



*La Gamificación como estrategia didáctica para la enseñanza del idioma inglés*

*Gamification as a teaching strategy for teaching English*

*A gamificação como estratégia de ensino para o ensino de inglês*

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## Resumen

El presente artículo tuvo como objetivo analizar la evidencia científica reciente sobre la gamificación como estrategia didáctica para la enseñanza del idioma inglés en contextos educativos formales. La investigación se desarrolló bajo un enfoque cualitativo-descriptivo, a través de una revisión sistemática de literatura comprendida entre los años 2020 y 2025, empleando el protocolo PRISMA para la identificación, selección y análisis de 15 estudios relevantes. Los resultados permitieron identificar que las estrategias de gamificación más utilizadas incluyen recompensas, niveles, dinámicas de roles, retos, competencias por equipos y el uso de plataformas digitales como Kahoot, Quizizz, Wordwall y Duolingo. Asimismo, se evidenció que estas estrategias contribuyen a mejorar la motivación, la participación, la retención del vocabulario y el desarrollo de habilidades lingüísticas en los estudiantes. Los recursos tecnológicos y metodológicos empleados se centraron en entornos digitales interactivos, aprendizaje colaborativo y enfoques pedagógicos activos. Sin embargo, se reconocieron limitaciones relacionadas con la formación docente, la infraestructura tecnológica y la planificación pedagógica. En conclusión, la gamificación representa una herramienta didáctica eficaz y transformadora en la enseñanza del inglés, siempre que se implemente de manera contextualizada, planificada y alineada con los objetivos educativos.

**Palabras clave:** gamificación; inglés como segunda lengua; motivación del aprendizaje; tecnología educativa; estrategias de enseñanza.

## Abstract

This article aimed to analyze recent scientific evidence on gamification as a teaching strategy for teaching English in formal educational settings. The research was conducted using a qualitative-descriptive approach, through a systematic review of literature from 2020 to 2025, employing the PRISMA protocol to identify, select, and analyze 15 relevant studies. The results revealed that the most commonly used gamification strategies include rewards, levels, role-playing dynamics, challenges, team competitions, and the use of digital platforms such as Kahoot, Quizizz, Wordwall, and Duolingo. It was also evident that these strategies contribute to improving students' motivation, engagement, vocabulary retention, and language skills development. The technological and methodological resources employed focused on interactive digital environments, collaborative learning, and active pedagogical approaches. However, limitations related to teacher training, technological infrastructure, and pedagogical planning were recognized. In conclusion,

gamification represents an effective and transformative teaching tool in English language teaching, provided it is implemented in a contextualized, planned, and aligned manner with educational objectives.

**Keywords:** gamification; English as a second language; learning motivation; educational technology; teaching strategies.

## Resumo

Este artigo teve como objetivo analisar as evidências científicas recentes sobre a gamificação como estratégia de ensino para o ensino do inglês em ambientes educativos formais. A investigação foi conduzida através de uma abordagem qualitativo-descritiva, através de uma revisão sistemática da literatura de 2020 a 2025, empregando o protocolo PRISMA para identificar, selecionar e analisar 15 estudos relevantes. Os resultados revelaram que as estratégias de gamificação mais utilizadas incluem recompensas, níveis, dinâmicas de role-playing, desafios, competições de equipa e a utilização de plataformas digitais como o Kahoot, Quizizz, Wordwall e Duolingo. Ficou também evidente que estas estratégias contribuem para melhorar a motivação, o envolvimento, a retenção de vocabulário e o desenvolvimento das competências linguísticas dos alunos. Os recursos tecnológicos e metodológicos empregues focaram-se em ambientes digitais interativos, aprendizagem colaborativa e abordagens pedagógicas ativas. No entanto, foram reconhecidas limitações relacionadas com a formação de professores, a infraestrutura tecnológica e o planeamento pedagógico. Conclui-se que a gamificação representa uma ferramenta de ensino eficaz e transformadora no ensino da língua inglesa, desde que implementada de forma contextualizada, planeada e alinhada com os objetivos educativos.

**Palavras-chave:** gamificação; Inglês como segunda língua; motivação para a aprendizagem; tecnologia educativa; estratégias de ensino.

## Introduction

Currently, English language teaching has undergone numerous modifications and evolutions over time to adapt to the needs and progress of society (Terán et al., 2024). In this context, learning foreign languages, especially English, is becoming increasingly relevant in educational systems, as globalization has positioned it as the most widely learned language today and established it as the

common and globally accepted language of science (Molina et al., 2021). Its importance has driven educational institutions to seek more inclusive, dynamic, and effective teaching methods, particularly those that support the comprehensive development of students.

However, the educational reality in countries like Ecuador presents significant limitations. According to EF EPI data published by *El Diario el Comercio* (2021), Ecuador ranked second to last in Latin America and 90th out of 112 evaluated nations, with a score of 440 out of 1000, indicating an A1 level of proficiency. While cities like Cuenca have improved due to international exams and a strong educational culture, locations such as El Carmen, Manta, Chone, Latacunga, and Riobamba lag behind due to limited English class hours, insufficient teacher training, and lack of resources. By 2024, Ecuador ranked 82nd out of 116 countries in the EF English Proficiency Index, scoring 465 out of 1000, below the global average (477) and in 19th place out of 21 in Latin America, highlighting a low level of English proficiency nationwide (Education First, 2024). This discrepancy underscores a stark contrast between public and private education, revealing structural inequality that hinders access to high-quality bilingual education across much of the country.

Learning an additional language is neither easy nor enjoyable, and students often encounter obstacles. It is necessary to acquire writing, reading, speaking, and listening skills (Al-Dosakee & Ozdamli, 2021). Moreover, limited language practice hinders the assimilation of new words, potentially delaying the learning process. Under these circumstances, adopting effective teaching methods—such as visual resources, games, and continuous interaction with the language—is essential. These techniques make learning more active and relevant, helping to retain information long-term (Quevedo, 2025).

Despite interest in implementing more innovative strategies, the use of educational technology has faced resistance within the system. Over the last decade, technology has evolved from being novel and unfamiliar to becoming a fundamental component of everyday life. However, in education, teachers and institutions have been the first to resist this change, often clinging to traditional roles, concepts, and perceptions in the learning process. The lack of technological resources—such as equipment, internet access, and technical skills—is frequently cited as one of the barriers preventing meaningful learning environments, where education is perceived as dynamic and engaging rather than dull and lifeless (Briceño, 2022).

In this context, gamification has emerged as an innovative strategy with great potential to transform teaching and learning. It is a pedagogical tool that incorporates game-like dynamics into non-game

contexts to motivate students and make learning more appealing (Huyen, 2020). Initially applied in areas like marketing, sales, and corporate training, its use in education gained popularity through projects like *Foldit*, an online puzzle game designed to make learning a more engaging experience (Briceño, 2022). According to Espinoza et al. (2024), discussing gamification requires considering how information and communication technologies can create activities that enhance motivation and develop skills.

Thus, when incorporating gamification into teaching, educators must reflect on updating content, evaluating its relevance, and reorganizing activities and assessments to effectively meet students' needs and contexts (Trejo, 2021). Despite its advantages, a major concern is the lack of solid research firmly supporting its effectiveness in English language instruction (Terán et al., 2024). Rodríguez et al. (2020) emphasize that since English learning became a priority in modern education, various methodological approaches have been developed to meet this demand, highlighting motivation as a key factor in foreign language acquisition.

Relatedly, the self-determination theory proposed by Ryan and Deci in 2000, cited by Quintero et al. (2024), explains how gamification connects to intrinsic motivation in learning. The theory posits that individuals are more engaged when they experience competence, autonomy, and social connection. In a gamified environment, these elements are reinforced through rewards, achievements, and instant feedback. Competence is fostered when students overcome challenges or reach new goals, giving them a sense of accomplishment. Autonomy is strengthened by allowing students to progress at their own pace, choose activities, and determine their sequence.

Additionally, studies show that integrating ICT into foreign language teaching enhances motivation, improves linguistic skills, fosters autonomy, and provides access to multimedia resources. ICT facilitates practice with native speakers, personalized learning, online collaboration, better retention, and instant feedback, significantly strengthening the learning process (Antonio & Carrión, 2023). For these strategies to be effective, it is crucial to establish clear rules, define proper mechanisms, maintain an engaging design, provide comprehensible instructions, promote inclusion, and set meaningful rewards that motivate learning (Murillo & Vaca, 2022). Furthermore, aspects such as game variety, combining digital tools with classroom activities, participant collaboration, and the frequency of gamified activities must be considered (Pérez, 2022).

Ultimately, gamification is not merely about implementing games in the classroom without purpose; rather, it involves using games to achieve pedagogical objectives, enhancing students'

motivation and enjoyment in the learning process (Murillo & Vaca, 2022). Therefore, this article aims to analyze the available scientific evidence on the application of gamification as a didactic strategy for English language teaching in educational contexts. Specifically, it seeks to identify the most commonly used gamification strategies in English instruction, describe the technological and methodological resources involved, and determine the impact of these strategies on English language learning based on recent studies.

## Methodology

This research on gamification as a didactic strategy in English language teaching was conducted using a qualitative descriptive approach, allowing for the exploration, interpretation, and systematization of available knowledge on the use of playful and technological resources in the English language teaching-learning process. To achieve the proposed objectives, a systematic review of scientific literature was carried out using the PRISMA method (*Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses*), which comprises four main stages: identification, screening, selection, and inclusion of studies.

During the identification stage, the information search was conducted in recognized academic databases such as Scopus, ERIC, Scielo, and Google Scholar. To refine the information within the field of study, a search strategy was developed using key terms in Spanish and English, such as “gamificación”, “enseñanza del inglés”, “estrategias didácticas”, “motivación en el aprendizaje”, “aprendizaje lúdico”, along with their English equivalents: *gamification*, *English teaching*, *didactic strategies*, *learning motivation*, *playful learning*, using Boolean operators *AND* and *OR*. Below is a summary of the equations used in each database:

**Table 1.** *Scientific Information Search Path*

Database	Search Equation Used
ERIC	(“gamification” AND “English language teaching” AND “motivation” AND “didactic strategies”)
SciELO	(“gamificación” AND “enseñanza del inglés” AND “estrategias didácticas” AND “aprendizaje”)
Scopus	(“gamification” AND “foreign language learning” AND “classroom strategies” AND “engagement”)
Google Académico	allintitle: “gamificación” “enseñanza del inglés” “motivación” OR “gamification” “language learning”



During the screening stage, a preliminary review of titles, abstracts, and keywords was conducted, considering the following inclusion criteria:

- Publications from 2020 to 2025.
- Peer-reviewed empirical studies, whether qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods.
- Articles written in Spanish or English.
- Research directly addressing the use of gamification in educational contexts related to English language learning.

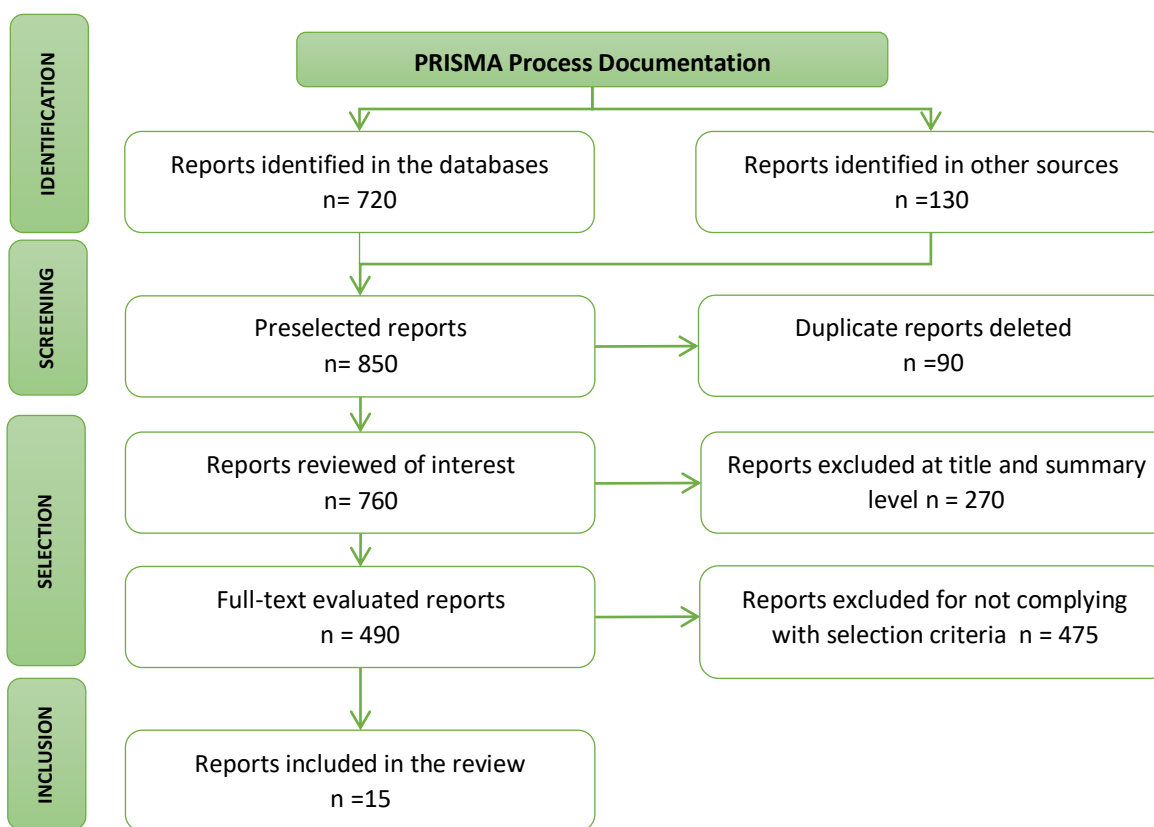
The following were excluded:

- Studies outside the defined time frame.
- Theoretical documents without empirical support.
- Academic works not published in scientific journals (theses, essays).
- Research in languages other than Spanish or English.
- Duplicate or irrelevant articles for the study's objectives.

Subsequently, in the selection stage, the content of each publication was analyzed in greater depth, assessing its theoretical and methodological relevance concerning the research problem. Finally, during the inclusion stage, relevant data were extracted, including the title, authors, publication year, study type, academic journal, educational level addressed, and main findings. The information was organized into an analysis matrix to better understand trends, approaches, and results regarding the implementation of gamification in English language classrooms.

As a summary, Figure 1 presents the flowchart of the study selection process applied in this review.

Figure 1 Study selection process



## Results

In accordance with the stated objectives, this systematic review identified relevant evidence regarding the use of gamification in the English language teaching-learning process. The results were organized based on three specific objectives: the most commonly used gamification strategies, the technological and methodological resources applied, and the impact of gamification according to recent studies. Below is a summary of the findings presented in tables, developed from the analysis of the 15 selected articles.

### a) Gamified Strategies Used in English Language Teaching

To address the first objective, studies documenting gamification strategies applied in English language teaching at various educational levels were reviewed. The strategies were systematized and organized into a comparative table that includes the author, year, country, study title, methodology, educational level covered, and the gamified strategies described in each case.



Table 2.

*Gamified Strategies Used in English Language Teaching*

<b>N°</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>Educational Level</b>	<b>Gamified Strategies</b>
1	Terán et al. (2024)	Ecuador	Gamification as a Didactic Strategy in the English Language Teaching Process	Exploratory correlational quantitative	Unified General Baccalaureate	Rewards, points, levels, challenges, and immediate feedback. Use of Wordwall, Kahoot, Quizizz, and Classcraft.
2	Briceño (2022)	Ecuador	Educational Gamification as a Strategy for Foreign Language Teaching	Quantitative, non-experimental, cross-sectional	Primary and Baccalaureate	Gamified games with points, levels, rewards, and role dynamics. Promotes social interaction through teams.
3	Trejo (2021)	México	Gamification Experience for Second Language Teaching	Gamification Experience for Second Language Teaching	Gamification Experience for Second Language Teaching	Gamification Experience for Second Language Teaching
4	Tigua et al. (2022)	Ecuador	Gamification as a Teaching Strategy Applied to the English Language	Documentary and bibliographic	Unified General Baccalaureate	Rewards, cumulative points, challenges, team competitions, and role-playing dynamics.
5	Rodríguez et al. (2020)	Ecuador	Alliance Between Learning and Play:	Quasi-experimental and explanatory	From Early Childhood to Baccalaureate	Challenges, tasks, rewards, levels. Use of dynamics,

			Gamification as a Methodological Strategy			mechanics, and components for educational play.
6	Quintero et al. (2024)	Ecuador	Gamification and English Learning: A Comprehensive Exploration	Quantitative analysis with case studies	Intermediate level	Rewards, points, levels, immediate feedback, spaced repetition. Platforms like Duolingo and Memrise.
7	Antonio & Carrión (2023)	México	Use of ICT in English Teaching-Learning	Qualitative documentary review	Not defined	Kahoot!, Duolingo, quizzes, games, Socrative, and Genially for collaborative practice.
8	Pérez (2022)	Ecuador	Gamification for Vocabulary Acquisition in English Post-Pandemic	Qualitative with triangulation	Upper Primary and Baccalaureate	Memory games, word searches, brainstorming, and interactive digital games.
9	Quevedo (2025)	Perú	Impact of Gamification in English Teaching in Early Childhood Education	Mixed with narrative-thematic in design	Early Childhood Education	Personalized games, playful dynamics, rewards, interactive typing, augmented reality.
10	Murillo & Vaca (2022)	Ecuador	Application of Gamification in the English Teaching-Learning Process in	Exploratory descriptive mixed	Undergraduate	Games like bingo, Pictionary, Hangman, Memory Game, and competitive

			Undergraduate Studies			group dynamics
<b>11</b>	Al-Dosakee & Ozdamli (2021)	Irak	Gamification in Teaching Learning Languages	Systematic and review	Not defined	Levels, badges, points, time limits, competitions, and rankings as motivational stimuli.
<b>12</b>	Espinoza et al. (2024)	Ecuador	Gamification in 7th Grade English Teaching	Descriptive qualitative	7th grade	Interactive games, levels, rewards (points, exemptions), educational platforms, and playful tasks.
<b>13</b>	Dindar et al. (2020)	China	Gamified Cooperation and Competition in English Vocabulary Learning	Quantitative experimental	Higher education	Gamified cooperation and competition with rankings, daily tasks, rewards, and real-time group dynamics.
<b>14</b>	Huyen (2020)	Australia	Gamified Learning: Are Vietnamese EFL Learners Ready Yet?	Gamified Learning: Are Vietnamese EFL Learners Ready Yet?	Gamified Learning: Are Vietnamese EFL Learners Ready Yet?	Gamified Learning: Are Vietnamese EFL Learners Ready Yet?
<b>15</b>	Wuluntari et al. (2023)	Indonesia	The role of gamification in English language teaching	Systematic literature review	Not defined	Playful mechanics like points, progressive levels, timed challenges, leaderboards,

and badges.  
Use of  
Vocabulary  
Ninja for  
vocabulary  
and  
competition.

As can be seen in the table, the most frequent strategies include the use of rewards, points, levels, role-playing dynamics, challenges, interactive activities, and team competitions. These strategies aim to foster motivation, active participation, and the appropriation of linguistic content through playful dynamics adapted to the educational context.

### a) Technological and Methodological Resources Applied in the Implementation of Gamification

In relation to the second objective, the technological and methodological resources used to implement gamification in the English classroom were identified. For this purpose, a table was created to summarize the digital resources, platforms used, methodological approaches, and characteristics of the educational environment reported by the analyzed studies.

*Table 3.*

*Technological and Methodological Resources Used in Educational Gamification Experiences*

N <sup>o</sup>	Author/Year	Country	Title	Methodology	Educational Level	Resources
1	Terán et al. (2024)	Ecuador	Gamification as a Didactic Strategy in the English Language Teaching Process	Quantitative correlational exploratory	Unified General High School	Tools such as Wordwall and Quizizz were used. Methodologies based on problem-solving and collaborative learning were applied, promoting active participation through level-based challenges and dynamics
2	Briceño (2022)	Ecuador	Educational Gamification	Non-experimental	School and High School	Platforms such as Kahoot and

			as a Strategy for Foreign Language Teaching	cross-sectional quantitative		Classcraft were integrated, along with mixed methodologies including flipped classroom and project-based learning. The use of badges, levels, and feedback encouraged motivation.
3	Trejo (2021)	México	Gamification Experience for Second Language Teaching	Mixed approach	Language students	Resources such as Kahoot!, Google Classroom, and in-person games were used. The methodological approach combined challenge-based learning, team competitions, and playful participation adapted to linguistic content.
4	Tigua et al. (2022)	Ecuador	Gamification as a Teaching Strategy Applied to English	Bibliographic documentary	Unified General High School	The review included tools such as Genially and virtual environments. The use of collaborative and gamified dynamics was highlighted as a resource to enhance understanding and interest.
5	Rodríguez et al. (2020)	Ecuador	Alliance Between Learning and Play: Gamification as a	Explanatory quasi-experimental	From Early Childhood to High School	Mobbyt and other playful environments were implemented. The methodological strategy focused on

			Methodological Strategy				reinforcing vocabulary and structures through dynamics and mechanics adapted to the context.
6	Quintero et al. (2024)	Ecuador	Gamification and English Language Learning: A Comprehensive Exploration	Quantitative analysis with case studies	Intermediate level		Duolingo and Memrise were used. Gamified activities focused on spaced repetition and immediate feedback, integrated into pedagogical routines.
7	Antonio Carrión (2023)	México	Use of ICT in the Teaching-Learning of English	Qualitative documentary review	Not defined		Resources such as social networks, digital forms, and platforms like Edmodo were reviewed. A trend toward personalized and collaborative learning was observed, although with infrastructure difficulties.
8	Pérez (2022)	Ecuador	Gamification for English Vocabulary Acquisition in the Post-Pandemic Era	Qualitative with triangulation	Upper and High School	Basic High	Tools such as Quizlet, Genially, Liveworksheet, and games like Hangman were used. PBL, collaborative learning, and flipped classroom were applied to facilitate vocabulary usage.
9	Quevedo (2025)	Perú	Impact of Gamification on English Language Teaching in	Mixed with narrative-thematic design	Early Education		3D books, augmented reality, mobile apps, and robots were used. Methodologies



			Early Education			were adapted to special needs, promoting multisensory interaction.
<b>10</b>	Murillo & Vaca (2022)	Ecuador	Application of Gamification in the English Teaching-Learning Process in Undergraduate Education	Exploratory descriptive mixed	Undergraduate	Physical and digital materials such as Kahoot, memory games, and group dynamics were combined. Classes were organized through flexible planning and playful objectives.
<b>11</b>	Al-Dosakee & Ozdamli (2021)	Irak	Gamification in Teaching and Learning Languages	Systematic review	Not defined	Duolingo, Busuu, and holographic technology were identified. Student-centered methodologies were highlighted with personalized learning and hybrid models.
<b>12</b>	Espinoza et al. (2024)	Ecuador	Gamificación en el 7mo grado para la enseñanza del inglés	Descriptiva cualitativa	7mo grado	Se aplicaron recursos como plataformas digitales, videos y tareas colaborativas. Metodológicamente, se promovió la interacción, autonomía y el trabajo en grupo con TIC y TAC.
<b>13</b>	Dindar et al. (2020)	China	Gamification in 7th Grade for English Language Teaching	Descriptive qualitative	7th grade	Digital platforms, videos, and collaborative tasks were used. Methodologically, interaction,

						autonomy, and group work were promoted with ICT and TAC tools.
14	Huyen (2020)	Australia	Gamified Learning: Are Vietnamese EFL Learners Ready Yet?	Mixed approach	EPC Students	Digital games on phones and laptops were used. The teacher played a key role in planning dynamics, reinforcing previous content through playful activities.
15	Wuluntari et al. (2023)	Indonesia	The role of gamification in English language teaching	Systematic literature review	Not defined	Platforms such as Quizizz and Vocabulary Ninja were highlighted. Applied methodologies included active learning, problem-solving, and vocabulary contextualization

### b) Impact of Gamification on the English Language Teaching-Learning Process

Regarding the third objective, a table is presented with reported evidence on the impact of gamification in English language learning. The information was organized based on the indicators used, educational levels, applied methodology, and results obtained in each study.

*Table 4. Evidence of the Impact of Gamification on English Language Learning*

Nº	Author/Year	Country	Title	Methodology	Education Level	Impact of the Strategy
1	Terán et al. (2024)	Ecuador	Gamification as a Didactic Strategy in the English Language Teaching Process	Exploratory correlational quantitative	Unified General Baccalaureate	A significant improvement in student motivation was evident, with greater active participation in class. Statistical analysis confirmed the relationship between

						gamification and meaningful learning.
2	Briceño (2022)	Ecuador	Educational Gamification as a Strategy for Foreign Language Teaching	Quantitative, non-experimental, cross-sectional	School and high school	The implementation of gamified dynamics increased vocabulary retention, encouraged peer interaction, and created a participatory environment that facilitated oral communication.
3	Trejo (2021)	Mexico	Gamification Experience for Second Language Teaching	Mixed approach	Language students	Students showed increased attention and willingness toward proposed activities, recognizing the motivating value of competitive and collaborative dynamics.
4	Tigua et al. (2022)	Ecuador	Gamification as a Teaching Strategy Applied to English Language	Documentary and bibliographic	Unified General Baccalaureate	The documentary analysis revealed that gamification promotes interest, improves concentration, and fosters more engaged participation with content.
5	Rodríguez et al. (2020)	Ecuador	Alliance Between Learning and Play: Gamification as a Methodological Strategy	Quasi-experimental and explanatory	From early childhood to high school	Students showed progress in vocabulary and grammar, attributed to the playful component that replaced traditional techniques. Participation increased through interactive dynamics.
6	Quintero et al. (2024)	Ecuador	Gamification and English Language Learning: A Comprehensive Exploration	Quantitative analysis with case studies	Intermediate level	Improvements were recorded in motivation, listening comprehension, and vocabulary retention. The experimental group

						outperformed the control group in all evaluated variables.
7	Antonio & Carrión (2023)	Mexico	Use of ICT in English Language Teaching and Learning	Qualitative documentary review	Not defined	The contribution of gamification in developing language skills, especially writing and speaking, was recognized, although its effectiveness depends on teacher training.
8	Pérez (2022)	Ecuador	Gamification for Vocabulary Acquisition in English in the Post-Pandemic Context	Qualitative with triangulation	Upper basic and high school	The use of digital games supported vocabulary learning, improved attitudes toward the language, and strengthened students' social interaction.
9	Quevedo (2025)	Peru	Impact of Gamification in English Teaching Early Childhood Education	Mixed with narrative-thematic design	Early Childhood Education	Gamification helped improve vocabulary retention and foster cognitive and social skills in young children through engaging and multisensory activities.
10	Murillo & Vaca (2022)	Ecuador	Application of Gamification in the English Teaching-Learning Process at the Undergraduate Level	Exploratory descriptive mixed	Undergraduate	A relaxed learning environment was achieved, with greater willingness to participate. Gamification enhanced attention, collaboration, and language comprehension.
11	Al-Dosakee & Ozdamli (2021)	Iraq	Gamification in Teaching and Learning Languages	Systematic review	Not defined	The motivational role of gamification was highlighted, transforming classrooms into dynamic spaces, fostering a positive

						attitude and better academic performance.
12	Espinoza et al. (2024)	Ecuador	Gamification in 7th Grade for English Language Teaching	Descriptive qualitative	7th grade	Teachers observed improvements in pronunciation, increased motivation, and better academic performance. Language skills and student cooperation were strengthened.
13	Dindar et al. (2020)	China	Gamified Cooperation and Competition on English Vocabulary Learning	Experimental quantitative	Higher education	Gamified competition increased daily participation, although there were no changes in task completion. Greater enjoyment and interest in activities were reported.
14	Huyen (2020)	Australia	Gamified Learning: ¿Are Vietnamese EFL Learners Ready Yet?	Mixed approach	EPC course students	The game was positively valued for its ability to motivate and facilitate autonomous learning. However, poor planning reduced its effectiveness in some cases.

The data show that gamification has had positive effects on motivation, engagement, vocabulary retention, and student participation. Additionally, some studies report improvements in listening comprehension, oral expression, and students' self-confidence.

## Discussion

The results obtained in this systematic review confirm that gamification has become an increasingly used educational strategy to enhance the English language teaching process, particularly in primary and secondary education. In this regard, authors such as Terán et al. (2024) and Briceño (2022) agree that using rewards, levels, and platforms like Wordwall, Kahoot, or Classcraft significantly increases student motivation and fosters active participation in class. Both

studies demonstrate how gamified dynamics help break the traditional classroom routine, making learning more engaging and less intimidating.

The motivational approach is also supported by Rodríguez et al. (2020), who highlight gamification's role as a bridge between learning and play, promoting the acquisition of new knowledge. However, not all studies are equally optimistic. For instance, Huyen (2020), in their research on Vietnamese contexts, notes that while games motivate and facilitate autonomous learning, poor planning can affect their effectiveness. That is, gamification is not just about using games but knowing when, how, and for what purpose to integrate them.

Similarly, Antonio & Carrión (2023) recognize the potential of ICT to strengthen language skills but issue a key warning: without proper teacher training, gamification risks becoming just another trend rather than a transformative pedagogical tool. This observation aligns with Briceño (2022), who acknowledges that many teachers face technological or methodological barriers to implementing such strategies.

On the other hand, Quintero et al. (2024) and Dindar et al. (2020) provide solid quantitative evidence on how gamified competition and cooperation dynamics improve vocabulary acquisition and listening comprehension. Studies like Quevedo (2025), focused on early education, further demonstrate that gamification not only enhances cognitive aspects but also social skills, fostering empathy and collaborative work from a young age.

Murillo & Vaca (2022) take the discussion further, asserting that gamification is not simply about introducing games into the classroom but using them with clear pedagogical objectives, immediate feedback, and engaging dynamics that spark students' curiosity and motivation. This aligns with Pérez (2022), who emphasizes that well-integrated digital games can shift students' attitudes toward English, boost linguistic self-esteem, and create more positive learning environments.

In summary, there is broad consensus that gamification, when properly planned and applied, has a positive impact on English language teaching. However, real challenges remain, such as teacher training, technological infrastructure, and the need to adapt gamified dynamics to the cultural and educational context of each institution. Thus, gamification should not be seen as a magical solution but rather as a valuable tool within a broader and more coherent framework of pedagogical innovation



## Conclusions

After reviewing scientific literature across 15 articles, it is evident that gamification has gained a significant presence in English language classrooms, particularly due to its ability to engage students effectively. One of the key observations was the wide variety of strategies used: rewards, levels, challenges, group competitions, role-playing dynamics, and platforms like Kahoot, Quizizz, and Wordwall have become increasingly common tools in teaching. Interestingly, these strategies not only make classes more enjoyable but also genuinely enhance motivation, encouraging students to participate actively and without fear of making mistakes.

Additionally, the review highlighted that effective application of these strategies is not solely about having access to technology but knowing how to use it with a pedagogical purpose. Many educators have relied on active methodologies such as collaborative learning, challenge-based learning, or even flipped classrooms. Platforms like Duolingo, Genially, and Google Classroom were successfully integrated into activities that respected students' learning paces, making them feel more engaged in the process.

Regarding the impact of gamified experiences, most studies agreed that the results were positive, showing increased participation, improved attitudes towards the language, advancements in vocabulary acquisition, listening comprehension, and oral expression, as well as enhanced self-confidence. Furthermore, gamification strengthened aspects such as peer interaction, learning autonomy, and students' willingness to actively engage in classes.

Ultimately, gamification is positioned as a relevant pedagogical strategy capable of transforming the educational experience in English classrooms when applied with proper planning, clear objectives, and methodological coherence. Beyond being just a trend, it represents an opportunity to enhance teaching processes, making them more inclusive and aligned with students' realities, thereby contributing significantly to comprehensive development and meaningful learning.

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