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# Motivation and academic performance in learning English through gamification

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## Abstract

The objective of this article was to determine the extent to which gamification in the classroom raises the level of motivation of higher level students, thus achieving learning objectives and improving academic performance in English as a foreign language. The research was of a comparative type in which several motivation theories are reviewed and contrasted and the game is integrated as the main strategy to raise the level of participation of students as the first objective; and, subsequently, the possible impacts on performance are analyzed. The design was of a documentary nature including different recognized data sources such as Scopus, e-Book, and Web of Science, under search criteria such as temporality and thematic relevance to include or exclude documents. Among the main findings, it was found that, for a significant group of authors, the use of games in the classroom increases participation, autonomy, interactivity and provides instant feedback. Regarding academic performance, different studies record improvements in student performance, although this requires optimal planning that considers aspects of the game such as the level of difficulty, competition, and specific skill requirements such as grammar and vocabulary.

**Keywords:** Motivation; academic performance; English learning; gamification; pedagogical resources.

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# Motivación y rendimiento académico en el aprendizaje del inglés a partir de la gamificación

## Resumen

El objetivo de este artículo fue determinar la medida en que la gamificación en el aula eleva el nivel de motivación de los estudiantes de nivel superior, alcanzando así, los objetivos del aprendizaje y mejorando el rendimiento académico del inglés como lengua extranjera. La investigación fue de tipo comparativa en la que se revisan y contrastan varias teorías de motivación y se integra el juego como principal estrategia para elevar el nivel de participación de los estudiantes como primer objetivo; y, posteriormente se analizan los posibles impactos en el rendimiento. El diseño fue de carácter documental incluyendo diferentes fuentes de datos reconocidas como son Scopus, e-Libro, y Web of Science, bajo criterios de búsqueda como la temporalidad y pertinencia temática para incluir o excluir documentos. Entre los principales hallazgos, se encontró que, para un grupo significativo de autores, el uso de juegos en la clase incrementa la participación, la autonomía, interactividad y provee retroalimentación instantánea. Con respecto al desempeño académico, diferentes estudios registran mejoras en el rendimiento de los estudiantes, aunque para esto, se requiere una óptima planeación que contemple en el juego, aspectos como, el nivel de dificultad, de competencia y, experiencias de habilidades puntuales como gramática y vocabulario.

**Palabras clave:** Motivación; rendimiento académico; aprendizaje del inglés; gamificación; recursos pedagógicos.

## Introduction

According to the EF English Proficiency Index (EF EPI, 2022), Ecuador ranks among the countries with the lowest English proficiency levels globally, placing 82nd out of 111 countries worldwide and 18th among 20 Latin American nations. Despite this discouraging scenario, the study also reports that Latin America has achieved significant progress in recent years, though insufficient to advance to a higher proficiency level. This situation has prompted educators to seek strategies to achieve learning objectives and enhance students' English proficiency, a task that remains challenging.

Maintaining high levels of student participation and interest in language learning is a primary goal for instructors. Achieving this requires an understanding of the key sources of student motivation to effectively design and implement appropriate teaching strategies in

the teaching-learning process. In this context, this research aims to determine through the review and comparison of relevant works on gamification as a motivational tool whether the implementation of gamification in the classroom fosters motivation and participation among students and whether this has positive impact in the academic performance overall.

The literature review enabled identification of primary motivation sources and types, highlighting the significance of self-motivation or intrinsic motivation in achieving optimal long-term results according to various authors. Several studies indicate that gaming represents an effective for fostering student's intrinsic motivation, though they also emphasize the importance of game design and the characteristics necessary for achieving superior outcomes.

By addressing the research objective: Examining the extent to which classroom gamification enhances motivation in higher education students, this study aims to

provide insights into incorporating games as instructional tools. The findings contribute to the body of knowledge available to educators seeking to improve English language learning through gamification at the tertiary education level.

## **1. Theoretical foundation**

### **1.1. Motivation and its types**

Life represents a constant pursuit of objectives and goals that individuals set to achieve personal satisfaction or, according to Abraham Maslow, self-actualization. However, individuals do not consistently maintain the same energy and drive necessary to achieve these goals, which are essential components of professional, academic, or daily tasks. According to Hidalgo-Oñate (2023), in such moments, motivation becomes an effective instrument that helps minimize potential obstacles and achieve objectives with determination and persistence.

The Real Academia Española (RAE, 2023) defines motivation as “a set of internal and external factors that determine, in part, an individual’s actions”. Similarly, Gallardo & Camacho (2016) refer to motivation as the “motives” or “reasons” that explain one’s behavior and that of others. The English term “drive” refers to the internal force that propels individuals toward action. Furthermore, Palmero et al. (2010) maintain that motivation follows a natural phenomenon, occurring when an organism perceives an internal imbalance in any of its components, necessitating some form of regulation, whether physiological or behavioral.

According to Lieury & Fenouillet (2016); and Jaramillo-Bernal, Robao-Pinzón & Rojas-Berrio (2018), motivation can be categorized as intrinsic, extrinsic, and a-motivation, the latter referring to a complete absence of motivation. Intrinsic motivation stems from an individual’s personal enjoyment and fulfillment derived from an activity. These authors add that intrinsic motivation

comprises two elements: a high degree of perceived competence and self-determination. These elements characterize a passionate and proactive individual with strong internal energy for growth and well-being.

Similarly, extrinsic motivation, according to Mullins & Gill (2016), relates to tangible rewards such as salary, tangible benefits, job promotions, work environment and conditions, grades, recognition, scholarships, among others. These incentives are designed to maximize individual performance in terms of their abilities, with the primary objective of achieving optimal results, whether individual or collective.

Meanwhile, Téllez et al. (2023) describe a-motivation as a lack of interest in activity processes or procedures, typically manifesting in individuals who perceive limitations to their aspirations. This condition may result from an accumulation of negative experiences and frustrations characteristic of pessimistic attitudes.

In conclusion, motivation represents the element that makes achievement seem possible, helps maintain a positive attitude, and prevents individuals from abandoning their objectives at the first obstacle. Consequently, success probabilities increase as motivated individuals demonstrate greater efficiency in activity execution and, therefore, greater happiness.

### **1.2. Motivation in the classroom**

The study of motivation in the classroom holds significant relevance in contemporary education. Educators widely acknowledge the challenges of managing a classroom without adequate participation levels that foster a conducive learning environment. Consequently, recent studies in educational psychology have focused on analyzing motivation and its variations across different learning contexts. According to Arriaga-Sanz et al. (2022), research examining the relationship between cognitive and affective factors that determine classroom motivation

levels has gained increasing prominence in recent times.

Multiple studies highlight the importance of student-teacher relationships in fostering motivation. Domínguez (2021); Arriaga-Sanz et al. (2022); and Ros-Martín et al. (2023) assert that teacher knowledge is not the sole component in ensuring educational quality, while also recognizing that additional factors such as personal circumstances, family background, academic environment, and socioeconomic conditions significantly impact motivation and learning outcomes.

Domínguez (2021), also notes that many educators consider student motivation one of the most complex challenges in achieving learning objectives. This issue is not exclusive to primary and secondary education, where students have not yet fully developed their character formation, but also extends to higher education. This results in elevated rates of course failure and attrition, translating into wasted time and resources for both students and the state.

The concept of motivation can also be examined through the stimulus-response framework, particularly determined in animal behavior research. Pavlov maintained that behavior is influenced by conditioning, while Watson observed a set of unified responses through conditioning (Rojas & Eguibar, 2001). Panksepp and Freud contributed additional systems related to emotion and the significance of affective demands, which can be interpreted as students' need for affection both with their peers and teachers (Zechowski, 2017).

Furthermore, the motivational factor can be analyzed through the lens of reward and punishment as learning stimuli, resulting from the interaction between motivation and habit. Here, motivation serves as the driving force, similar to motive in criminal behavior, while habit represents prior knowledge; consequently, learning does not occur without motivation. Authors such as Miralles & Cima (2010); Lieury & Fenouillet (2014); Gallardo & Camacho (2016); and Domínguez (2021) suggest that motivation can be manipulated when understood through this duality

between reward and punishment, where the following parameters are considered to modify motivation levels and subsequent learning: Praise, reprimand, indifference, and control—with praise being the primary motivational factor, followed by reprimand, and finally indifference and control.

In conclusion, motivation can be considered an omnipresent factor in human life, through which better outcomes are achieved, particularly in academic dynamics. While reward and punishment mechanisms may be effective in some educational settings, the optimal approach is to encourage student autonomy and achievement needs, fostering an intrinsic condition that requires neither promises of rewards nor threats of censure.

### **1.3. Impact of Motivation on Academic Performance**

According to Skinner (1980); and Lieury & Fenouillet (2014), positive reinforcement has the most significant impact on student motivation, whereas negative reinforcement can have adverse effects. This indicates that positive feedback will consistently be the most appropriate approach to maintaining higher levels of motivation in the classroom. However, according to Gallardo & Camacho (2016), it is essential to regularly evaluate students to measure their progress and communicate it, since previous studies have surprisingly demonstrated that dropout rates can be a consequence of insufficient assessment, particularly at the university level.

While grades serve as important performance indicators, they must be assigned fairly and proportionally to student effort. Lieury & Fenouillet (2014) caution against excessive reward as it can undermine motivation, as students tend to seek increasingly stronger reinforcements and become demotivated when these cannot be provided. Similarly, excessive indulgence also functions as a form of demotivation.

Can learning occur without Motivation? This is the fundamental question that must be

addressed to understand why some students, without requiring significant external rewards, exhibit a natural inclination to learning. Undoubtedly, a certain degree of motivation is essential for students to engage in learning. According to Ros-Martín et al. (2023); and Buenaño et al. (2023), the quality of work improves significantly when individuals are motivated, as it facilitates the achievement of learning objectives. Moreover, motivation serves as a strong predictor of students' engagement levels and academic performance.

However, rewards are not the sole determinant of motivation. In fact, factors such as curiosity an innate biological drive in living beings that compel the brain to seek answers serve as a powerful source of intrinsic motivation. Interestingly, this intrinsic drive can be negatively influenced by external reward systems, such as prizes, recognition, or time constraints imposed on a task. Conversely, competition acts as an extrinsic motivator, often enhancing engagement among participants compared to those who work individually. This phenomenon is particularly evident in sports and collaborative activities.

Another crucial factor affecting student motivation is the perceived difficulty of a subject. This is particularly relevant for students who struggle academically, as their motivation tends to decline progressively when faced with increasing complexity, ultimately impacting their performance. Schachter & Celce-Murcia (1977); along with Lenon, De Prada & Hockly (2001), emphasize the importance of simplifying information, making it more accessible so that students can more easily recognize patterns and combinations within the material.

Additionally, a key but often overlooked factor in academic motivation is the way teachers communicate with their students. Casado (1998) argues that this aspect plays a pivotal role in what he terms the "communication of expectations," which manifests in unconscious, non-verbal teacher-student interactions. Negative behaviors such as a lack of encouragement, absence of rewards, constant criticism, and low

expectations can lead students to internalize and conform to these low expectations phenomenon known as the Pygmalion Effect. Effective communication is therefore essential to mitigate the detrimental consequences of these micro-interactions; which educators must be consciously aware of.

From a hermeneutic perspective, based on a comprehensive literature review, a strong correlation emerges between play-based learning strategies, such as gamification, and academic progress. While this relationship is far from linear given that learning is inherently multifaceted it is frequently observed that academic performance improves when students engage in enjoyable learning experiences that are cognitively meaningful, transforming entertainment-driven activities into effective educational tools.

#### **1.4. Gamification: Typology and key elements**

According to Gonzalez (2017), gamification seeks to transform education by fostering student autonomy. The traditional pedagogical model, in which the teacher acts as the sole source of knowledge, should no longer be the dominant approach. Instead, students should take an active role in their learning process, thus sustaining intrinsic motivation. Zambrano-Álava et al. (2020) supports this idea, arguing that gamification fosters self-regulated learning and, in essence, serves as a mechanism to boost motivation.

Gaitán (2013); and Calderón et al. (2022) describes gamification as the integration of game-based mechanics into academic settings to enhance learning outcomes. Ripoll (2014) echoes this perspective, emphasizing that gamification creates a playful experience within an educational context, making learning more engaging. Gallego, Molina & Llorens (2014) define gamification as a process where students actively participate in structured activities, allowing them to take on roles, make decisions, and develop a sense of ownership—key factors in fostering



motivation and engagement.

Similarly, Marín & Hierro (2013) conceptualize gamification as the adaptation of game dynamics to non-gaming environments, where strategic elements are employed to encourage participation and motivation. Ramírez (2014) further elaborates on this idea, describing gamification as a collection of techniques designed to enhance both learning and motivation within “non-playable” environments.

Gaitán (2013) identifies several key game models applicable to educational contexts, including point accumulation, level progression, rewards, rankings, and challenges. Gonzalez (2017); and Marín, Morales & Reche (2020), expands on this by asserting that educators should leverage digital game-based learning models to maximize engagement and learning outcomes.

Romero & Espinosa (2019) highlight three essential components of gamification: Rules, which structure gameplay by defining player turns, scoring mechanisms, and success criteria; narrative, which establishes the thematic framework, character roles, objectives, and incentives; surprise factor, which incorporates unpredictable stimuli to sustain students’ motivation at an optimal level.

Although researchers universally acknowledge the pedagogical potential of gamification, the specific elements they emphasize vary according to their research focus. Ultimately, the key takeaway is that, when implemented strategically, game-based learning can complement traditional teaching methods without undermining the academic rigor required in formal education.

### **1.5. Gamification in the classroom and its impact on motivation**

Navinkumar & Sivakami (2024) report that an increasing number of educators have incorporated gamification strategies into their classrooms as part of task-based learning methodologies aimed at enhancing motivation.

Gómez-Trigueros (2024), in a study conducted in Valencia, found that students exposed to gamified learning experiences exhibited a significant increase in motivation across multiple disciplines.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the concept of “gamification tools” has gained widespread recognition as a means of improving student engagement. Navinkumar & Sivakami (2024) demonstrated that students who used Kahoot developed stronger grammatical skills, an improvement directly attributed to higher motivation levels when using digital learning tools.

Shakhmalova & Zotova (2023) reinforce this perspective, highlighting the positive impact of mobile and computer-based applications like Kahoot and Quizlet. Their study revealed that fourth-year university students experienced a 10% increase in motivation after integrating these tools into their learning process. Other authors who agree with the use of technology such as tablets, internet access, use of mobile computers, are Criollo-C & Luján-Mora (2023) who affirm that through these means and thanks to the application of the Kahoot gamification tool, it has been possible to increase participation and motivation in the classroom, which generates dialogue for possible future research in gamification.

Beyond motivation, gamification has been linked to behavioral transformation. Rodríguez-Iglesias, Moreno-Adalid & Gallego (2022), using Chi-Square statistical analysis, found that classroom dynamics changed significantly when playful elements were integrated. Similarly, Lomba, Jaber & Sánchez (2021) argue that gamification increases student participation, reduces absenteeism, and fosters a motivational classroom atmosphere, ultimately enhancing academic performance.

Mudure-Iacob (2021) further posits that gamification is not only a learning strategy but also an effective formative assessment tool. In addition to boosting motivation, gamification fosters autonomous learning, encourages collaboration, and promotes hands-on language acquisition. Vathanalaoha (2022) underscores

the urgent need for engaging educational tools in the 21st century, highlighting that gamification can create a more immersive and inspiring learning environment.

Another example of this is the study carried out on a group of students belonging to the sixth grade of basic education in Japan. The authors Martínez-Roig, Mateo-Guillén & García-Tudela (2022) indicate that thanks to the implementation of gamification in a game called “A Trip to Japan”, the students as part of the study of this research developed a more autonomous learning and desire to know the English language when faced with situations that could occur in real life when traveling abroad.

Finally, it is important to mention that, although gamification does not always have an impact on the best academic performance of students, according to Bai, Hew & Huang (2020), it does represent a tool to increase motivation in students, because it allows to foster enthusiasm, promote the achievement of objectives, and gives feedback on academic performance in the activities in which it has been applied.

## **1.6. Gamification and its effects on academic performance**

Qub'a et al. (2024) mentions that the use of gamification in university students reflected not only an increase in motivation and commitment to learning a language but also the improvement of their language skills; it should be noted that this good result is conditioned by optimal planning principles. Another study that corroborates this result is that of Zhang (2024), who shows that through the use of gamification in experimental group A, better results were obtained in the ESG test (Environmental, Social, and Governance education) compared to experimental group B in whom the aforementioned technique was not applied, suggesting that this is a transformative tool for higher education

The authors De-la-Peña & Chaves (2024), in their study carried out in Spain on

students between 16 and 18 years of age, point out that the use of gamification based on a digitalization methodology impacted on a 39% improvement in the experimental group to which this technique was applied, as opposed to the other group of students in which the teacher-centered methodology was applied.

Rofiah & Waluyo (2024) considers that the effect of gamification was positive in improving learning anxiety and motivation in the group of students with a higher level of knowledge of the English language in grammar and vocabulary skills; however, a significant improvement in academic performance is not reflected. Li, Fryer & Chu (2024), on the other hand, agrees that gamification increases motivation, the level of satisfaction in learning, commitment to learning and, to a certain extent, academic performance, although he recommends that studies on the subject can be carried out with a rigorous experimental and longitudinal methodology.

Wang, Liu & Zhang (2019) states that the improvement in academic performance through the use of gamification is a hypothesis that needs further studies, since when he used the gamified program “Speed Mandarin” in a group of 60 students, only a slight improvement in oral ability could be observed, but not in other skills such as reading comprehension, listening comprehension, and written expression.

This general look at the impact that results from gamifying some educational spaces leaves the conviction that there is a lot of pedagogical work to be done in the field of teaching English, based on playful resources. This represents a positive challenge because it is about continuing to reflect on the processes through which students can approach unknown territory, such as another language, from what is known, which, in this analytical proposal, corresponds to play and fun teaching.

## **2. Methodology**

For the development of this research, a comprehensive literature review (Snyder,



2019) was adopted in order to know if motivation levels in the classroom increases through the implementation of gamification. In this way, two phases were adopted in the investigative work, an initial qualitative phase: In the first instance, an analysis was carried out of the current and most relevant information related to motivation in the classroom, gamification and its impact on motivation, and finally on performance efficiency. For this purpose, starting from the definition of the specific problems of teaching English at a higher level, it was possible to define the most relevant topics to be investigated in order to try to provide solutions to them from the scientific field.

Thus, at first a preliminary review was made of the most relevant works and contributions for the objectives of this research work, resulting in an effective approach to the topic of study and the real challenge that motivation represents for the teaching of English in the Ecuadorian university environment. And then in a second moment for the analysis of results and comparisons, the results and the importance of the contributions were evaluated in terms of the impacts recorded on performance efficiency. These two techniques complement each other, so that they allow a broad scope of the topic of study.

According to the aforementioned, it started with the search of several recognized databases such as: Scopus, e-Book, and Web

of Science (WOS), all of which have relevant research works, books and articles reviewed by world-renowned academic peers and that have been of crucial importance for the development of this research.

The selection of works and articles has been made in both English and Spanish with search topics such as “motivation in the classroom”, “motivation”, “drive”, “gaming in the classroom”, “gamification”, “motivation and grades”, “academic performance”. Among these documents, many were discarded because they were repetitive and did not represent a significant contribution to the research, but those that are directly related to the topics studied were used for the review and subsequently the analysis of data and results.

### 3. Results and discussion

Regarding the research findings and according to the search criteria for the systematic literature review, a series of documents were obtained and the most relevant articles for the objectives of this research were selected, discarding those that were repetitive, topics that did not fit the study objectives, and also reducing the inclusion criteria by publication date, in certain cases the publication periods were extended due to the non-existence of works in the range of recent years as presented in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
**Search results according to databases, keywords, and inclusion criteria.**

Database	Combination of searched terms	Number of documents	Language	Inclusion criteria and dates of
Scopus	“Motivation in the classroom”; “motivation”; “motivation in the classroom”	39	37 in English 2 in Spanish	Last 5 years (From 2020-to 2024)
	“Gaming in the classroom”, “gamification”, “motivation and grades”, “motivation y academic performance”	634	599 in English 28 in Spanish	Research date: June 10 <sup>th</sup> 2024
e-book	“motivation”; “motivation in the classroom”	24	22 in English 2 in Spanish	Last 10 years (From 2015-to 2024)
	“Digital gaming in the classroom”, “gamification”, “motivation and grades”, “motivation y academic performance”	3	3 in English 0 in Spanish	Research date: June 12 <sup>th</sup> 2024

**Cont... Table 1**

	“motivation”; “motivation in the classroom”	1.811	1.811 in English	Last 3 years (From 2023-to 2024)
<b>WOS</b>	“Digital gaming in the classroom”, “gamification”, “motivation and grades”, “motivation y academic performance”	1.349	1.347 in English 2 in Spanish	<i>Research date: June 12<sup>th</sup> 2024</i>

**Source:** Own elaboration, 2024.

From the readings made, it was possible to define that the use of games in the classroom increased the levels of motivation, as it is indicated in several studies by Shakhmalova & Zotova (2023); Navinkumar & Sivakami (2024); and, Gómez-Trigueros (2024), who agree that through the implementation of tools such as Kahoot and Quizlet, better levels of participation in the classroom and the strengthening of grammar skills were achieved. In this sense, it is important to take into account that the game activity must have an objective within the learning and its level of difficulty must be slightly above the level of competence of the students so that it does not represent an unattainable challenge and motivation is maintained throughout the activity.

Likewise, according to the different articles and books reviewed in this research, it was determined that it is crucial to ensure that students are motivated to improve their performance. It was also identified that intrinsic motivation has better results in the long term and is more effective in achieving learning objectives. Thus, Ros-Martin et al. (2023) goes further and ensures that the work of motivated students is of better quality and motivation helps predict levels of participation in the classroom.

Furthermore, it has been identified that the game, as González (2017); Romero & Espinosa (2019); Zambrano-Álava et al. (2020); and, Marín et al. (2020) assert, is an element that incorporates innovative aspects in the classroom such as self-regulation, promotes student autonomy and increases levels of intrinsic motivation, which represents greater effectiveness in student performance. Thus, games in the classroom are a crucial element

that must be incorporated regularly due to its own characteristics such as the interpretation of a given role in the game that makes students raise their level of relevance, as indicated by Gallego et al. (2014).

According to Shakhmalova & Zotova (2023); Criollo-C & Luján-Mora (2023); Gómez-Trigueros (2024); and, Navinkumar & Sivakami (2024), the implementation of games in the classroom through different digital tools has achieved an increase in motivation, giving positive results; As Kam & Umar (2024) point out, this adds affirmative motivational dimensions such as capacity, autonomy, self-worth; this being especially true for games that are not evaluated.

In the case of learning English, the use of gamification has been the subject of studies in recent years and it is emphasized that games provide countless benefits, according to Poole & Clarke-Midura (2020), among them are making learning a fun process, motivating the student to learn the language, providing a highly interactive context, promoting collaboration and meaningful interactions with instant feedback, among the most important. These benefits can be enhanced, for example, by using new vocabulary and helping control the anxiety that learning a new language could represent.

De Mello et al. (2020) assure that more studies on gamification should be carried out to measure the true impact of this strategy on not only the development of linguistic skills and learning in an academic environment, but also on the performance of candidates for international exams such as TOEFL. In fact, Nikolaou, Georgiou & Kotsasarlidou (2019) confirms that evaluative gamification predicts not only academic performance in a classroom,

but can also provide a guideline for the future work performance of people who have been taught through this strategy, measuring soft skills such as flexibility, adaptability, resilience and decision-making power, which means that even this learning tool can be seen as a source of personnel selection in human resources.

Other studies on gamification have even included the broad field of psychology, for example, Goddixsen et al. (2024) assures that gamification is a source of measurement of student integrity and honesty, this is because through the game "Integrity Games" he was able to verify that students after playing it were aware of academic integrity, they increased their knowledge about conflict prevention and misconduct.

## **Conclusions**

From what has been analyzed in the literary study and after the discussion of the results, it can be concluded that the use of gamification significantly affects the increase in motivation for learning in students of all educational levels. In addition, this increase in motivation results in an increase in class participation, self-esteem, and recognition of the value of acquiring new knowledge, among others. It is worth mentioning that this increase in motivation generally occurs when the gamification activity is well planned and other factors are taken into consideration, such as the level of difficulty of the activity, the reward system and the understanding of the context of the game.

At the same time, gamification in this new century is marked by the implementation of new technologies that make students live new educational realities and have different recreational experiences from those of previous times. This implies the need for teachers to reinforce their training, in the field of strategies that favor or enhance the possibility of using certain technological resources such as computing or cell phones, which are part of the daily lives today, not only of the students but also of the community in general.

Regarding the relationship of gamification with academic performance, several studies suggest that the implementation of gamification by itself does not guarantee an increase in the academic level of the participants. It is necessary to carry out a greater number of diachronic investigations that measure the true effect of gamification on academic performance. However, what can be concluded is that by raising the levels of motivation, the level of academic performance increases, and this can be explained thanks to the fact that through different psychological and educational analyses, cited in this research, intrinsically motivated students were able to have better performance in the evaluation of soft skills, communication skills, linguistic performance, among others.

In summary, from these lines it has been possible to demonstrate the need to delve into some of the pedagogical strategies that already use gamification, but do not obtain a greater benefit from it by not involving the students in the design of the games and their purpose. The study then reveals a wide use of massification tools associated with motivation for learning, warning about the possibilities of expanding their coverage in areas such as English that may be very prone to these techniques.

Speaking about its limitations, it was not possible to carry out a study that would allow theory to be contrasted with practice in some empirical contexts and that is where recommendations for new research point. It would be convenient for active teachers in some educational institutions to undertake new research on this topic, but applying a field methodology and thus involving the main actors of the pedagogical centers such as students and teachers.

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