



Designing Digital Gamification Literacy for EFL teachers

Dinar Auliarahman Joyonegoro¹, Eliasanti Agustina²

¹ Education and Teacher Training, Universitas PGRI Adi Buana, Surabaya, Indonesia; email: dinaraulia.1011@gmail.com *

² Education and Teacher Training, Universitas PGRI Adi Buana, Surabaya, Indonesia; email: eliasanti@unipasby.ac.id

*Corresponding Author:
email corresponding author

Article history:

Received: 21 April 2025

Revised: 11 June 2025

Accepted: 25 July 2025

Published: 29 August 2025

© Copyright: authors
This is an open access article
under the CC-BY-SA license

E-ISSN 2987-7741

ABSTRACT

This research aims to design digital gamification literacy for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers, particularly in the context of the Merdeka Curriculum in Indonesia. In the current digital era, gamification has emerged as an innovative approach to enhance student motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes. However, many teachers still face obstacles in adopting this strategy, such as a lack of understanding, training, and limited access to technology. This study employs an explanatory mixed-method approach, involving 20 lecturers from the English Education study program in a quantitative survey and 3 of them in qualitative interviews. The research results show that although the majority of respondents are accustomed to using digital technology, only a small fraction actively apply gamification in their teaching. The main obstacles identified include time constraints, lack of training, and gaps in technology access. On the other hand, the participants showed a high interest in gamification training and recognized its positive potential in enhancing student-centered learning. This study recommends the development of practice communities, experiential training, and the provision of structured digital resources as strategic steps to strengthen digital gamification literacy among EFL teachers.

Keywords: digital gamification, teacher literacy, English language learning, Merdeka Curriculum, blended approach

INTRODUCTION

Many English teachers and lecturers face challenges in utilizing and adapting to technological advancements, including the use of games as a learning medium. Many people still think that games have a negative impact on children, whereas games can be an effective tool to support the learning process. This research aims to examine how teachers can develop literacy in gamification as part of their learning process. Besides that, This research also aims to provide a new perspective for English education lecturers in helping teachers to understand and implement gamification effectively.

In the digital and internet era right now, it is important to adapt to the digital world where everything use technology and internet, especially for the teachers, so that they could keep up with the generation today. One of the effective way to support our teaching learning in this digital era is by implementing gamification, Kayımbaşıoğlu & Hacı, (2016). The performance of gamification in learning has various significant improvements. First, gamification can increase student goal. Elements such as leveling up, goals to be achieved, adrenaline-pumping challenges, and compensations in the form of achievements can make the learning activity more engaging and less unvaried. This encourages students to contribute more actively in learning. Second, gamification can boost students' learning individuality. Through a personal challenge system, students are urged to completed their tasks self-sufficiently, there by encouraging their learning plan. In accumulation, the presence of a group task arrangement or team up is also beneficial in inspiring students to work together to form teams, complete challenges collaboratively, and form a positive education environment with a healthful and beneficial competitive atmosphere.

The approach in this teaching learnings is based by a game that carries a number of difficult challenges that need to be directed. This initial challenges involve resistance to alter, a lack of digital knowledge among teachers and students, and inadequate access to technology. Moreover, designing effective and involving educational games needs specialized skills and high creativeness, which are not always simple to find. Another challenge is exactly how to objectively evaluate the influence of the game on students' learning aftermaths, while also confirming that the game used remains related and sustainable in the learning activity.

There are many challenges when implementing gamification in EFL classroom, One of the essential challenges in applying gamification in EFL classrooms is the gap between learning goals and the types of games or gamified activities used. Not all gamification elements are appropriate for every language proficiency. For instance, grammar learning involves a different approach compared to speaking or writing. Hence, teachers need to have pedagogical evaluation skills to change the gamification design to the type of language skills they want to accomplish. This highlights that gamification literacy is not just about technology, but also influences aspects of pedagogy and educational thinking.

To implementing gamification literacy in education it needed some challenges that encompasses various aspect, especially the digital divide Fauziningrum et al, (2023). Several students are not yet familiar to using digital technology, making this a blockade in the game-based learning method. The digital gap is one of the biggest encounters, as not all students have access to sufficient devices and internet connections. As a result, there is a lack of correspondence in achievement between students who have sufficient resources and those who are less privileged. Furthermore, teachers also need to be educated to efficiently operate gamification technology so that learning goals can be optimally achieved.

Oppositely, students' innate and extrinsic purpose are important factors in the success of gamification. In the study of learning motivation, gamification has been proven to enhance both types of motivation, especially when designed with the principles of meaningful gamification. According to Nicholson (2015), meaningful gamification not only focuses on external rewards (such as points or badges) but also provides relevant, personal learning experiences that trigger deep reflection. This is extremely important

in language learning, since language is not purely a mechanical skill, but also an instrument for interaction and self-expression. Therefore, the design of gamification in EFL ought to consider the cognitive, affective, and group view point of the learning process.

The importance of implementing gamification in the context of English language education is also closely related to the transformation of the educational paradigm, which is now more learner-centered. In this attempt, students are no longer placed as lifeless objects who simply receive material, but as active subjects who aid to building knowledge about meaningful learning experiences. Gamification can play a crucial role in recognizing this approach, as it grants students to experience a more participatory, enjoyable, and personalized learning process. Besides, the application of gamification can also assist the development of 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and communication, all of which are extremely relevant in foreign language education.

However, the effort to integrate gamification into the EFL learning process cannot be done instantly or without careful planning. Special literacy known as digital gamification literacy is required, which is the ability to understand, design, and implement gamification elements into the digital learning environment effectively. This literacy encompasses several important aspects, including an understanding of game design principles, the ability to use digital platforms that support gamification (such as Kahoot!, Quizizz, Classcraft, Duolingo, etc.), and the ability to evaluate the impact of gamification on the learning process and outcomes for students. In the context of EFL teachers, this literacy is very important so that gamification does not just become an ornament in learning, but truly contributes to achieving language learning objectives.

The rapid development of information technology has created various online learning platforms (e-learning) equipped with gamification features. For example, Learning Management Systems (LMS) like Moodle and Edmodo now offer plugins or integrations with gamified applications that allow teachers to provide challenges, point systems, digital rewards, and even leaderboards. Unfortunately, not all teachers are able to optimize these features. Many of them only use the LMS to upload materials and assignments, without utilizing its gamification potential. This indicates a gap between the availability of technology and the digital competence of teachers in utilizing it to the fullest.

The enhancement of Computational Thinking (CT) understanding for teachers within the context of the Merdeka Curriculum in Indonesia has become an important focus to strengthen fundamental competencies in education. This is done by utilizing innovative learning methods (Muljono, Wise Herowati, Novianto Nur Hidayat, Harun Al Azies, 2024). This research aims to provide a framework that can be used by teachers, particularly regarding the implementation of gamification, especially digital gamification.

In the current technological era, many teachers are either unable or unwilling to use gamification-based learning methods (Rusmiyanto et al, 2023). Generation Z, who grew up and developed with digital technology as an integral part of their lives, have very different learning preferences compared to previous generations. They prefer learning that is visual, interactive, fast, and concise. However, the reality is that many teachers or lecturers still rely on one-way lecture methods and monotonous

textbooks. The lack of integration of innovative technology and personalization in learning causes students, especially Generation Z, to feel bored and lose motivation to learn, making the learning process less optimal.

Many teachers also do not yet understand the learning preferences of Generation Z students. This results in difficulties in adapting teaching methods that are relevant and engaging for them. If the learning is not tailored, students may lose interest and motivation to learn, which ultimately affects their academic achievement. Teaching methods that do not align with students' learning styles can lead to difficulties in understanding the material, negatively impacting deep conceptual comprehension. Moreover, the generational gap between teachers and students can widen the relationship distance, hindering the effective learning process. Therefore, it is important for teachers to implement gamification-based learning methods, which are learning approaches that use game elements such as leveling systems, clear objectives, engaging challenges, and rewards (achievements). This approach can trigger active, interactive, and enjoyable learning, such as through hands-on practice, ice breaking, or interactive quizzes in the classroom.

The adoption of gamification in EFL teaching is also closely related to the readiness of educational institutions. Schools and universities play a crucial role in providing adequate infrastructure, training, and policy support for teachers to implement this approach. Without systemic support, individual teachers' efforts will struggle to achieve optimal results. Therefore, this research also encourages collaboration between policymakers, educational technology developers, and teaching practitioners in formulating sustainable and impactful gamification implementation strategies for improving the quality of language education.

Besides technical and pedagogical aspects, the implementation of gamification also needs to consider the socio-cultural context in which the learning process takes place. The learning culture in Indonesia, which tends to value teacher authority and conventional learning approaches, can pose a unique challenge in the adoption of gamification. Therefore, it is important to develop a contextual gamification approach that respects local values while encouraging innovation and active learning. For instance, traditional games modified to language learning objectives can help as inspiration in designing gamification performances that are similar to the students' culture.

In the international context, the gamification literacy has developed a serious unease in English as a Foreign Language education. A number of international studies show that the considered use of gamification elements can enhance student engagement, remarkably in online learning. Research by Huseinović (2023) shows that college students who attend classes with integrated gamification prove significant improvements in motivation and learning effects. Another study by La Cruz et al. (2022) also concluded that gamification has a confirmed effect on vocabulary skill and students' assurance in speaking English.

The integration of technology in education has already revolutionized traditional teaching methods in the recent years and they gave a new pathway to engage students Rusmiyanto et al., (2023). One of the new approaches is gamification, which is the procedure of integrating game mechanics and elements into non-game environments. This method has proven to have excellent potential in progressing learning outcomes, motivation, and student engagement in various fields, including

language teaching. The integration of game elements into education has gathered general attention as a promising approach to develop learning experiences and outcomes (Wulantari, 2023). The question is, "Is gamification often depleted in the English education department?"

METHODS

This study employed a mixed-method explanatory design, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The explanatory mixed-method was chosen to allow the researcher to first gather general insights through quantitative data, and then deepen the understanding of emerging trends and patterns with qualitative data. In the early chapter, quantitative data were collected through questionnaires scattered to 20 lecturers from the English language division. On the way to complement and further clarify the survey results, interviews remained conducted in the second phase. As For the qualitative stage, there is three participants were purposefully selected from the initial group that we choosed, depending on the certain criteria to really make sure there are different points of view. Two of these individuals had been teaching for more than four years, and the third was chosen because they used gamification tactics in their teaching all the time.

This study used a structured questionnaire and a semi-structured interview guide as its major ways to gather data. But for the quantitative phase, a questionnaire was designed usingapps called Google Forms to explore lecturers' point of view, approaches, and knowledges related to digital gamification in EFL teaching. The semi-structured interview guide, on the other hand, let the researcher have more open-ended, in-depth conversations and follow up on important themes that came up in the survey data. The questionnaire was spread online to 20 lecturers, and respondents were given a precise time frame to finish it. Following the survey, three participants candidates were firmly selected for continuation interviews. Through these interviews we aim to gain a deeper understanding of each and every participant's experiences, knowledge and their insights. To make sure the data accuracy and credibility, all of the interviews were documented or recorded with the participants' informed consent.

After that the survey responses were analyzed to classify evolving trends, patterns, and preliminary conclusions.so that these initial findings informed the development of questions for the qualitative chapter. Of course, the documented and recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim, and all of the transcripts were carefully reviewed to confirm accuracy. After that all of the data were read multiple times to gain a comprehensive understanding, and for the recurring ideas it was categorized into themes and subthemes. Furthermore, an interpretive analysis was conducted for the purpose to connect the qualitative insights with the quantitative findings, to ensuring alignment with the research objectives. Finally, all of the results were synthesized into a coherent report to address the research questions and provide a complete picture of the study's results.

Just to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, all the member verification was conducted, in which participants studied the transcripts and sum-ups of their interviews to approve the accuracy of the data we collect. Triangulation was also applied via integrating both survey and interview data, consenting the researcher to

double-checking results and reinforce the credibility of the deductions. So, by leveraging the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methods, this mixed-method approach offered both a broad overview and in-depth understanding all of the research problem, and could resulting in more comprehensive and meaningful insights.

RESULTS

The findings we got from both the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study are offering valuable insights into the challenges and levels of acceptance regarding gamification among EFL teachers. From the data we collect Most of the 20 survey participants were teaching adult learners, with a significant portion about (40%) reporting over ten years of teaching experience. Despite from all of their extensive backgrounds, familiarity with gamification varied remarkably. Nearly half of the respondents indicated that they were “very familiar” with gamification, while the other half stated being “somewhat familiar” or “not familiar” at all. This variation was suggesting that while some teachers have a strong understanding and knowledge of gamification, the others are only beginning to explore this instructional method.

The great majority of responders (95%) said they routinely incorporate digital technologies into their teaching techniques. Commonly they used familiar tools included gamified applications such as Kahoot! and Quizizz, as well as learning management systems like Google Classroom. These findings were suggesting that teachers are generally receptive to utilizing digital tools to enhance their instructional approaches. However, the fact that only 20% of the participants stated that they actively applied specific gamification plans—such as including challenges, awarding badges, or using point systems—in their lessons. This disparity demonstrates a divergence between the broad usage of digital tools and the deliberate use of gamification techniques in school settings.

As for the deeper analysis of the survey data was uncovered several underlying factors contributing to the gap between the digital technology use and the real implementation of gamification approaches. Among the most frequently cited challenges were time limitations about (25%) and limited access to technological resources for (30%). Many teachers stated concerns about the all the time that required to design and implement effective gamified lessons, stating that such efforts often demand some additional planning beyond their existing workloads. These challenges were extra compounded by a lack of adequate high-tech infrastructure, so particularly in institutions with the limited funding and old-fashioned facilities. These findings suggesting that the barriers to adopting gamification are not merely individual or pedagogical, but is more rooted in broader structural issues that lead to highlighting the need for institutional support and policy-level involvements to enable more widespread and workable integration of gamified approaches in EFL education.

Interestingly, the data we collect are stating that 80% of respondents reported never having received formal training in digital gamification before. But those who had or already participated in such training could described it as either “very effective” or “somewhat effective.” This finding underscores the possible impact of professional development programs in equipping teachers with all the skills and confidence that needed to integrate gamification into their teaching performs. As well, a large majority

of participants about (90%) are expressed strong interest and willing to join future teaching or workshops, with some clear preference for interactive formats such as live online sessions and in-person workshops. These preferences are highlighting the importance of offering hands-on, practical learning experiences that allow the educators to directly involve with gamification tools and approaches in meaningful ways.

After all that these findings were take further to the qualitative portion of the investigation provided more information. Interviews with chosen participants demonstrated a deep awareness of both the promise and the limitations of incorporating gamification into the classroom. The lecturer who had successfully combined gamification are reported noticeable improvements in student motivation and interest in classroom engagement. They highlighted specific approaches, such as incorporating storytelling foundations to make lessons more immersive and using leaderboards to encourage healthy and fun competition among students. However, these educators also acknowledged the considerable time and the effort required to design such activities, particularly for those who be deficient in familiarity with digital tools or foundational game design philosophies.

Some of the recurring theme in the interviews was the clue to importance of aligning gamification strategies with clearly defined educational goals. Partakers emphasized that gamification should not be treated as an enhance-on or decorative feature, but rather as an integral part of the teaching and learning process. They were stated that the successful implementation is needed the necessitates and careful preparation to ensure that gamified activities are both pedagogically sound and connected with learning aims. There are several mentors that been mentioned that they need it for practical assistance, such as access to ready-made models, adaptive tools, or curated resources to help them take part the gamification into their coursework lesson.

In calculation to these findings, the study found substantial disparities in how gamification could apply it in various educational settings. Such as, Teachers working with adult learners reported more success with gamified techniques than those who are teaching younger scholars. Also, the transformation was largely attributed to the progressive levels of autonomy and fundamental motivation often observed in adult learners. However, it was revealed that younger children responded well to gamification aspects highlighting fun and creativity, showing that adjusting gamification tactics to students' growing stages and learning preferences is crucial for their efficacy.

The research could also be underlined the importance of cultural and institutional factors in the implementation of gamification. Educators at metropolitan schools, where digital infrastructure and resources were more readily available, reported less obstacles than their counterparts in rural or underserved settings. This disparity are highlighting the ongoing digital divide and the importance of besieged interventions—such as infrastructure development, reasonable funding, and localized training—to guarantee that all teachers, regardless of teaching environment, can effectively include gamification into their classrooms.

Finally, or lastly, the study looked at educators' point of views on the possible benefits of gamification. So Many participants saw that gamification as a game-changing approach to creating more and more student-centered, dynamic, and engaging learning environments. They were truly optimistic about its capacity to improve their

critical thinking, teamwork is dreamwork, and problem-solving abilities in kids. However, panelists were indeed noted that gamification's success is heavily dependent on careful execution, as well as the convenience of acceptable resources and training they could get. They could really get stressed because without that these supporting components, gamification's claimed benefits may be impossible to approve or maintain in practice and learning process.

DISCUSSION

The data we collected was revealing that the considerable difference between the availability of digital resources and the actual execution of gamification strategies in instructional performs. While there are so many teachers indicated a high degree of familiarity with digital technology, there was only a tiny percentage routinely or regularly used gamification in their training. This divergence might indicate or we could say it specify some uncertainty or lack of faith in employing gamified techniques in a pedagogically helpful manner. Previous research already said this (Kayimbaşioğlu & Hacı, 2016) they found that time management and inadequate digital literacy are major impairments to gamification in educational contexts, despite its well-recognized motivating effects.

Resistance or struggling to pedagogic change and the ongoing digital divide appear and seems to be the primary challenges to gamification's mainstream that majority can accept. Teachers or lecturers in underserved areas confront structural and physical hurdles, such as restricted that could limited the device accessibility and inconsistent internet connections, which complicate and really obscure the incorporation of digital resources. Some of these distinctions are still underscore the central need for institutional support, infrastructure development, and equitable or reasonable policies to bridge technological inequalities and their dissimilarities. Furthermore, some of the educators' have desire for hands-on, contextually relevant training demonstrates that need for professional development that is both practical and directly related to their teaching situations and condition. This supports earlier findings in researcher (Rusmiyanto et al., 2023), which that they emphasize the importance of tailoring instructional strategies to suit the learning styles and potentials of digital-native students, mostly those from Generation Z.

Another key to the conclusion is from the poll or the survey is that educators are particularly interested in attending seminars and training on digital gamification. This enthusiasm really emphasizes the need of sistematis, competency-based professional development that could provide the teachers with both the technical and pedagogikah skills required for effective implementation. Such as programs could focus on designing engaging, goal-oriented gamified activities that could align with curriculum goals while addressing practical concerns like time constraints, budget limitations, and technological unfamiliarity. Ultimately, we are offering teachers with available and relevant support may play a crucial role in tightening the gap between the potential and possibility of the practice for gamification in EFL backgrounds.

Beyond all the immediate findings, this study highpoints the broader the implications for teacher preparedness, institutional support, and the educational mindset are more necessary for successful digital gamification adoption. One interesting thing we found was that many EFL teachers were unsure about using gamified methods, even though

they were generally comfortable with digital tools. This could mean that just being good with technology doesn't always mean being good at teaching. It's not enough for teachers to know how to use digital platforms; they also need to know when and why to use them in ways that are academically meaningful and in line with learning goals.

This difference fits with the idea of Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK), which stresses the importance of combining technology, teaching methods, and subject matter knowledge. Many teachers face institutional limits, like curricula that are too strict, not enough ongoing training, or not enough time for creativity, which may make it harder for them to properly combine these three parts. So, to get more students to use gamification in EFL lessons, you need to do more than just give them access to technology. It also calls for specialized professional development programs that help teachers create game-based learning methods, which help them make smart, context-sensitive decisions about how to teach.

Aditian's study focuses on recurring equality challenges in digital education. The digital divide continues to produce unequal learning environments, particularly between urban and rural schools, or well-funded and under-resourced institutions. Teachers in technologically equipped classrooms looked more confident and willing to experiment with gamification tactics. Those working in low-resource settings, on the other hand, typically avoided such strategies—not because they opposed them, but because they lacked access to critical tools, a consistent internet connection, or institutional backing. These formal hurdles highlight the need for larger educational systems that promote equal access to innovation and support across all teaching environments, making gamification—and digital education in general—a realistic choice for all educators, regardless of circumstance.

Generational mismatch was also identified as a key impediment to successful gamification incorporation in EFL training. Many teachers, particularly those schooled in more traditional or teacher-centered educational paradigms, voiced concern or skepticism about Generation Z students' learning habits. This generation, having grown up in a primarily digital world, is accustomed to engaging, fast-paced, and visually appealing educational experiences. Students frequently disengage from teaching strategies that are slow, text-heavy, or unidirectional, regardless of how relevant or well-prepared the information is. As a result, incorporating gamification requires more than just introducing new tools; it signifies a fundamental paradigm change in educational philosophy, mandating a rethinking of how learning is planned and delivered.

Gamification is consistent with constructivist education theory, which emphasizes active knowledge generation via experience, interaction, and reflection. Gamified techniques, which include levels, challenges, progress tracking, and quick feedback, provide dynamic learning environments similar to real-world learning experiences. These characteristics encourage student autonomy, risk-taking in language usage, and intrinsic drive. Gamification, when used effectively, may help students establish self-regulated learning, which is an important ability in language acquisition since students must take the initiative and monitor or follow their own development over time.

Interestingly, despite many instructors professing to have no formal training in digital gamification, a significant desire to get such instruction was frequently expressed. The

discrepancy between present constraints and aspirational planning indicates a huge possibility for official improvement. Professional Development programs that are immersive, context-driven, and based on real-world classroom needs have the ability to close this gap. Rather than simply offering digital tools, such training should emphasize instructional design, curricular alignment, and the capacity to handle gamified classroom dynamics. Equipping instructors with both theoretical knowledge and practical skills is critical for promoting confident and meaningful gamification use in EFL courses.

According to our interview data, instructors who effectively applied gamification did so through self-directed experimentation, which was frequently helped by peer cooperation or informal learning groups. Rather than depending entirely on institutional training, these instructors used trial and error methods, discussed ideas with others, and participated in online conversations or webinars. This emphasizes the need of forming a community of practice (Wenger, 2020) among educators, where instructors may share their experiences, reflect on issues, and collaborate to develop gamified teaching strategies. Initiatives such as online forums, peer mentorship programs, and collaborative seminars may assist to foster a culture of continual professional development and reduce the alienation that early adopters often experience.

Another noteworthy finding was the necessity for long-term and pedagogically sound gamification. While several participants acknowledged that gamification initially piques students' and instructors' interest, they also warned that its novelty may rapidly fade if not adequately integrated into an educational concept. Some teachers voiced worry about "over-gamification," which refers to the superficial usage of game components like points, badges, or leaderboards that have no apparent connection to learning objectives. They said that this strategy may lead to student confusion, disengagement, and a lack of academic focus. To avoid this, educators must view gamification as an intentional method of reinforcing curricular material and encouraging long-term learning goals.

A more nuanced conclusion from the research considers cultural perspectives on the usage of games in education. In other cases, games are still viewed as diversions with little intellectual value. This remaining stigma may make educators and institutional stakeholders hesitant to employ gamification techniques. To solve this, the narrative around educational gamification must be reframed—not as a replacement for traditional tactics, but as a complementing strategy that increases student engagement, encourages learner autonomy, and improves cognitive involvement. Advocacy efforts, real-world success stories, and developing empirical research may all help to reshape these findings and validate gamification as a successful educational technique in language instruction.

The argument also emphasizes the importance of individualized gamification tactics tailored to students' language, cultural, and social circumstances. Rather than relying simply on worldwide apps or pre-designed game formats, instructors might collaborate with students to develop gamified events based on local tales, challenges, or experiences. This culturally sensitive method not only boosts student engagement, but it also makes language learning more relevant by linking it to the learners' everyday lives. Contextualized gamification can assist bridge the gap between classroom instruction and real-life circumstances for students in multilingual and

multicultural nations such as Indonesia, resulting in more relevant and inclusive learning opportunities.

Another important topic discussed in the interviews was the assessment of gamified learning. Many instructors were concerned about how to adequately measure learning results in a gamified setting. Traditional evaluation techniques, such as standardized tests or written assignments, may fail to capture the broader range of abilities promoted by gamification, including teamwork, problem-solving, and creative thinking. This emphasizes the use of more adaptable and formative assessment methodologies, such as digital portfolios, project-based assessments, peer and self-assessment, and the usage of digital badges to track skill progress. To maintain validity and instructional coherence, these assessment methods must be explicitly connected to both gamified events and language learning objectives.

From a theoretical perspective, this study adds to the growing literature on ecological models of teacher development, which see teacher competence as the result of a dynamic interaction of personal, institutional, and sociocultural variables. Teachers' capacity to implement digital gamification tactics is controlled by wider systemic variables such as access to technology, institutional support, specialized learning opportunities, and collaborative networks, rather than individual skill or desire. As a result, future research and education policy should adopt a more comprehensive approach, acknowledge the interconnectedness of these variables when aiming to increase technology-supported pedagogical innovation in EFL settings.

Based on the findings, we could find some various practical recommendations might be made for significant participants in the education sector:

1. To improve teacher education programs, curriculum designers should use gamification components. This entails teaching courses in digital pedagogy, game-based learning theory, and core game design thinking to prepare educators for technology-enhanced education.
2. School administrators should provide gamification-focused professional development opportunities and dedicate time and resources for teachers to experiment, collaborate, and reflect on implementing gamified strategies into their teaching practices.
3. To reduce the digital divide, authorities should invest in infrastructure and internet access, particularly in rural or underserved areas. Equitable access to technology is crucial for successfully applying gamification in a variety of educational settings.
4. Researchers should examine the long-term effects of gamification on language learning outcomes across various age groups, skill levels, and cultural backgrounds. A longitudinal research would yield more detailed information on the long-term effects and practical limitations.

To summarize all of that, while broad implementation of digital gamification in EFL classrooms faces significant difficulties, such as technology availability, teacher preparation, and institutional constraints, the study's overall findings indicate to a bright future. The remarkable passion demonstrated by instructors, together with the observable engagement of students, creates a solid platform for future deployment. Gamification has the potential to make EFL instruction more interesting, egalitarian, and learner-centered.

CONCLUSION

According to this study, while an increasing number of EFL teachers are becoming more familiar with digital tools, several obstacles, such as a lack of formal training, time constraints, and unequal access to digital infrastructure, continue to impede the practical and consistent implementation of gamification in the classroom. These findings show that technological familiarity is insufficient; what is needed is a broader sort of pedagogical literacy that encompasses both digital skills and good teaching strategies. Gamification in EFL classroom must be purposeful, linking to educational goals, student needs, and local teaching settings. When wisely adapted to the reality of 21st-century learners, particularly within the Indonesian educational setting, gamification has the power to significantly enhance student motivation, classroom engagement, and overall language learning outcomes.

Given these findings, politicians and educational institutions should engage in organized, continuous professional development programs that focus not just on technical skills, but also on the pedagogical integration of digital gamification. The emphasis should be on helping educators understand when, why, and how to employ gamified tactics to facilitate meaningful learning. To bridge the gap between interest and practice, additional efforts should include developing culturally responsive gamified materials, establishing professional learning communities where teachers can collaborate and share best practices, and improving digital infrastructure in underserved areas. These collaborative efforts are important to making gamification a practical, inclusive, and transformative component of EFL training. Future study should investigate how successful gamification is for different language ability levels and learner demands. They should also provide alternative evaluation methods to complement game-based learning settings.

REFERENCES

- Al-Azawi, R., Al-Faliti, F., & Al-Blushi, M. (2020). "Educational Gamification Vs. Game-Based Learning: Comparative Study." *International Journal of Innovation, Management and Technology*, 7(4), 132-136.
- Adzmi, N. A., Bidin, S., Selvaraj, B., & Saad, S. (2024). The Role of Gamification in Enhancing Engagement and Motivation in Language Learning. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*.
- Demirbilek, M., Talan, T., & Alzouebi, K. (2022). "An Examination of the Factors and Challenges to Adopting Gamification in English Foreign Language Teaching." *International Journal of Technology in Education*, 5(4), 654-668.
- Dehghanzadeh, H., Fardanesh, H., Hatami, J., Talaee, E., & Noroozi, O. (2019). Using Gamification to Support Learning English as a Second Language: A Systematic Review. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 1-24.
- Deterding, S. (2020). "Gamification in Education and Business." *International Journal of Serious Games*, 5(2), 1-8.
- Huang, B., & Hew, K. F. (2021). "Implementing a Theory-Driven Gamification Model

- in Higher Education Flipped Courses: Effects on Out-of-Class Activity Completion and Quality of Artifacts." *Computers & Education*, 125, 254-272.
- Huseinović, L. (2023). The Effects of Gamification on Student Motivation and Achievement in Learning English as a Foreign Language in Higher Education. *Education and Humanities*, 11-36.
- La Cruz, K. M.-D., Noa-Copaja, S. J., Turpo-Gebera, O., Montesinos-Valencia, C. C., Bazán-Velasquez, S. M., & Pérez-Postigo, G. S. (2022). Use Of Gamification in English Learning in Higher Education: A Systematic Review. *Journal of Technology An Science Education*, 408-497.
- Octaberlina, L. R. (2023). Efl Learning Gamification: Exploring High School Learners' Vocabulary Acquisition Through Experimentation. *Salience Journal*, 12-22.
- Roseni, E., & Muho, A. (2024). Impact of Gamification and Interactive Language Learning Platforms on Engagement and Proficiency in English Language Education. *The Journal of Education Culture and Society*, 205-222.
- Rusmiyanto, A., Wulantari, D., & Fauziningrum, F. (2023). Strategies for Implementing Digital Gamification in EFL Classrooms. *Journal of English Education and Technology*, 11(4), 215-233.
- Shen, Z., Minjie, L., & Wang, F. (2024). Investigating the Influence of Gamification on Motivation and Learning Outcomes in Online Language Learning. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 1-11.
- Talan, T., & Demirbilek, M. (2020). "The Effect of Digital Gamification on Students' Academic Achievement: A Meta-Analysis Study." *Journal of Educational Technology & Society*, 23(3), 1-10.
- Takenaka, N., Uchida, S., Nakagawa, S., Inoue, N., & Jodoi, K. (2021). Developing an active-learning app to improve critical thinking: item selection and gamification effects. *Heliyon*, 1-8.