GAMIFICATION APPLIED TO FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

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November, 2023
ABSTRACT

In an increasingly globalized world where linguistic competence is essential, this theoretical research work, without being put into practice, focuses on applying gamification as an innovative strategy to improve learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

This study not only explores the positive influence of gamification on the learning process in primary school, but also goes into the specific application of WebQuest as a gamified tool. One useful method for incorporating gamification into English classrooms is WebQuest, an instructional resource that uses guided internet exploration.

The research approach of this paper is to analyse and propose how gamification, in particular the implementation of WebQuests, can optimize the process of learning EFL, mainly in primary education.

Some case studies are reviewed and empirical evidence is presented to confirm that gamification not only increases student motivation and involvement, but also significantly improves the retention and application of English language content.

The methodology of this study is based on an analysis of previous research on the gamification and application of WebQuest in English teaching. In addition, specific research is being carried out to identify WebQuest examples that focus on the development of key linguistic skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing in English.

The key results obtained reveal that the combination of gamification and WebQuests has a significant impact on English learning. Students who participated in gamified activities showed a significant increase in their motivation and commitment. In addition, they showed improvements in specific skills, such as listening, speaking, reading or writing in English.

In conclusion, this study shows that gamification implemented through tools such as WebQuest not only motivates students to participate actively in their learning, but also significantly improves their English skills. The effective integration of
gamification in the classroom through WebQuests provides an interactive and stimulating approach to teaching and learning the English language, preparing students to meet the linguistic challenges of the contemporary world effectively and competently.
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1. Introduction.

The knowledge, skills, and values needed to meet the challenges of the modern world are provided by education, which is a crucial pillar in the development of both individuals and societies. In this setting, information and communication technologies (ICT) have a significant impact on how we teach and learn. The use of ICTs in education has completely changed how students acquire information, engage with it, and take part in engaging learning activities.

ICT presents excellent prospects to enhance communication, cultural understanding, and linguistic proficiency, particularly in the teaching of foreign languages. Students can practice their language abilities interactively and independently using tools like mobile applications, internet platforms, and specialized software. Also, these technologies encourage international communication between teachers and students, establishing a multicultural environment in the online classroom.

Foreign language teaching methodologies have developed to include cutting-edge pedagogical techniques in this digital environment. For instance, gamification is becoming a well-liked method for inspiring pupils and enhancing learning. It is possible to create a playful environment that encourages active involvement, teamwork, and goal achievement by incorporating game aspects into educational sessions. This setting can be particularly helpful while learning a foreign language.

In other words, education, ICT, foreign language teaching techniques, and gamification are all intertwined in a web that effectively and dynamically improves the acquisition of knowledge and language abilities. This fusion of technology, pedagogy, and entertainment enhances the learning process and equips students for a globalized and digitalized world.

In the present work, of a theoretical nature, a didactic proposal is suggested that will not be put into practise but could be useful in the teaching of English as a foreign language.
2. Justification of the study.

In this paper, we will address the current relationship between gamification and the teaching of English in the foreign language classroom, with the aim of recognising the advantages of using this methodology in the teaching of the foreign language, especially using WebQuests as gamification tools in the English classroom.

We believe that the use of gamification can improve the quality of teaching, and examples will be provided to demonstrate this.

First, we situate the general context of the area of foreign language education.

Teaching foreign languages is a complex task due to the diversity of languages and cultures, their importance in the global era, and the influence of information and communication technology (ICT) on language learning. This is reflected in the BOE, Royal Decree 126/2014, of February 28, when it refers to the fact that, "The learning of foreign languages takes on special relevance in this (social) plane, since the ability to communicate is the first requirement that the individual must meet in order to function in an increasingly pluricultural and plurilingual context." To this end, various teaching methodologies, including gamification, communicative approaches, and collaborative learning, are used to enhance students' language learning efficiency. This context emphasizes the importance of personal development, technology integration, and evaluations for language proficiency. In addition, it is important to work in an environment known to the student, starting from previous knowledge, as stated in Royal Decree 126/2014 of the BOE: “At the Primary Education stage, it should be taken into account that the starting point is a basic level of competence. basic level of competence, so that, both in communicative interaction as well as in the comprehension and production of texts, it will be essential to always refer to contexts that are familiar to students of this age, thus taking advantage of contexts familiar to students of this age, thus taking advantage of previously acquired knowledge, skills and the skills and experiences they possess". 
This issue is relevant in the current context because mastering a second language is crucial in today's globalized world. Modern methodologies, like communicative approaches and gamification, adapt to students' learning styles and provide interactive experiences. Incorporating ICT enhances student motivation and engagement, particularly in English classrooms, preparing students for linguistic challenges and future success.

In addition, it is important to identify the knowledge gap around the topic of gamification.

Due to the fact that a considerable percentage of teachers have yet to implement this cutting-edge method, there is a knowledge gap regarding the use of gamification in foreign language instruction. Although gamification has been shown to improve learner engagement, motivation, and involvement, some teachers are ignorant of these benefits or may be hesitant to include gamification components into the classroom. This ignorance or resistance to change could be brought on by a lack of knowledge about how to effectively adopt gamification, inadequate training, or sufficient resources. As a result, there is a knowledge gap regarding the use of gamified approaches for teaching foreign languages, which restricts the learning potential. The learning capacity of students who find themselves in classes where gamification has not been introduced is therefore limited due to the difference between those who use gamified approaches to teach foreign languages and others who have not yet investigated this approach.

Therefore, with this work, we try to show the possible benefits of using tools such as gamification in the teaching of a foreign language, as a suggestion to be a possible proposal to be taken to the classroom, supported by data that corroborate this proposal.

3. Aim and scope.
The overall objective of this master's thesis is to analyse the positive impact of gamification on the teaching of English as a foreign language, demonstrating it with studies that support my position.

To this end, more specific objectives are proposed, such as:

- To review the theories that speak about the benefits of using this technique.
- To draw conclusions from these theories.
- To study real cases that have already been corroborated it.
- To propose a type of gamification that works on each English skill.

3.1. Research question.

This part of the project reflects the research questions.

The aim of this study is to review whether the use of gamification, specifically, WQs as a learning tool in teaching English in foreign languages, promotes this acquisition.

The research questions proposed for this project are the following:

R.Q.1. How can gamification be applied to foreign language teaching to improve motivation and engagement?

R.Q.2. What are the most effective game elements and design principles in gamified language learning?

R.Q.3. What are the attitudes and perceptions of learners towards gamification in language learning?

R.Q.4. What are the effects of gamification on language learning outcomes and performance?

R.Q.5. What are the implications of gamification for foreign language teaching and learning?
To answer these asked questions, I have approached the study by relying on grounded theories and previously applied methodologies.

4. Content.

4.1. The importance of language education.

To have a clear understanding of the term education, Vygotsky in 1982, explains the development of higher psychological functions, which takes place through practical and instrumental effort, not alone, but in social interaction or cooperation. Through activity or interaction between the child and other adults or peers of different ages in the Zone of Proximal Development, these functions are transferred from the adults who already possess them to the new developing offspring. This process, which we can accurately refer to as education, is precisely the way in which the human race has been able to circumvent or fundamentally alter the biological laws of evolution.

In summary, education is the intelligent mastery of naturally occurring developmental processes. Education fundamentally restructures all behavioural functions, in addition to influencing one or more developmental processes, cited Vygotsky (1996).

Thus, it can be stated that development implies the appropriation of culturally created tools, knowledge, and artifacts within social contexts of shared action (such as the family, for example). Which indicates that education plays a fundamental role in growth, according to Baquero (1996), Bruner (1988) and Wertsch (1993).

To better understand these phrases, we could conclude that education is to master processes that should be natural, appropriating tools and knowledge, whether from our family, schools, or jobs, and that allow us to develop.

In addition, Vygotsky also refers to imitation:
“Imitation, if we interpret it in a broad sense, is the main way in which the influence of instruction on development is carried out. development... and makes possible the important role of education, for through imitation the child becomes the subject of the work of others.” (Vygotsky, 1993).

From here, we can draw the importance of the educator in the teaching process of the student, because he will be his referent to imitate.

We can conclude with two key issues that are reflected, and that is that education should be a natural process that requires tools created for it and that influences both knowledge and materials, tools, as well as cultures or contexts, since education is not of the individual but social and involves interaction, which occurs mainly by imitation; hence we highlight the important role of the teacher.

This conclusion, serves us to understand the importance of language as well, since, Gil (2019), explains that language is present in all dimensions of the human being, both in the activities of his intellect, as well as in those of interaction with the beings of the surrounding environment, human faculty par excellence.

Therefore, given the importance that language has in the human being, the way of teaching language should be as we have said above, natural, with tools created specifically for it, and with interaction.

According to Niño (n.d.): language, in a broad sense, “is man's global capacity to symbolize reality, develop thought and communicate through any medium”.

4.2. The importance of teaching English as a foreign language.

4.2.1. Legal framework in the teaching of English as a foreign language in primary school.

To argue this work, we will rely on the current laws, first of all, the Organic Law 3/2020, of December 29th, which modifies the Organic Law 2/2006, of May 3rd, on Education (LOMLOE) that has been published in the BOE of December 30th, 2020. It is the one that regulates the contents to be taught, objectives and necessary indications for Primary Education. Likewise, in Andalusia we have to
refer to the Decree 101/2023, of May 9, which establishes the organization and curriculum of the Primary Education stage in the Autonomous Community of Andalusia, where it states that "El área de Lengua Extranjera en la etapa de la Educación Primaria tiene como objetivo principal la adquisición de la competencia comunicativa básica en la lengua extranjera, así como el desarrollo y enriquecimiento de la conciencia intercultural del alumnado." and that being today's society technologically much more advanced thanks to the Information and Communication Technologies, within the Areas and specific competences of the stage, it says that: “Esta área, además, permite al alumnado desenvolverse mejor en los entornos digitales y acercarse a las culturas vehiculadas por medio de la lengua extranjera”. That is to say that they can identify and understand a foreign language and subsequently manage to use it to interact and develop in the environment. Since I have also mentioned the new technologies and digital tools as a means of motivation and resource in the school, in the same Decree 101/2023 “las herramientas digitales poseen un potencial que podría aprovecharse plenamente para reforzar el aprendizaje, la enseñanza y la evaluación de lenguas y culturas extranjeras" and even in Chapter V "Attention to diversity and individual differences", in Article 18, "General principles of action for the attention to diversity and individual differences", paragraph d), it refers to the following: “La igualdad de oportunidades en el acceso, la permanencia y la promoción en la etapa. El marco indicado para el tratamiento del alumnado con necesidades específicas de apoyo educativo es aquel en el que se asegure un enfoque multidisciplinar, mediante la utilización de las tecnologías de la información y la comunicación como herramientas facilitadoras para la individualización de la enseñanza, garantizando la accesibilidad universal y el diseño para todos, así como la coordinación de todos los miembros del equipo docente que atiendan al alumnado y, en su caso, de los equipos de orientación educativa."Therefore, it is important and necessary that in the subject of English as in the rest of the subjects through the use of digital tools and ICTs to gamify and increase motivation and attention to the diversity of students that each classroom has.
It is also important to take into account the methodological principles of the Primary Education stage that appear in Decree 101/2023, Article 7. "Learning situations and methodological orientations for their design", where it is cited that, "Las situaciones de aprendizaje implican la realización de un conjunto de actividades articuladas que los docentes llevarán a cabo para lograr que el alumnado desarrolle las competencias específicas en un contexto determinado". Another positive aspect that it highlights is project work, teaching by competencies, and interactive strategies that enable knowledge sharing and building through verbal and group exchanges of ideas. In other words, the student will play an autonomous and active role not only between him and the teacher but also with his classmates so that everyone can create their own learning, being motivated and inquisitive. By emphasizing on the methodological orientations that are relevant to the first foreign language English, it is evident that a key component of teaching by competencies is to keep students motivated to learn by giving them an active and autonomous role and making them aware of their responsibility for their own learning. This motivation is supported by a technique that uses student-adapted activities and tasks to promote active and communicative learning. In conclusion, after the analysis of the Decree, it is clear that gamification can beneficially promote the objectives related to foreign language teaching.

A foreign language, with an emphasis on English, has transitioned from being a privilege to being a need in several different productive sectors, according to Argentine professors and researchers Biava and Segura (2010). English has gained prominence around the world due mostly to the trend of globalization, to the point where it is now regarded as the common language of commerce.

Jamiechango (2009), explains that, it is safe to say that it’s the language of the modern world. English has an impact on all non-Anglo-Saxon nations, including Spain, and has become a lingua franca that more or less directly influences all fields and professions in our day and age. Possession of it is no longer a luxury, but rather a clear requirement.
But, for many students, acquiring a foreign language can occasionally be a terrible experience. It's incredible how many students admit to being worried language learners.

Worde (1998) found that between one-third and fifty percent of the kids she surveyed reported having crippling levels of language anxiety. Although the idea of anxiety is extensively discussed in literature on language learning, these studies have concentrated on a dizzying variety of its characteristics and have produced significantly disparate definitions. Research on anxiety has also looked at several language outcomes, including the rate of picking up second languages, how well students succeed in language classes, and how well students perform on high-stakes language exams. These research' theoretical frameworks ranged from purely behavioural to psychodynamic.

Scovel (1978) noted that early perspectives on anxiety produced very inconsistent results about the association between anxiety and second language achievement, which has had a significant impact on subsequent history of studies on anxiety in the language learning field.

Another important paper is that of Horwitz, and Cope (1986). The concept of linguistic anxiety was explained by the writers in clear terms. Their work gives a scale for measuring classroom anxiety in foreign languages, which is a significant contribution. The findings of these studies showed that, in a variety of settings, language anxiety has a devastating impact on learning a foreign language.

Thus, it is demonstrated that the learning and teaching of a foreign language should be focused on reducing anxiety in students and making students aware of the need to learn this foreign language, as it is a priority in today's society, and to do all this in an environment in which they feel comfortable and motivated. For this, it is necessary to use tools and methodologies that favour dynamic and motivating learning of this language.

4.3. Old methodologies in the teaching of English and their failures.
For centuries, pedagogues and teachers were focused on improving their pedagogical actions and writing methods in education. With the rise of modern languages, trade, and ideas in Renaissance Europe, the study of foreign languages experienced hype, but a methodological revolution took place in the 20th century.

The Spanish-speaking population initially showed interest in learning English in the mid-19th century, primarily through reading and translating classic books. The only available English-language books were dictionaries and grammars, and exams required candidates to read and translate various materials. There was no strategy to cover all language skills, and oral expressiveness was not considered. The first study of English prosody was in William Casey's grammar in 1819.

Martín (2009) defined a method as the way to reach a certain result. Thus, the method we use will either make the way easier, more difficult, or definitely divert us from our initial destination. So, it is important to improve the methods used to learn a foreign language. For this reason, we are going to review the best-known methods for this, and their main failures.

4.3.1. Traditional method.

Sears (1845), this approach is focused on examining and evaluating language rules. It aims to teach students to read and evaluate literature in the target language. Common practices include translating, memorizing, and analysing grammar. Error handling is crucial, and grammar is presented deductively through detailed explanations, contrastive analysis, and gap exercises.

Tejuelo (2009) shows us that due to its numerous flaws and disregard of oral skills, the traditional method is no longer used. It discourages conversation, offers examples of language that are taken out of context, and doesn't motivate students.

4.3.2. Direct method.
Direct methods were developed to address the shortcomings of the conventional approach, emphasizing oral communication and a shift in perspective. These methods improved the teaching method by focusing on deductive processes like grammatical explanations, activities, and rule memorization. Grammar instruction was moved to a secondary level, emphasizing word, context, discussion, and oral engagement. However, there were limitations, such as no grammatical explanations and students often had to complete gap exercises verbally. Despite these limitations, the teaching method remained inductive Tejuelo (2009).

This approach also had certain drawbacks, Tejuelo explained this: Although there were some restrictions, the teaching method was inductive. However, there were some drawbacks to this approach as well, including the representation in the classroom of dialogues or scenarios that the students would never experience, the teaching of passive lexis, the difficulty of using mime and the impossibility of physical explanations when teaching abstract lexis (Tejuelo, 2009, pp 123 – 137).

4.3.3. Audio lingual method.

Fries (1945) developed the oral approach, also known as the structural method, in the mid-20th century. This approach, based on behaviourial psychology and structuralism's linguistic theory, involves developing habits through phonetic repetition and grammatical structures through written assignments. Grammar is taught inductively, with memorization and repetition exercises helping students learn and assess progress. According to Zanón (1989), a method as innovative as his linguistic theory.

However, Tejuelo (2009) argues that these methods failed to produce bilingual speakers due to a lack of communication, genuine communication, and encouragement for independent creativity. The structural method, influenced by Fries, still has significant contributions to language learning.
4.3.4. Situational method.

According to Palmer, Hornby y Pittman (1960), is a behaviourist method focusing on reinforcement and imitation. It corrects flaws in earlier language teaching methods and emphasizes structures, with grammar being a significant focus. The current methodological approach in language learning focuses on forming linguistic habits through mechanical exercises, leading to the development of methods like the total physical response, natural method, suggestopedia, and communicative method.

Chomsky (1966), criticized that the student has a reactive role, only responds to stimuli, and does not participate in decision making. The teacher has a central and active role. He understands language learning by habit, and students complained of not being able to transfer what they had learned to concrete situations in the real world.

4.3.5. Total physical response (TPR).

It began development in the United States. It was created by Asher in 1970, a psychologist with a focus on second-language acquisition. Since it assumes that learning a foreign language is analogous to learning one's home tongue, it is a natural approach. The method is based on the psychological theory that memory increases if stimulated through the association of motive activities during language learning, which lowers anxiety. The teacher leads the action of the students by means of commands. This approach prioritizes listening comprehension while also placing a high value on inductively taught grammar and acknowledging the relevance of meaning.

Some criticisms may be that as students become more advanced, it becomes more difficult to give other commands. Most useful for freshmen and sophomores. Also, it places too little emphasis on accuracy. Students may feel embarrassed and it can become very repetitive.
4.3.6. Natural approach.

Terrel and Krashen (1983), developed the foundations of this methodology. They can easily distinguish between learning and acquisition. The comprehension of meaning is the essential goal. This approach is based on the idea that exposure to and immersion in the target language matter more than the students’ written output. This method is founded on innatism, an acquisition theory that gives learners a leading and very active role. Grammar instruction is kept to a bare minimum, including the absence of in-class grammar explanations, structure repetition, gap exercises, and grammar practice outside of class.

Ramos (2003), mentions that the Natural Approach method introduced two important innovations in comparison to previous methods: separating students according to their levels of English (pre-production, early production, emergent speech, intermediate) and taking into account their specific needs.

Some limitations or criticisms of this method, as stated by Krashen and Terrel (1983), are that this method is for beginners who wish to move to an intermediate level, because it is aimed at the development of basic communication skills, both oral and written.

4.3.7. Suggestopedia.

The Suggestopedia was developed by Georgi Lozanov. According to Brown (1993), it is based on the theory that the human brain could process large amounts of material given certain learning conditions, one of which would be the state of relaxation produced under the teacher’s control. The method points out that the state of relaxation of the mind is fundamental for maximum retention of the knowledge offered. Music is the main resource used, in addition to the classroom environment, which should be comfortable.

The approach emphasizes language use over form, with grammar-related posters displayed on classroom walls. It follows a set timetable, starting with conversation, vocabulary list review, and teacher-led grammar instruction.
The flaw of this method is that it has a closed program, starting with a dialogue, the presentation of a vocabulary list, and reducing the grammar to the teacher's comments, according to Martin (2009).

Psycholinguistics has been constantly searching for the perfect method for many years, demonstrating the unbreakable link between educational success or failure and the selection of a suitable approach. The goal of teaching foreign languages is to prepare pupils for natural communication in authentic situations. In order to become infinite speakers, students must be taught.

4.4. Other innovative methodologies.

For more than a century, English teaching strategies focused on grammar, simultaneous translation and repetition. This behaviourist approach consisted of providing external stimuli without introspection. In the mid-20th century, audiovisual tools made the process less monotonous. Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) gained popularity in the 1990s, but grammar, translation and repetition remained the mainstays. The development of ICT and multimedia resources in the 21st century improved results and led to the creation of foreign language learning applications. With the advance of technology, the teaching of English as a foreign language now emphasizes a more humanistic pedagogy, and this advance in technology provides us with a new way of teaching.

Some current methodologies are:

4.4.1. Communicative approach.

According to Richards & Roger (1989), the communicative approach requires that language be used textually, with a focus on function, and that the course's advancement be determined by the language's functions, the context of the communication, and the group's interests. Exercises with structures can be employed, but they shouldn't be the main emphasis of learning. The use of
translation is a resource that offers a contrasting view of the language without compromising the overall meaning of the text. The acquisition of forms is part of the meaning-seeking process. Forms are acquired as part of the search for meaning, but they do not serve as an aim in and of themselves. The aim of the work developed is for the student to achieve communicative competence in the L2.

In the communicative method, Widdowson (1991) suggests an integrated treatment of linguistic skills, attempting to develop the communicative abilities of the learner.

According to Bérard (1995), the communicative approach was created as a response to criticism of audio-visual and audio-visual methods of language instruction. Its primary goal is to establish communication while taking the learner's needs into consideration. These needs determine the skills the learner wishes to develop (oral comprehension and expression or comprehension and expression), and it does this by using real-world documents to help the learner acquire the language more effectively and quickly. The obtained knowledge will be put to practical use while adhering to sociocultural norms.

With the goal of structuring classes in a way that promotes sociability, creating a teaching/learning climate that enables motivation and communication among students as well as between teacher and students, students will become the agents of their own learning and will be able to learn how to learn through communication and learning strategies.

4.4.2. Project-based learning.

Black and other authors explain that the Project-Based Learning is defined as an educational approach in which students design, deploy, and evaluate projects with practical application in the real-world, transcending the classroom environment. (Blank, 1997; Dickinson, et al, 1998; Harwell, 1997).
“In Project Based Learning, interdisciplinary, long-term, student-centred learning activities are developed”. (Challenge 2000 Multimedia Project, 1999).

The advantages that this model offers to the learning process, since it encourages students to think and act based on the design of a project, elaborating a plan with defined strategies, to provide a solution to a question and not only to fulfil curricular objectives. It allows learning in diversity by working together.

4.4.3. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL).

PBL has an advantageous effect on learner motivation since it is an active, learner-centred paradigm based on constructivist principles (Kokotsaki et al., 2016). Also, it is designed to serve as the foundation for the creation of educational materials; that is, it is the primary task for one or more subjects, rather than an activity to enhance the teaching method (Markham et al., 2003). In contrast to the traditional methodology, PBL is built around a specific issue, to which students attempt to provide a response by developing a project.

It is useful for the student to acquire specific knowledge, and to improve proficiency in the target language.

For content acquisition and meaningful progression of language proficiency to occur, we must integrate three components:

1. The content we want to convey.

2. The possibility for the learner to create and experiment with the target language and to self-correct.

3. A focus on form, i.e., integrating activities that guide the learner’s attention to the structures and active vocabulary we want him to acquire or reinforce.

According to García-Varcálcel and Basilotta (2017), PBL can be defined as a teaching modality focused on tasks through a shared process of negotiation among participants; its main objective is to obtain a final product. That is, the
students participate in the structuring of the project and develop research strategies, so the linear dynamics of the subject-exam is broken.

4.4.4. Flipped learning classroom.

Authored by Treglia, Platt, and Lage (2000). A model that reverses the roles of individuals who are directly participating in the teaching-learning process has been referred to as the "inverted classroom" in general.

That flips the roles of those who are directly involved in the teaching-learning process; the teacher-led classroom is abandoned in favour of multimedia tutorials that the learner can access outside of the classroom. The "homework" is actually multimedia tutorials that the student can access outside of the classroom.

Thus, the so-called homework is translated into real-world activities in the classroom, exercising the material through group work, problem-based learning, project-based learning, and the completion of projects (Coufal, 2014; Lage, Platt and Treglia, 2000; Talbert, 2012).

Wilson (2021), explained Inverted learning as a pedagogical strategy in which direct instruction is substituted for direct instruction and is shifted from the group learning dimension to the individual learning dimension, transforming the remaining group space into a dynamic and interactive learning environment where the facilitator assists the students in the application of the concepts and in their understanding.

4.4.5. Collaborative learning.

In the classroom, cooperative learning is a term for small group work. Although it does not imply that students form teams, it does imply that these teams, after getting directions from the teacher, all the students share knowledge and work on a task until all members comprehend it and learn via mutual support, always in collaboration. We use the term "cooperative learning" to describe a diverse and
diversified range of structured instructional approaches in which students collaborate in teams or groups to support one another while completing typically academic tasks (Melero & Fernandez, 1995).

It is very important to point out that working in groups is not the same as working in cooperative groups.

The distribution of the classroom in small work groups puts the students in a position to interact with each other. One of the objectives of cooperative learning is to promote supportive behaviours among students.

New methodologies aim to improve second language teaching by focusing on standards that are essential now. These strategies include using relevant material related to students' interests and requirements, incorporating dynamics and exercises that encourage natural language acquisition, and creating context-driven exercises. Language learning should be seen as a necessity for communication, not just academic purposes. Teachers should focus on effective communication and education for life, not just passing tests. By considering these characteristics before and during lessons, they can choose the most effective English teaching strategies and methods for the best results.

After a review of the most current methodologies, we concluded with the words of Martín. (2009), he is inclined to present the communicative approach as the ideal methodological framework for teaching because there is no methodological perfection, but a constant knowledge and adaptation of methods, theories, approaches and teaching-learning styles, and because of the current methodological assumptions. It also understands that the educational objective of the foreign language teacher is that his/her students reach full communicative competence. Therefore, adopting his position, we proceed to highlight the communicative approach as the most useful for our proposal in this final master's thesis.

The communicative approach and gamification combined open up a world of educational possibilities where students not only develop their language skills but
are also immersed in an immersive and interactive environment that inspires them to actively participate, work with others, and learn in a fun and efficient way.

Gamification has been applied to teaching foreign languages in order to increase student engagement, enjoyment, and effectiveness. It is an effective tool for increasing educational objectives, encouraging behaviour change, and increasing user engagement. Deterding (2014) defined gamification as an art and a science of engaging people, solving problems, and driving change using game mechanics and game design principles.

4.5. Gamification and Language Education.

As we have seen before, the communicative method leads us to gamification, a tool that is used nowadays in the classroom, thanks to the advances in the new current methodologies.

We all agree that education is one of the most important areas, and that it is constantly evolving and improving. "Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today." (Malik, 2019, Quotes section, Parag 4).

With this phrase of El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, known as Malcom X, is reflected the importance of evolving in the methodologies, and in the needs that arise in the classrooms, one of the needs that we have seen in the review of methodologies, is that we must involve students in what they are learning, they must take an active role, and work with topics of interest to them. This is how Pedraz, (2017), states it in his sentence:

"And therein lies one of the essences of the success of any project: making the player a participant in the world where the action takes place (feeling that he/she has the power to make decisions, to grow, to interact...)."

In addition to involving the learner in an active and interesting role for him/her, this approach allows us several things according to Negre (2017), who explain that this type of methodological approach allows the student to:
a) Be able to adapt to any curricular content.

b) Foster collaboration and teamwork.

c) Develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

d) Improve communication skills.

e) Pose challenges to be.

f) Build deductive thinking.

g) Learn to work under the guidance of a team.

h) Be protagonists of learning; and in addition, it has a playful component.

Joining the quotes from these authors, the type of idea we are developing becomes a little clearer: gamification.

There are several definitions of gamification, but although definitions vary, they all have a systemic component that refers to how the game is constructed, and include an experiential component that describes the player's participation in the game.

We have this one from Hierro (2014), since it is the one that gives more information about this concept:

"Gamification is a technique, a method and a strategy at the same time. It starts from the knowledge of the elements that make games attractive and identifies, within a given activity, task or message, in a given activity, task or message, in a non-game environment, those aspects that can be turned into a game or playful dynamics. All this in order to achieve a special bonding with users, encourage a change of behaviour or convey a message or content. In other words, to create a meaningful and motivating experience" (Hierro, 2014, Gamification definition section, Parag 15).

We can say that gamification is a learning method that applies game mechanics to a classroom or work environment in order to increase results, improve the assimilation of certain knowledge, enhance certain skills or, among other things, compensate for certain behaviours.
Due to its playful nature, which makes learning more enjoyable, this form of learning is being used in learning approaches more frequently. Romero-Rodriguez and Torres-Toukoumidis (2018).

The productivity, drive, and desire to get better while playing the game serve as a good summary of the goal of gamification, explain Cayrothegames (2014).

Jareño (2019) explain that the goals of gamification can be defined as motivating the student body, internalizing the knowledge, enhancing cognitive abilities, rewarding students, and fostering a desire to succeed.

Oliva (2017) lists the following benefits of gamification as advantages:

1. Encouragement of collaborative implementation in addition to group learning, with the goal of enhancing learning dynamics in the classroom.

2. Gamification efficiently grades students' learning and encourages them to work hard to raise their academic performance.

3. Gamification motivates students to perform better by utilizing integrative dynamics and a technological approach when they don't put forth enough effort to try to improve their academic performance.

4. Due to the potential structural change brought about by the creation of gamified classrooms, gamification as a methodological tool offers to students a clear itinerary on how they should grow in the comprehension of the academic subjects that are more challenging for them.

5. With this practice, it is possible to encourage students to do tasks independently, in teams and individually, and to use ICT to study while having fun. Gamification may be used in regular classroom settings as well as online and blended learning settings, making it a very convenient methodology for students to learn and develop skills in a way that is different from what they would learn in a typical classroom while also having fun.

In addition, gamification, depending on how it is used in the classroom, can encourage critical thinking since it encourages students to use their imagination.
and creativity on their own and challenges them to make decisions on their own. autonomous decision-making (Colomer, 2018).

According to Johnson (2013), the educational games are effective at boosting all socio-emotional competencies in students, including critical thinking, problem solving, and teamwork.

4.5.1. Gamification for Foreign Language Teaching (FLT).

According to Michos (2017), there are similarities between learning a language and playing a game because both involve procedures like mastering the regulated and standardized rules and building abilities to achieve a specific goal. Applying a gamified teaching approach is not as difficult as it may seem because the two are actually pretty simply combinable as a result.

Here is a list of benefits that gamification offers to the classroom when it is used to teach foreign languages. Michos (2017) created this list after concentrating her research on gamification in foreign language instruction:

Gamification:

- influences the atmosphere of the classroom.
- increases students' feelings of contentment.
- gives time for rest for tired students.
- enhances motivation and concentration.
- promotes the participation of students in class activities.
- promotes activity with a purpose.
- makes learning enjoyable.

Gardener (1985) mentions that both motivation and attitude are elements that influence learning a second language. In short, combine motivation and learning to new experiences that enrich the student.

Like with other disciplines, it may be challenging to get kids to comprehend why they need to learn certain things. It can be especially challenging to get them to see the value in learning a second language, since their desire for doing so is
often low. Teachers must stress the use of motivating approaches in order to improve students' interest in the foreign language, in this case English, because children view English as a required topic that they do not understand and that eventually demotivates them.

Gamification is a motivational method that enhances teaching and learning and employs games to pique students' interest in the material through active participation. According to Casado (2016), employing prizes and points to engage students in the game is the best approach to learn a foreign language.

Students can still communicate with one other in English, so if we utilize a game that encourages interaction between players and the environment, we can encourage kids to speak English as if it were their native tongue.

4.5.2. Gamification stages and levels.

While beginning the project's development, it is important to consider all the stages, the student's phases, and how each phase will be affected by the student's evolution and advancement, which proposes the article of Nahmias (2018):

Discovery:
When, how, and where the project is known by the user are crucial factors at this phase. The user is aware of the project. Users' motivation must be maximized upon discovery in order to encourage them to begin the game. When the user starts the game they designed, the game is finished.

Onboarding:
We must practice and acclimatize the user with the game's guidelines, goals, and mechanics throughout this phase. and the game's mechanics. At the early stages of the game, the player must gradually understand the rules.
When the user is prepared to carry out the project, this phase is complete.

Accompanying (Scaffolding):

The user launches the activity during this final phase utilizing the mechanics and guidelines he has learnt. During the course of this third clause, the plot will develop, the goals that have been established will be realized, and all difficulties will be overcome.

The preservation of the flow is the most delicate part of this phase, thus it’s crucial that the difficulty of the challenges and the difficulty of the users are balanced. The user will get bored and quit the game if the game’s development is incredibly straightforward. Instead, if the game’s difficulty is above the user’s capabilities, the user may experience worry, which may lead them to give up on the game altogether.

Final (Endgame):

The user enters this final phase when they believe they have completed the activity to their satisfaction and believe there is nothing else to see.

However, depending on how the time has been set up in the game—whether it has a limited duration or not (with beginning and finish) or a continuous duration in time (loop)—it can be changed in order to carry out this phase. With the time-limited alternative, an epic conclusion is required, where the player can feel content with the difficulties overcame, the goals attained, and the accomplishments made—always accompanied by an exciting conclusion to the crafted story.

On the other hand, if what we want is for the player to want to play again, we must make the game harder by adding additional obstacles, levels, and goals.

5. Proposal.
5.1. Studies on gamification in the English as a Foreign Language (FL) classroom.

This section provides an overview of the results of empirical research based on the application of gamification in teaching English as a foreign language over the past five years. The table includes information on the authors and titles of the research, the countries in which the study was conducted, its objectives, the populations to which the approach was applied, and its findings. There are 5 primary and 2 secondary studies.
### Table 1

#### Summary of empirical studies based on gamification and foreign language teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors and years</th>
<th>Name of the article</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CARRIÓN-SALINAS, G. A.</td>
<td>“Gamificación en educación primaria. Un estudio piloto desde la perspectiva de sus protagonistas”</td>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>Analyse the possibilities of gamification as a teaching and learning tool to offer an innovative proposal of gamification in primary education</td>
<td>46 students in the 7th year of (11-12 years old) who study English at the Educational Unit of Milenio El Tambo (Loja) divided into two groups</td>
<td>65% of students feel motivated and participate more actively in the activities proposed in the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GALEANO, J. D. Y RODRÍGUEZ L. E.</td>
<td>“El uso de las técnicas de gamificación en la adquisición de vocabulario y el dominio de los tiempos verbales en inglés”</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>To evaluate the impact of an educational video game supported by gamification techniques to acquire vocabulary and verb tenses in English</td>
<td>74 students of 5th grade (10-11 years) studying English divided into two groups (control and experimental) of</td>
<td>The use of gamification in a video game has a positive impact on the increase of vocabulary and verb tenses in English.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To test whether the use of gamification in a primary school classroom increase motivation and linguistic competence written in English.

Two groups (control and experimental) of students in 5th grade of primary education studying English in a public school in the Community of Madrid. No does not specify the number of participants.

The experimental group showed a significant increase compared to the control group in the degree of motivation towards the study of English language and in the level of linguistic competence in written communication.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Paper Title</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MORA, M. Y CAMACHO, J. (2019)</td>
<td>“Classcraft: inglés y juego de roles en el aula de educación primaria.”</td>
<td>España</td>
<td>Facilitate the acquisition of basic English grammar by using the Classcraft platform and motivate students with gamification strategies. 6th grade primary school students studying English. It does not specify the number of participants. Classcraft offers many educational possibilities. Its use improves the language skills and the teaching-learning process of the English language in primary education.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The text is extracted from the image in a readable format, including the table structure and content.
Gamification applied to foreign language teaching

gamification mechanisms in digital games increases students' online participation and improves their writing of argumentative texts.

Experimental groups in a girls' school. No does not specify the number of participants.


To assess English language proficiency in speaking, listening comprehension, written expression and spelling of vocabulary clothing, transportation, professions, family, parts of the human body, sports, nationalities, 36 Spanish-speaking students in the fourth grade of secondary education at the IE Daniel Goleman (Juliaca) and 20 students from IE Jens Knudsen (Arequipa) who study English (level A1). Significant improvement in English vocabulary in Spanish-speaking students with a highly motivating technique. Significant learning difference (in the pre-test they pass 11.1% and in the post-test 99.1%).

Perú
age-related personal objects and verbs of everyday activities
As a conclusion of this table, we can see that, thanks to the use of gamification in the foreign language classroom, areas such as motivation, active participation, use of vocabulary and verb tenses, written competence, language skills, writing, use of argumentative texts, speaking, interest and academic results are improved. There is a significant improvement in general in the classroom, differences between 60 and 80% improvement in the comparison of foreign language classes without gamification and with gamification.

As we have seen, gamification is a process that uses the ludic elements with a purpose, and this is proposed in an orderly manner, with a procedure, and an end, what we could say, a guided process. This process is explained in more detail below.

5.2. Guided research process.

Guided research, according to the European Institute of Education (2022), is when the teacher proposes a topic to investigate and guides the students in locating the information. In this way, it helps to develop vocabulary and data search.

Within this type of research, we find web-guided research, which according to Caracas (2014), it is defined as a didactic strategy of inquiry-based learning that relies on the use of the Internet as a medium for obtain information on different aspects, around a central problem (which can be suggested or not by the teacher) and whose results are presented in a final work: power-point presentation, a travel brochure, timeline, text documents, blog diary, etc.

WebQuests, miniquests, treasure hunts, didactic adventures, virtual excursions, earth quests, and geoquests are just some of these techniques. According to the Toledo Teacher's Center (2010), they share the ability to enable through interaction with ICTs the acquisition of diverse management strategies, guiding the research process in an innovative and agile way for the students, and
requiring a commitment from the teacher in its appropriate design and implementation.

We can see that WebQuests are a concrete method of guided research using Internet resources for learning.

Therefore, a Webquest provides a clear, step-by-step structure for students to conduct effective research on a particular topic, in this case, in the area of English.

5.3. **WebQuest: Definition, types and parts.**

The use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in educational settings, notably in English pronunciation, is a significant trend in the study of foreign languages. Mompean and Fouz-González (2015) assemble a number of pertinent works in the field of computer-assisted pronunciation instruction that make use of apps and other technology in FL classrooms. Many studies have also shown that computer programs can be utilized as a tool to practice vocabulary, reading, writing, and pronunciation (Bărbuleț, 2013; Alkahtani, 1999; Krajka, 2000).

As a result, the employment of new technology can not only promote learner autonomy but also lessen learners' linguistic anxiety when speaking in public (Young & Wang, 2014).

Similar to this, other current audio description initiatives (Talaván & Lertola, 2016) have shown to be effective online resources for fostering speaking abilities in virtual spaces.

As we have seen throughout this paper, gamification is a tool that favors the teaching of the second foreign language, and if we also enhance it with the use of ICT, it could be a great advance for this purpose. The capabilities of the World Wide Web motivated Dodge (1998) to develop a new teaching methodology known as WebQuest, or WQ, which includes the use of technological resources
in the classroom. Thus, the relationship between gamification and WebQuest is clear.

Two writers should be taken into account in order to give a proper explanation of the term WQ: both Tom March and Bernie Dodge. Dodge (2001) introduced the concept of WQ and provided the definition of a WebQuest like an exercise focused on inquiry where the majority of the information used by students is found online. WebQuests are made with the intention of making efficient use of students’ time, emphasizing the use of information over its search, and supporting students’ thinking at the levels of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Although Tom March worked with Bernie Dodge to create the WQ, it is also important to take into account the description and characteristics he offered.

March (2003) define WebQuest as:

A scaffolded learning structure that uses links to essential resources on the World Wide Web and an authentic task to motivate students’ investigation of a central, open-ended question, development of individual expertise and participation in a final group process that attempts to transform newly acquired information into a more sophisticated understanding. The best WebQuests do this in a way that inspires students to see richer thematic relationships, facilitate a contribution to the real world of learning and reflect on their own metacognitive processes.

This term was proposed by Bernie Dodge, a researcher at the University of San Diego, in 1995, and defined it in other words as a didactic model of guided research, where most of the information comes from the Internet.

According to Bereiter and Scardamalia (1984), asking students to act beyond their current cognitive abilities is known as procedural scaffolding or facilitation and has been shown to positively affect student performance.

Ngeow and Kong (2001) defined Scaffolding as activities that help students develop the right mindset, engage students with the problem, break activities into manageable tasks, and direct students’ attention to the essential aspects of the learning objectives.
It serves as our introduction to WebQuests, as Dodge (2001) said that scaffolding is a temporal structure employed to help students become more skilled than they are. A good WebQuest builds scaffolding into the process of the work learners must follow to achieve its objective. And March, related scaffolding with WebQuest in this way:

"A WebQuest is a scaffolded learning structure that uses links to essential resources on the World Wide and an authentic task to motivate students' investigation of a central, open-ended question, development of individual expertise and participation in a final group process that attempts to transform newly acquired information into a more sophisticated understanding. The best WebQuest does this in a way that inspires students to see richer thematic relationships, facilitate a contribution to the real world of learning and reflect on their own metacognitive processes" (March, 2003).

- Types:

We can distinguish between two types of WebQuests: short and long term.

The primary goal of a short-term WQ, which can last from one session to three, is information acquisition. In order to learn, students must engage in high-level cognitive processes like organizing, organizing, and internalizing information. A student will have "struggled with a large amount of new knowledge and made sense of it" by the time they complete a short-term WQ (Dodge, 1995).

The fundamental goal of a long-term WQ is to increase and broaden knowledge of a particular subject or field. This kind of Design requires several weeks to produce. Cognitive tasks including comparing, classifying, deducing, analysing errors, building, and analysing various viewpoints are required of students. "A student would have investigated a body of knowledge deeply, altered it in some way, and exhibited an understanding of the content" at the conclusion of this sort of Inquiry (Dodge, 1995).

- Parts:
Dodge (1995) believed that in order to implement a well-designed WQ, this activity should include some mandatory components, referred to as critical qualities, and other components, referred to as non-critical, which were appropriate but not required.

If we adopt Dodge's description from 1995, the WQ should have at least the following components: a) an introduction; b) a task; c) a collection of information sources; d) a process; and e) some guidance. f) an evaluation; and g) a verdict. Each section must be concise and easy to understand.

a) Introduction.

This section aims to capture students' interest in order to make it appealing and enjoyable for them. The motivational component's goal is to provide the material in an engaging manner that is pertinent to the learner's past experiences and potential future interests (Dodge, 1995).

b) Task

This section concentrates on the task the learner has been given; typically, it specifies a particular issue or circumstance that has to be resolved. Moreover, "a well-designed assignment is feasible, entertaining, and encourages learners to think beyond rote comprehension" (Dodge, 2002). The WQ's potential ability to connect its subject matter to the curriculum is another crucial characteristic. In 2002, Dodge offered a higher-order thinking taskonomy for WebQuests:

Table 2

Taxonomy of higher-order thinking tasks for WebQuests
c) Process

In this part, the teacher guides their learners through various procedures to help them complete the work at hand. The procedures may be divided into several smaller jobs to make the activity easier to follow for all students. Students' roles are also included in this section. When thinking about WQ for L2, it may also include some advice, often called scaffolding, on how to set up the group as well as some tactics for collaborative work or linguistic reinforcement.

d) Materials

The teacher has preselected a set of web pages for this section. Students must then read, watch, or even conduct research to finish the assignment. It is important to include not only web pages but also other types of resources like films, music, maps, and so forth.

e) Scaffolding
This is a temporary framework that motivates students to perform an activity more expertly than they actually are. Dodge (2001). Three different kinds of scaffolding exist according to Dodge (2001):

- Reception enables pupils to better manage their studies and comprehend what they are studying. Timelines, glossaries, organization charts, and observation guides are a few examples of reception scaffolds.

- Transformation describes the instructions provided to assist pupils in applying techniques like comparing, contrasting, or reasoning to take the information and turn it into new knowledge.

- Teaching pupils how to produce a final product is referred to as production. By giving students writing and presenting rules, templates, and examples, this can be scaffolded. When the teacher provides some help in advance so that pupils might be able to complete the work, scaffolding is a crucial part of the design of a Classroom. Vygotsky (1978) introduced the concept of the "Zone of Proximal Development," which can be characterized as the gap between what a student can accomplish on his own and what he can accomplish with the assistance of an adult or through collaboration with peers.

f) Evaluation

The many criteria that will be used to evaluate the pupils are provided in this section. Although this section of the WQ is the last one, it needs to be acknowledged from the start of the project. The most common assessment method, the rubric, fosters critical thinking because of its self-evaluation and self-improvement pattern. Stevens & Levi (2011).
g) Concluding

This section's objectives are to summarize and reflect on what the students have learned, as well as to motivate them to do more research on the subject.

According to March (2003), a WebQuest's primary crucial feature is to enable this transition of information into a freshly created, integrated understanding.

There are other important non-critical attributes to mention, defined by Dodge (1995):

- Working in groups encourages team learning. Each kid has a responsibility and plays a part in the team, explain Adell (2004). It’s vital to note that Johnson and Smith (1998) came to the conclusion that group learning is superior to individual learning after conducting a study.

- Motivating components, according to Dörnyei (1994), are essential for successfully acquiring knowledge. WQ, according to March (2003), are real-world challenges that encourage students to pursue learning. To do this, you ought to adhere to Keller's ARCS Model of Motivational Design from 1983, which claimed that motivation is correlated with attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. March (2003).

- Multidisciplinarity, working on a disciplinary WebQuest is far more engaging and difficult than working on a single discipline-specific WebQuest. However, it always hinges on the goal of the final activity (Dodge, 1995).

5.4. WebQuests in an EFL/ESL context.

Due to the success of WQ in our classrooms over the recent years, countless websites have been created to assist teachers in developing new WQ or reusing WQ from other teachers. For instance, in Spain, there are well-known pages with collections of Questions for all levels that are ready to be used with students. This is the situation with WebquestCat and Aula21.net.
Explaining Pérez’s work is important since he concentrated on the design and implementation of a WQ from the perspective of second language acquisition Pérez (2005). It goes without saying that implementing Strategies for teaching and learning a second language may be more difficult than teaching any other subject to a student in their first language. For this reason, a change in the structure of WQ must be made in order to make it suitable for language education in L2 contexts as well.

According to Pérez (2005):

The establishment of a WebQuest for the purpose of teaching and learning a second language entails leveraging online resources and exercising higher order thinking skills in a group setting. It is an inquiry-oriented activity that is placed in a meaningful thematic context. At the same time, it gives the students the chance to learn and practice some verbal abilities while being supported by a set of linguistic and procedural scaffolding.

According to Pérez (2005), the following characteristics should be applied while creating a WQ for second language learning:

- Considerable L2 usage
- The proficiency with languages
- Objectives both linguistic and nonlinguistic
- The task’s outcome
- The method
- The WQ should be developed to practice the language skills
- WebQuest should be designed to work with the skills of the language.

As has been previously said, it is crucial to give students direction by giving the right scaffolds; however, when dealing with Learners in a second language, this aspect becomes considerably more significant. The original WQ model’s direct instructions must then be taken into account to ensure that the WQ is a language-oriented activity and that learners are aware of their language learning experience. Pérez (2005).
Some of the WebQuests created for this second foreign language teaching are shown below.

This is an example of WebQuest for English foreign language learners:

**Figure 1**

*Screenshot from the WebQuest "Today's news"*

![Screenshot from the WebQuest "Today's news"](image)

**Introduction**

Congratulations! You have been selected to work for two online news sites. You have to report on home news and sport and entertainment in Spain. You are a team of two freelance reporters who usually work together. On this occasion you will have to do your job very urgently because they do not have any other reporters in Spain at this moment. The only problem is that these two news sites have opposite writing styles and they are addressed to very different readers. One is a popular news site and the other is a quality one.

**Task**

- You will be working together, but each of you will have a different role in the team.
- You will have to write two reports for each news site, that is, one about sport or entertainment and one about home or political news for each media site, but as you are writing articles for two opposing news sites, you will have to rewrite the news twice or send different pieces of news to them. It will mean four articles in total. Follow the process described below.

This WebQuest belongs to a web site called "Isabel ESL site", where it proposes Exercises, Web-based Materials, Workshops and links for Teaching and Learning, WebQuests of English as a foreign language, and divides its page in: CALL methodology, its own material and selected Links of interest. This WebQuest that we have selected, appears in the section of CALL methodology, WebQuest for foreign language.
The purpose of these pages is to demonstrate a WebQuest model for a second language. This model was created using the original WebQuest model created by Bernie Dodge (1995).

When we enter the WebQuest, it appears: Introduction, Task, Process, Tools, Evaluation and Conclusion.

In the introduction section, it talks about British newspapers and raises a topic, where the English department organizes a seminar on the British press, and the students have been chosen to participate.

In the Task part, explain what is to be done: participate in a workshop on British newspapers, or in a competition to see which team has learned the most, and then specify how to achieve this, giving instructions and concrete data (dates, newspapers according to political affiliation and others).

In the Process part: divide it into three sections: Background knowledge, reading and vocabulary workshop, and preparing the task.

In the first part, she gives instructions on how to find a partner for the task and explains the objective of the WebQuest, which is to reinforce previous knowledge. He poses some questions to solve in group and determines the time set, 5/10 minutes. It also asks to do another activity about a newspaper, and a link appears with a list of options and another link with the results. In addition, it specifies the knowledge that the student will acquire: what types of newspapers there are in Great Britain, how information is collected and presented in a newspaper and the language and structure of news writing. The second part of the process section is a reading and vocabulary workshop where the 4 objectives to be achieved are specified, and the practical exercises to achieve them. And the third one, to make a cover according to the choice of the student A and B.

The resources section offers various links to UK political newspapers, and six links of interest.

In the evaluation, they have to follow the criteria they are given to evaluate themselves.

And as a conclusion, they give their opinion on what they have learned.
As we already know, within English there are four skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Mary Finocchiaro, (n.d), states that:

"Classroom activities should be designed to help students perceive the interrelationships among listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills."

Therefore, the following is a series of WebQuests divided by improvements for each skill.
Table 3

*Table with examples of WebQuests divided by skill*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Author and year</th>
<th>Name of the WebQuest</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>URL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>Perez,I. (2003)</td>
<td>“The Oloa Project”.</td>
<td>This WebQuest works on all the skills, but especially the listening part as it is about a radio program. It asks the student to be a radio journalist through some tasks, first of all he must see the news of the week in images provided by a link, then he must listen to an article to which he accesses through a link to a video that talks about &quot;The War of the Worlds&quot;. They are divided into teams, and each one has a role, they have 4 steps to follow in the task to acquire the necessary information to end up producing their radio program, which consists of the news bulletin of their school.</td>
<td>The OLOA Project Blog</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This WebQuest is interactive, can be done in groups or individually, and works on the 4 skills. It works on oral expression since it does not give orders on how to work the activities, and that gives the option to do it with the method we prefer, in this case oral. In addition, at the end he asks for an oral debate.

This WebQuest is also very complete because it has a glossary section to consult in case, they do not understand keywords. The science area is worked on here, it proposes 6 tasks. In the first task or mystery, as it is called in the WQ, to help the detective they must identify the parts of the plant, giving the students explanations of the goals and ideas. Before solving the first mystery/task, he gives them 4 links of previous information that they should know before, such as the cycle of plants, the structure of plants... all interactive, with gifs, links, interactive images...

The second task is about soil, as in the previous one, it provides information with interactive links before
Gamification applied to foreign language teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Activity 1 - Webquest Becoming a knight in Middle ages (google.com)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comunidad Catalana of WebQuest. (2023)</td>
<td>This WebQuest is more oriented to reading, since it works a lot with reading and written exercises. It is about the Middle Ages, and the objective is to be a knight of the Middle Ages and participate in a joust. It has 6 activities to reach the objective, and an optional one. They work on feudalism, castles, people in castles, parts of castles, and knights, through readings and online games.</td>
</tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The text offers students a thorough tutorial on how to produce a supplement magazine including the most significant news events of 2004, including everything from news selection to magazine creation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The article outlines the steps involved in producing a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the rest of the activities, they work on how a seed becomes a plant, how a plant produces other plants, the bulb, and finally they must guide other students and discuss.
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supplement magazine that covers significant 2004 news events. During the first procedure, students are required to choose news articles from many categories, including business, politics, sports, health, and space exploration. As part of process 2, they have to create a 100–120-word synopsis of each news item, using at least three key words, and propose their chosen news items to an editorial board. They should also be ready to respond to any further queries on the news item and provide the date the news item was published. They also receive helpful wording to express their summaries in.

Students are required to create a magazine about the significant 2004 news events as part of Process 3. Using their brief synopsis as a guide, they are expected to compose a news item for each category, adding details and utilizing their own language. They are required to write between 200 and 250 words every piece and to use at least three keywords. They are also expected to evaluate the language, organization, and content of
articles published by other group members and offer comments.
Visual samples of each WebQuest are shown below:

**Figure 2**

*Screenshot WebQuest: “The Oloa project”*

**Figure 3**

*Screenshot WebQuest “The great plant Escape”*
Figure 4

Screenshot WebQuest “Becoming a knight in the Middle Ages”
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Figure 5

_Screenshot WebQuest “The year 2004 magazine”_
5.5. Elaboration of a WebQuest.

According to data presented by UNIR (2020), the elaboration of a WebQuest should be done following these steps for a correct presentation of the WebQuest.

1. Select a problem of interest for the students.

2. Analyse the problem and break it down into parts.

3. Establish the characteristics of what the students have to do.

4. Make clear the evaluation criteria

5. Develop the WebQuest and check that everything is correct.
It is important to follow these steps, since WebQuest has a disadvantage and that is that, as there is so much information, the selection of it at the time of documentation can lead to inaccuracies and errors. That is why it is necessary to contrast the sources of information as many times as possible, UNIR (2020).

Despite this, its benefits are clear.

**5.6. Benefits of using WebQuest.**

According to March, one of the reasons why teachers use ‘WebQuests’ to complement their lessons is that students feel more motivated and interested in the subject matter since they have to carry out a meaningful task and use real resources from the Internet to work on the activities (Adell, 2004).

**5.6.1. General benefits:**

According to Lueg, C.F. (2015) implementing a WebQuest in the classroom usually takes place in order to:

- Use it as an evaluation tool.
- For serving as a tool in the classroom to encourage the development of general competencies.
- For the purpose of presenting and developing the contents.
- For the review of certain topics.
- For pupils to take benefit from the Internet
- As a tool to encourage favourable attitudes about learning.

According to different authors, using WQs has advantages such as exposing students to real-world content (like videos, blogs, news articles, advertisements, radio recordings, and brochures) and integrating linguistic (thinking and creativity) and social (cooperation, technical or computer skills, socialization, etc.) skills. Garca et al. (2005). Diaz (2013), and other authors, articles and webs, separated the benefits of Webquest in:
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- Benefits for students:

  - The learner is the only real protagonist in the process.

  - WebQuests offer a great deal of flexibility in terms of adjusting the assignment complexity to the students' skills.

  - The WebQuest is a particularly enticing resource since it piques your interest about how the adventure that is being offered to you will conclude.

  - The usage of WebQuest helps students improve their problem-solving skills as well as those of analysis, synthesis, and selection since they have to "make it" rather than just searching the network for the solution.

  - All higher cognitive functions, including information transformation from different sources and formats, interpretation, comparison, elaboration and contrast of hypotheses, analysis-synthesis, creativity, etc., are activated by a strong WebQuest.

  - WebQuests encourage the learner to have a positive attitude about the topic being studied by encouraging their curiosity, inventiveness, and work ethic. This instructional tool encourages exploration, enjoyment, and reflection.

  - Additionally, it strengthens their capacity for independent thought and the ability to think critically. They gain the ability to interact, to observe and behave critically, and to respect the reality of the environment in which they grow up.
- With WebQuest, kids feel more inclined to work in groups, the teacher acts as a mediator, and the level of collaboration and assistance among the students rises in proportion to the instructor's involvement.

- WebQuests boost students' self-esteem because they encourage group work and teamwork, with each student playing a particular role in the group to complete a task. Working in collaborative teams also fosters social connection.

- Students may find careers, skills, or potentials as they play out their assigned responsibilities. This increases their familiarity with various fields and disciplines, and the students learn more about their own intellectual interests and career goals through this method.

- A stronger focus on student self-learning that includes various solo and group activities in which the student must take on a significant amount of responsibility for the growth of his or her self-formative process.

- WebQuest learning activities prepare students for comparable and real-world situations, giving them more and better tools to properly integrate into society. On the other hand, it was a success since they had learnt through cooperative learning, not by themselves.

- WebQuest offers students well-structured and intelligible exercises, as well as clarity in the steps required for task formulation and the assessment criteria, which makes learning more understandable and simpler. It encourages learning that covers topics like information literacy, research, and information usage.
They establish a constant working environment where the groups are concentrated.

- Benefits for teacher:
  - For instructors and teachers who can combine their creative ability with the enormous number of digital resources, WebQuest creates remarkable creative areas. WebQuest enables educators to create, develop, and learn.
  - The Web is a flexible method that may be applied to any academic subject.
  - WebQuest is a great tool for open problems with several answers and situations where various regions or topics are interconnected.
  - They may use ICTs to channel their teaching suggestions and create engaging learning experiences.
  - They have the potential to wow pupils with a fresh perspective, method of operation, and work ethic.
  - Increase their possibilities, become more diverse, and sharpen their communication skills.
  - Increase their understanding of the resources accessible to practice their job.
  - Every piece of content created in the online environment ABRE-WQ is available to the public and can be used by anybody. As a result, you may extend your projects outside your class and share them with other colleagues while also appreciating the work of others. It is possible to network effectively, rapidly, and enriching.
  - Promote values education, such as teamwork, accountability, sensitivity, quality work, engagement, communication, etc.
  - WebQuests are a great method to direct creative processes within the context of worthwhile educational experiences.
It is understood that the WQ is a flexible tool that can be used for multiple purposes in Education, so its use will only depend on the willingness of the teacher, the quality or planning he/she does, the creativity he/she has in designing it and the clarity of the pedagogical intentionality he/she attributes to it when deciding to incorporate it in the classroom.

5.6.2. Benefits in the foreign language:

WQs are extremely useful for teaching foreign languages, as several studies have demonstrated. It has been stated that this resource is effective for learning English since it exposes students to genuine conversation opportunities, significant content, and authentic material in the language. WQs have been used to work on oral expression and interaction in professional contexts, such as English for tourism, or to improve reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition in L2 (Stoks et al 2002).

When teachers wish to teach more than just grammar and additionally focus on communicative and social content, WQs are particularly intriguing (Méndez, 2016). It has been demonstrated that the prevalence of genuine materials offered to students by this tool enables them to more fully comprehend the pragmatic and cultural functioning of the target language speakers as well as to be aware of and comprehend the sociohistorical events (Méndez, 2019).

WebQuests offer a genuine learning experience for students to study a foreign language in a genuine setting, enhancing their language abilities through real-world work. They encourage teamwork, communication, and collaboration, fostering social learning. WebQuests provide access to real materials in the target language, such as web pages, videos, audio files, and documents, broadening students’ exposure to the target language and culture. This tool is effective in teaching English as a second foreign language due to its gamification structure and playful elements.
In the words of Alcántara (2007) “exposure to authentic materials is easy to ensure, but it is much more complicated to select materials that are appropriate to the level of language knowledge of the students”. Therefore, in the case of foreign language WQs, greater effort should be made in the search for information and in the electronic resources provided to students.

That is why I propose the use of gamification to improve the use of the foreign language, specifically Webquest. Because its benefits are proven, and it can be a useful tool for this area of teaching.

6. Results and conclusions.

In this work, the application of gamification was explored, especially through WebQuests, to improve the teaching of English as a foreign language in the context of primary education. The aim was to analyse the effectiveness of these strategies in the classroom and provide a vision of how they could benefit both students and educators by providing concrete Webquest examples that exploit the different English language skills.

As a result of the study, examples of cases that confirmed the benefits of gamification in the learning process were examined. These cases clearly demonstrated how strategies can increase students' motivation and involvement, among other factors, thereby improving their understanding and retention of English.

The research questions raised at the beginning of this study focused on how this type of methodology can be useful in teaching English in the classroom. These questions provided a framework for our research and guided our analysis, being resolved throughout the work.

In response to our research questions, we found that gamification has a significant impact on learning English in primary school. Students participate actively, improve their language skills, and enjoy the educational process, leading to more solid learning outcomes.
These results have significant practical and pedagogical implications. Educators can use this gamification and Webquest as effective tools to improve the learning experience of primary school students. These strategies not only foster love of the language, but also promote an interactive and enriching educational environment.

It is important to recognize the limitations of this study. The research was based on a limited number of cases already studied and on a basic analysis. Future research could consider a broader and more detailed approach to fully understand the impact of gamification and WebQuests in different educational contexts.

For future research, the integration of this tool into other educational levels and other subjects could be explored in greater depth. Furthermore, it would be worth exploring how these strategies could be adapted to meet the specific needs of students with different learning styles and language skills.

As a final conclusion, this work provides a basis for the effective implementation of gamification in primary English language teaching and learning. By providing an engaging and motivating educational experience, these strategies not only enrich the learning process, but also prepare students to face linguistic challenges with confidence in an increasingly interconnected world, and where the learning of foreign languages as English is crucial.
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