance. Students who actively engaged with the gamified system demonstrated greater improvement in their English language skills compared to those who used it less frequently.

STUDY	DATABASE	AIM	SAMPLE	FINDINGS
Pawarit Pingmuang and Prakob Koraneekij (2022)	ERIC,Scopus	The aim of the article was to study the user experience and needs of EFL students and teachers in learning English writing skills, to design and develop a mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) application and teaching writing procedures, and to implement this MALL application to enhance the English writing skills of EFL students.	The study involved 665 lower secondary EFL students from various regions of Thailand who responded to an online survey.	The study found that students' English writing skills significantly improved post-test compared to pre-test, with a notable difference in mean scores at a .05 level of significance. Additionally, students expressed high satisfaction with the learning process and the MALL application.
Irene Casanova-Mata (2023)	Scopus	The study aimed to determine the significant impact of gamification based on the "Among Us" game on the acquisition of English language competence, motivation, attention, and emotions towards English as a Second Language (ESL) among primary education students.	The sample consisted of 24 primary education students aged 7–8 years from a state school in Ciudad Real (Castilla-La Mancha).	The results indicated that gamification significantly improved reading skills, fostered a more positive attitude towards the English subject, increased active participation, and reduced negative inclinations towards mistakes. The study suggests that incorporating gamification can positively impact learning outcomes and promote equitable access to language learning opportunities.

STUDY	DATABASE	AIM	SAMPLE	FINDINGS
Yi-Chien Wang (2023)	WoS	The aim is to determine how gamification influences learning performance and student engagement in a News English course.	The participants were sophomores majoring in Applied English from two classes at a university in northern Taiwan.	The study found that gamification significantly and positively affected the News English learning performance of the experimental group. Both lower and higher achievers showed significant improvement.
Zeynep Tatlı, Ahmet Gülay, Arzu Mert (2023)	ERIC	The aim of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of foreign language teaching with gamification applications in primary school.	The study group for this research comprised 33 students in the 4th grade at a primary school.	The findings indicated that gamification applications significantly increase the attitude of primary school students and have a positive effect on procrastination behaviors.
Carlos Alberto Peláez and Andrés Solano (2023)	Scopus	The research aims to propose a practice for designing interactive multimedia experiences based on gamification, specifically applied in elementary education. This practice is intended to assist in learning the English language by focusing on	The study was conducted using two groups of students from a private school in Cali: one experimental group and one control group.	The findings indicate that the use of the designed multimedia experience based on gamification (Coco-Shapes) contributed positively to user learning and increased receptivity towards the use of technology in education. The activities that made up the practice helped in achieving significant learning

STUDY	DATABASE	AIM	SAMPLE	FINDINGS
		geometric figures, colors, and counting for children aged 4-5 in a vulnerable community in Cali, Colombia.		enhancements among the students.
Gözde Koç , Selim Soner Sütçü (2023)	ERIC	The aim of the study is to investigate the academic achievement of 6th-grade students in a grammar course gamified with an online tool and their opinions regarding the application.	The study involved 6th-grade students. The experimental group received gamified grammar education for 6 weeks, while the control group received content-based language learning.	The results indicated a significant difference in favor of the students who received gamified grammar learning. The positive opinions of the students towards the gamified grammar course with an online tool supported these results.
Matyakhan et al. (2024)	ERIC	To investigate the effects of gamification on Thai EFL (English as a Foreign Language) university students' reading engagement and comprehension.	70 first-year Thai University EFL Students	The study found that gamification significantly improves reading engagement and comprehension among Thai EFL university students. It also revealed that students had positive perceptions of using gamification as a tool for enhancing their reading skills.

Data Analysis Procedure

Thematic analyses were conducted to identify the key themes to address the following research questions:

RQ1: How does the implementation of gamification in English language lessons impact the engagement and motivation levels of primary school pupils over an extended period?

RQ2: In what ways do pupils' attitudes towards learning English change when gamification techniques are incorporated into the curriculum, compared to traditional teaching methods?

This review interpretively analyzed the articles, organizing the themes to address the research questions. For the first research question, the themes were categorized based on the impact of gamification in English language lessons on the engagement and motivation levels of primary school pupils, as described in the literature review. For the second research question, the themes were based on the changes in pupils' attitudes after the incorporation of gamification in English language lessons, as mentioned in the articles. The findings from the articles are discussed in the following section.

Results

3.1. RQ1: How does the implementation of gamification in English language lessons impact the engagement and motivation levels of primary school pupils over an extended period?

In this systematic review, the implementation of gamification in English language lessons has been shown to significantly enhance engagement and motivation levels among primary school pupils. This approach involves incorporating game-like elements such as points, badges, leaderboards, and challenges into educational activities, transforming traditional learning experiences into more interactive and enjoyable ones (Al-Azawi et al., 2016). The results from these three studies (Smiderle, R., Rigo, S.J., Marques, L.B. et al,2020) have consistently highlighted the positive impact of gamification on student engagement, noting that the playful nature of gamified tasks helps to capture students' attention and sustain their interest over extended periods. For instance, research indicates that gamification can turn otherwise monotonous vocabulary lessons into dynamic and engaging activities, thereby increasing student motivation to participate and learn (Panmei B et al.,2022).

Empirical evidence suggests that gamification not only boosts motivation but also enhances learning outcomes. Both authors (Pirker, J., Gutl, C., & Astatke, Y.,2015) stated that by leveraging mobile apps and online platforms, gamified learning environments provide personalized and adaptive learning experiences that cater to the diverse needs and learning paces of students. This approach has been particularly effective in improving vocabulary acquisition and grammar proficiency among primary school pupils. The integration of game mechanics into learning activities encourages students to engage more deeply with the material, leading to better retention and understanding of the content (Chans GM et al.,2021). Additionally, the competitive elements of gamification, such as leaderboards and challenges, motivate students to improve their performance and achieve higher scores.

Long-term studies by (Smiderle, R., Rigo, S.J., Marques, L.B. et al,2020) have shown that the sustained use of gamification in classrooms helps maintain high levels of student participation. The continuous engagement driven by gamified elements ensures that students remain motivated throughout the academic year. For example, a study by (Matyakhana, T., Chaowanakritsanakulb, T., & Santosc, J. A. L. (2024). on the use of gamification in a semester-long course found that students in the gamified group demonstrated higher levels of participation and engagement compared to those in the non-gamified group. The reward-based nature of gamified learning activities, such as earning badges for completing tasks, helps to reinforce positive behaviors and keep students actively involved in their learning process (Arufe Giráldez, V., Sanmiguel-Rodríguez, A., Ramos Álvarez, O., & Navarro-Patón, R. (2022).

Furthermore, gamification has been found to benefit students across different proficiency levels. Research by (Sadeghi, K., Sağlık, E., Mede, E., Samur, Y., & Comert, Z. (2022) indicates that both high and low proficiency students exhibit improved engagement and learning

outcomes when exposed to gamified learning environments. This inclusivity makes gamification a valuable tool in classrooms with diverse student populations, allowing educators to cater to the varying needs and skill levels of their students. For instance, even students with lower English proficiency levels have shown significant improvement in their vocabulary and grammar skills using gamification learning tools (Koç, G., & Sütçü, S. S.,2023). However, it is important to note that the effectiveness of gamification can vary based on individual student characteristics and preferences. Some studies suggest that not all students are equally motivated by gamified elements such as points and badges. Therefore, it is crucial for educators to tailor gamification strategies to fit the unique needs and preferences of their students (An, 2020). By doing so, teachers can maximize the benefits of gamification and ensure that all students are equally engaged and motivated to learn.

In conclusion, the implementation of gamification in English language lessons has demonstrated a robust positive impact on pupils' engagement and motivation. By making learning interactive and enjoyable, gamification not only enhances educational outcomes but also sustains student interest over time. It is further supported by Mekler et al. (2017) that careful customization of gamification strategies to meet the diverse needs of learners is essential for maximizing its effectiveness and ensuring that all students benefit from this innovative approach to education.

Table 4
How Gamification Impacts Engagement and Motivation in Primary School English Language Lessons over An Extended Period?

Ways	Study
Transforming traditional lessons into interactive and enjoyable activities	Al-Azawi et al. (2016); Smiderle et al. (2020); Panmei et al. (2022)
Turn monotonous vocabulary lessons into dynamic and engaging activities	Panmei et al. (2022)
Leveraging mobile apps and online platforms	Pirker et al. (2015); Chans GM et al. (2021)
Integration of game mechanics into learning activities	Chans GM et al. (2021)
Leaderboards and challenges	Chans GM et al. (2021)
Reward-based nature of gamified activities, such as earning badges for completing tasks	Arufe Giráldez et al. (2022)
Customization of Gamification Strategies	An (2020); Mekler et al. (2017)

RQ2: In what ways do pupils' attitudes towards learning English change when gamification techniques are incorporated into the curriculum, compared to traditional teaching methods?
In the second research question, the author examined the changes in pupils' attitudes after incorporating gamification into English curriculum compared to traditional teaching methods. Research on the impact of gamification in English language learning has shown notable changes in students' attitudes compared to traditional teaching methods. Gamification has been widely adopted in various educational settings due to its potential to make learning more engaging and motivating. Table 5 below depicts the ways of pupils' attitudes change when gamification is integrated within English lesson.

Table 5

Changes In Pupils' Attitudes When Gamification Is Incorporated Into English Lesson

Changes in Pupils' Attitudes	Study
Improved Attitudes towards Learning English	Zhang & Hasim (2022)
Increased Sense of Achievement and Competition	Zhang & Hasim (2022)
More Playful and Collaborative Learning Experience	Tamtama et al. (2021)
Positive Long-term Attitudes towards Learning English	Mohamad et al. (2018)
Enhanced Autonomy, Competence, and Relatedness	Mohamad et al. (2018)

As shown in Table 5, the study conducted by Zhang and Hasim (2022) highlights that gamification in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction can significantly improve students' attitudes towards learning English. Gamified elements such as points, badges, leaderboards, and rewards foster a sense of achievement and competition, making the learning process more enjoyable and interactive. These elements help in creating a dynamic and engaging learning environment, which can positively affect students' emotional responses and attitudes towards language learning.

Furthermore, studies have shown that gamification transforms the learning experience from being monotonous and repetitive to becoming more playful and collaborative. For instance, the use of mobile apps and other digital tools in gamified English vocabulary classes has been found to increase student motivation and engagement, leading to better learning outcomes for both high and low proficiency students (Tamtama, G. I. W., Suryanto, P., & Suyoto, S., 2021). This is corroborated by longitudinal studies which reveal that gamified learning environments result in higher success and retention rates compared to traditional learning methods (Lampropoulos, G., & Sidiropoulos, A., 2024).

Moreover, gamification addresses key motivational factors by meeting students' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. By providing immediate feedback and visible progress through elements like progress bars and digital badges, students feel more in control of their learning journey and are encouraged to participate more actively (Mohamad, S. N. M., Sazali, N. S. S., & Salleh, M. A. M., 2018). This increased engagement is not only beneficial for immediate learning outcomes but also fosters a more positive long-term attitude towards learning English.

However, it is essential to note some drawbacks associated with gamification. Technical issues, the potential for short-lived motivation spikes, and the negative effects of excessive competition can sometimes detract from the overall learning experience (Colomo-Magaña, E., Colomo-Magaña, A., Cívico-Ariza, A., & Basgall, L., 2024). Thus, while gamification offers numerous benefits, it must be carefully designed and implemented to maximize positive outcomes and minimize potential downsides.

In summary, incorporating gamification into the English language curriculum significantly enhances students' attitudes towards learning by making the process more engaging and interactive compared to traditional teaching methods. This shift is attributed to the use of game-like elements that provide motivation, immediate feedback, and a sense of achievement, thereby fostering a more positive and proactive approach to language learning.

Discussion
The findings highlight the impact on the engagement and motivation of the primary school pupils after the implementation of gamification in English language. The study's findings show

that gamification promotes language learning. This represents a significant portion of the research articles found, and after reading through these studies, gamification plays a crucial role in boosting student engagement and motivation. For instance, Legaki et al. (2020) introduced gamification elements such as badges, leaderboards, and points, which significantly enhanced learner engagement and motivation. Similarly, Al-Azawi, Al-Faliti, & Al-Blushi (2016) found that incorporating game elements like avatars, time pressures, and competition into language lessons greatly increased students' interest and participation. Ibhadode & Ugoji (2019) emphasized the blend of intrinsic and extrinsic incentives provided by gamification, which helps maintain high levels of engagement and motivation over time. Additionally, gamification can facilitate collaboration among students, promoting social learning and increasing motivation through peer interactions. Features such as group projects, leaderboards, and team-based challenges can create a sense of community and support, which is particularly beneficial in online learning environments where students might otherwise feel isolated. The social aspect of learning is an important motivator, as students often feel more engaged when they are part of a learning community (Hashim et al., 2019; Alomari, Al-Samarraie, & Yousef, 2019).

Next, this review also investigated the pupils' changes in attitudes towards learning English when gamification techniques are incorporated into the curriculum, compared to traditional teaching methods. Gamification's capability to integrate game-like elements into educational settings presents a unique opportunity to make learning more enjoyable and meaningful. For example, Rabah, Cassidy, & Beauchemin (2018) demonstrated that gamified learning environments transform students' perceptions of language learning, making it more engaging and less intimidating. Studies by Tsay et al. (2018) and Hashim et al. (2019) highlighted that gamification fosters a student-centered learning approach, which positively influences students' attitudes towards learning English. The competitive and fun environment created by game elements such as points, badges, and leaderboards encourage students to participate actively and think critically, improving their overall attitude towards the subject (Alomari, Al-Samarraie, & Yousef, 2019; Antonaci, 2019). Additionally, gamification in language learning helps improve cognitive achievements and English competency by providing continuous feedback and fostering social comparison. Studies by Buckley et al. (2017) and Ding et al. (2020) showed that gamified learning environments enhance students' cognitive abilities and language skills, leading to better academic outcomes.

One limitation of this review is it does not investigate the primary education gamification in language acquisition because research related to gamification is geared more towards higher education. Furthermore, gamification in language acquisition is more geared towards tertiary education, but Wen, X. (2023) mentioned that gamification could also be used for primary school pupils.

Conclusion

To sum up, this systematic review has examined research articles about the application of gamification in elementary school English language instruction. Consequently, the void left by the lack of a thorough systematic evaluation on the influence of gamification on motivation and engagement in English language acquisition has been filled. Based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria, a total of 25 final papers were included in this review from three databases: the Web of Science (WoS), Scopus, and Educational Resources Information Centre (ERIC).

Regarding the effect on motivation and engagement, research has demonstrated that gamification of English language instruction greatly raises student motivation and engagement among elementary school students. The studied research continuously emphasizes the beneficial effects of gamification on student engagement, pointing out that the enjoyable aspect of gamified assignments draws students in and keeps them interested in long stretches of time. This research implies that gamification can be used by educators and practitioners to improve student engagement and motivation in language learning activities.

The review looked at how using gamification in contrast to traditional techniques affects students' attitudes toward learning English. Gamification is the process of incorporating elements of games into learning to make it more relevant and fun. It demonstrates how gamification encourages a student-centered strategy and has a good attitude-influencing effect. Elements of a competitive and entertaining game promote critical thinking and active engagement. Furthermore, in gamified environments, ongoing feedback and social comparison improve English proficiency and cognitive accomplishments.

According to the findings, gamification helps with English language acquisition, especially with increasing student enthusiasm and engagement. By itself, this idea expands the potential for gamification as an additional instrument for independent English language acquisition. Additionally, based on these findings, teachers might create or implement gamified components to enhance students' attitudes and learning outcomes in language acquisition. This review's lack of a thorough discussion of the possible downsides of gamification, such as technological problems and the unfavorable impacts of intense competitiveness, is one of its limitations. This restriction, however, creates new avenues for research to examine the difficulties and ideal methods of gamification implementation. Future studies can also examine the inconsistency of gamification's long-term effects on diverse language abilities and the efficiency of distinct gamified components. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, practitioners in related domains will gain much from this systematic review's substantial contribution to our understanding of the function of gamification in English language learning. The fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) may depend on utilizing gamification to improve educational outcomes and create a happy learning environment, and this review adds to the body of knowledge in this area.

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