



## Challenges Faced by First Years English Department Students in Using Online Gamification in Basic Grammar Class

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### Abstract

*Quizizz, Wordwall, Kahoot!, iSpring, and other popular online gamification tools are used in the Universitas Negeri Padang basic grammar class. It was difficult for students to learn basic grammar using online gamification because they encountered numerous internal and external obstacles. The goal of this study is to pinpoint the internal and external difficulties that English language learners encounter when gamification is used in a basic grammar class at the Universitas Negeri Padang. Research tools included questionnaires and interviews. Nine of the 94 basic grammar course participants who completed the questionnaire also took part in individual interviews. This study also aims to shed light on potential obstacles and difficulties that may need to be taken into account when incorporating recognized gamification frameworks. We can draw the conclusion that students found it difficult to apply gamification to both internal and external challenges. External challenges are weaknesses brought on by the environment, such as a hostile work environment, a poor internet connection, excessive task and assignment load from instructors, etc. Internal challenges are personal weaknesses such as knowledge and attitudes. Below are the internal issues. Lack of content knowledge, lack of student preparation, lack of motivation, lack of comprehension, lack of vocabulary, lack of time management, etc.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Grammar is the set of rules governing the traditional placement and relationship of words in sentences (Brown, 2001). Without understanding the grammatical rules, learners cannot communicate effectively in the language. However, grammar has always been the most difficult element to teach (Burgess and Etherington, 2002) and the most tedious element to learn at all levels of learning

institutions (Al-Mekhlafi & Nagaratnam, 2011; Schulz, 2001). It has been thought According to Saaristo (2015), grammar is a central concept in general linguistic theory. However, learning grammar presents some challenges. However, there are different approaches and methods of teaching English grammar to solve this problem. For example, gamification. Gamification in education is a way of teaching students through games and other fun activities to make the learning process more enjoyable. According to Zichermann and Cunningham (2011), games have proven to be a very useful tool in the classroom. Online gamification is used in applications and processes to enhance learning (Bellotti et al., 2013). Online gamification is considered one of the most important ideas in education (Mohamad et al, 2017). The most popular online gamification applications for Universitas Negeri Padang's basic grammar class are Quizizz, Wordwall, Kahoot!, iSpring, and others.

On the one hand, in the context of education, gamification has several advantages in teaching and learning. Benefits for teachers using gamification include: First, to help students achieve their educational goals (Duggal et al., 2021); second, to measure learners' weaknesses and strengths (Castillo-Cuesta, 2020); (Al-Malah et al., 2020; Coman 2020) Dewantara 2020 Duggal et al 2021 Garca Iruela et al 2020 Gündüz and Akkoyunlu 2020 Hamari and Nousiainen 2015 Kitchenham and Charters 2007 Reeves and Read 2009 Sailer and Homner 2020; Uzunboyly, 2020 Acosta-Medina, 2021; Castillo-Cuesta, 2020; Díaz-Ramírez, 2020; Dindar et al., 2021; Fu et al., 2021; Pinter et al., 2020; et al., 2020), and fifth, promote student participation and engagement in the educational process (Díaz-Ramírez, 2020; Duggal et al., 2021; Gündüz and Akkoyunlu, 2020; Pakinee and Puritat, Reyes, Gálvez, & Enfedaque, 2021; Gündüz and Akkoyunlu, 2020; Pinter et al., 2020; Vanduhe, 2020; Zari c at el., 2021).

On the other hand, previous studies have found some difficulties in implementing online gamification. Johnson et al., (2016) distinguished his two types of assignments: External and internal: External challenges stem from work and home environments such as limited access, inadequate training, and lack of support (Johnson et al., 2016). Students typically only have a small amount of time to dedicate to their education because of their demanding workloads, a lack of organizational support, competing schedules, or even family obligations. (Kahu et al., 2014; Rao & Giuli, 2010; Willging & Johnson, 2009; Erickson & Noonan, 2010; Rao & Giuli; Previous research has also identified internal difficulties that students face, such as teacher attitudes and beliefs, and these difficulties are connected to student characteristics. Finding a balance between work and family or other social responsibilities is a significant challenge for students, according to numerous studies in the literature (Doherty, 2006; Selwyn, 2011; Yasmin, 2013). According to Willging and Johnson (2009), the problem stems from students' lack of interest in the program and study materials.

On the other hand, previous studies have shown some challenges in using online gamification. Johnson et al., (2016) distinguished his two types of assignments: both internal and external Environments at work and home contribute to external challenges like restricted access, inadequate training, and a lack of support (Johnson et al., 2016). Students typically have little time to dedicate to their education because of their heavy workloads, lack of organizational support,

scheduling conflicts, and possibly family obligations (Erickson & Noonan, 2010; Kahu et al. ., 2014; Rao & Giuli, 2010; Willing & Johnson, 2009;). Previous research has also identified internal difficulties that students face, such as teacher attitudes and beliefs, and these difficulties are connected to student characteristics. Balancing work and family responsibilities or other social obligations is a significant challenge for students, according to numerous studies in the literature Yasmin (2013); Selwyn (2011); Doherty (2006). Willing and Johnson (2009) claim that the issue is caused by the students' disinterest in the course and its study materials.

A study by Redjeki and Muhajir (2020) titled “Gamification for Grammar Learning in Higher Education” is one of the most relevant to this research. Their research was conducted using the same methodology in higher education grammar classes. a qualitative approach and surveys and interviews as tools to find out the benefits and challenges of using Duolingo as one of online gamification applications. The shortcomings of this study in using online gamification focus on external challenges faced by students, such as internet assignments and internet connectivity. The Basic English Grammar course is designed to help students who are learning English as a second or foreign language develop their skills. Its purpose is to introduce students to the form, meaning, and usage of basic English structures. The difference between this study and that of Redjeki and Muhajir (2020) is that this study focuses on the challenge of using online gamification as a method of learning basic grammar. Because students face many external and internal challenges. This study focused on English undergraduate students enrolled in an undergraduate English grammar course. With this in mind, the researcher wants to conduct a research paper titled "Challenges faced by her first-year student in the English department when using online gamification in grammar class."

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

Based on the research objectives, descriptive qualitative research will be used in this study. According to William (2007), descriptive methods are investigative methods that allow us to determine the state of the current phenomenon. On the other hand, according to Creswell (2012), qualitative research is often used to determine the importance of central ideas, examine issues, and develop small individuals' understanding of social issues.

Qualitative research therefore does not use positivism to account for the surface of reality as quantitative research. Rather, it aims at a thorough understanding of human and social problems. Researchers interpret how subjects derive meaning from their environment and how that meaning influences behavior. The study was conducted in a naturalistic environment and no variables were manipulated or artificially altered (Fadli, 2021). In addition to focusing on the actual problem, the descriptive approach aims to help solve problems that arise. The descriptive method consists of clarifying each step of the study in detail. According to Sudjana and Ibrahim (2001), Descriptive research seeks to describe signs, symptoms, or actual events. The goal of this study is to find out more about the internal and external difficulties English Department students encounter when using online gamification in basic grammar courses.

The information that researchers gather to address their research questions is known as data. Data sources for qualitative research can include documents, interviews, observations, audiovisual recordings, and physical artifacts, according to Creswell (2012).

This research is conducted at the Department of English, Faculty of Language and Arts, University of Padang. According to Sugiyono (2015), a population refers to a generalized domain consisting of objects or subjects with specific properties and characteristics that researchers use to learn and reason. The study population consists of students of the English Department who in the 2022/2023 academic year he enrolled in the basic grammar class at Universitas Negeri Padang. The data for this study are based on the results of questionnaires and interviews with elementary school students. The data source, on the other hand, is collected from questionnaires and interviews with students enrolled in the English Department of the Basic Grammar Class at Universitas Negeri Padang. Researchers conduct research over several days.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### *Data Description, Finding, Discussion.*

#### *Data Description*

A qualitative method was used in this study. Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews are used as research tools. Ninety-four English first-year students enrolled in a basic grammar class with online gamification responded to a questionnaire, and 10% (or nine students) responded to an individual interview his session. After a participant fills out a questionnaire distributed via her Google Form, the responses can be moved into a table in the form of numbers.

The data are described as follows:

No	Statements	M	Category
1	I enjoy a fast-paced and competitive environment while using gamification.	3.99	High
2	I know more than enough to be able to complete one gamification session.	3.63	Low
3	I am a tech-savvy person and I can use gamification very well.	3.83	Medium

<b>4</b>	I have smartphones/ tablets that can support gamification and other mobile platforms to learn Basic Grammar Class.	4.10	High
<b>5</b>	I am highly motivated in completing all gamification in learning the Basic Grammar course.	3.91	High
<b>6</b>	I always prepared to complete gamification every time in Basic Grammar Class.	3.77	Low
<b>7</b>	I am comfortable sitting in a competitive environment and compete my friends.	3.81	Medium
<b>8</b>	I know that my level of understanding of a topic is sufficient to complete gamification.	3.40	Low
<b>9</b>	I revise before I join the gamification session in the learning of basic grammar.	3.54	Low
<b>10</b>	I find it easy to maintain participation levels during gamification sessions.	4.00	High

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*Table 4.1 challenges in using gamification*

Based on the table above, researchers classified respondents' responses into two categories. External and Internal: This allowed researchers to focus on calculating percentages and refining what they learned from the data.

The 'high' category is 'I enjoy a fast-paced competitive environment when using gamification' (statement 1), 'smartphones/tablets that support gamification, and learning basic grammar courses We have other mobile platforms for you to use' (Statement 4). , "I am highly motivated to complete all core grammar courses in Gamification in Learning" (Statement 5), and "I find it easy to maintain a level of participation during gamification sessions" ( statement 10). According to the formula, these statements are classified as "high" because the average is greater than 3.90.

The "Medium" category includes "I am tech savvy and very good at using gamification" (Statement 3) and "I am in a competitive environment and enjoy competing with my friends." (Statement 7). According to the formula, these statements are categorized as "high" because the average is between 3.78 and 3.90.

The 'low' category was 'I know enough to complete a gamification session' (statement 2) and 'I have always been prepared to complete gamification every time I did a basic grammar class' (statement 6), the statement "I know". Understanding the topic is sufficient to complete the gamification (statement 8) and "review before attending gamification sessions to learn basic grammar" (statement 9). According to the formula, these statements are classified as "low" because the average is less than 3.78.

***Finding***

Using the data obtained, the researchers hope to illustrate the challenges first graders must face when using online gamification in basic grammar lessons. Researchers would like to describe data obtained from an English language freshman's responses to the difficulties she encountered using gamification online in her primary grammar class. This data demonstrates the problems associated with using gamification in basic grammar courses.

Based on data obtained through questionnaires and interviews, researchers find external and internal challenges faced by first graders in using online games in their grammar lessons. External challenges include a competitive environment, lack of internet, weather or environmental factors, instructors assigning too many tasks and tasks, and poor time management. The internal challenges are: Lack of content knowledge, lack of preparation for learning, lack of motivation, lack of understanding, lack of vocabulary.

***Discussion***

The purpose of this study is to clarify and clarify freshman perceptions of difficulties associated with the use of gamification in core grammar teaching.

Recognizing these perceptions is critical for governments and decision makers to develop solutions to the challenges facing higher education students. Learning challenges are related to teaching methods and student conditions and can be physical, mental and environmental (Annisa, 2022). The results of the study showed that first graders had some challenges when using gamification in their grammar class. These difficulties were classified as external and internal. These results were very similar to those of Damara (2016). Damara (2016) divided the respondent's responses into her two challenges. External and internal. Internal challenges related to personal weaknesses such as knowledge and attitudes. The term external challenges refers to weaknesses caused by the environment.

In this study, researchers also found external and internal challenges faced by new students when using online gamification in their primary grammar class. In this study, the external challenges are:

First, competitive learning. A competitive environment can encourage students to be more focused, more involved and to compete for better grades, while students prefer a more comfortable learning environment. Studies have found competitive learning to be a challenge when using online gamification. For example, Sabornido (2022) found that one of his barriers to integrating gamification into student learning experiences is competitive learning. Tasks are important in online gamification learning. This is so because the majority of activities demand that students complete specific tasks before receiving rewards. Students are able to participate in class activities due to time constraints, grading credits, competition with other students, working in groups, and other factors. However, studies demonstrate that not every task is finished for a variety of reasons. These statements, supported by Sunarwan, Madkur, and Putra (2022), state that some less competitive students cannot enjoy this environment. They just want a comfortable learning environment. liquorice and the like. (2018) also found that the negative side of competition appears when students focus more on winning and having fun than learning. Some students were in a hurry to answer questions in order to participate in the competition and did not take long to fully understand the questions and answers. The Pre-Established Reporting Elements from Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses 2020 (PRISMA) were used in the Sabornido study, but the study also modified interviews and questionnaires from Arif et al. (2019) and Annisa (2022).

The second is the lack of internet network. Many students don't have the high-speed internet connections needed for gamification sessions. Slow and fast internet connections can affect how quickly students can participate in gamification sessions. In the absence of internet networks, Annisa (2022) found that urban areas have many internet service providers with sufficient internet network capacity to support the online learning process. However, there are few internet service providers in rural areas. Those available had poor internet connections and were found not to support online learning. This study is consistent with the statements of Dewi et al. (2018), the students' only challenge was a slow internet connection. Budiati (2017) also states that low battery and difficulty connecting to Wi-Fi are the most common computer problems. Poor signal, unstable internet networks, limited data packages, and unsupported devices are examples of technical issues (Agustina et al, 2020). Nashruddin, Alam, and Tanasy (2020) found that some students living in

remote areas had difficulty accessing the internet due to lack of geographical coverage. The reasons for not being connected to the internet may vary in similar studies. It may be caused by the region and location where the survey was conducted, as well as weather and environmental factors.

A third external challenge is having too many tasks. A study by Annisa (2022) found that the type and number of assignments in online classes contributed to the problem. Students felt an additional burden due to multiple tasks coming in at the same time. Sabornido (2022) also found in his research, suggesting that educators should consider the workload and difficulty of each task to be completed in relation to the student's abilities and abilities. According to Livana et al. (2020), too many assignments are a major cause of student stress. Maharani (2017) points out a significant association between academic stress and challenges. Students noticed that they received more assignments from online classes. They felt an increased workload, especially when challenges from different instructors occurred simultaneously (Agustina et al, 2020).

As a result, researchers discovered five internal issues. Content knowledge takes precedence. Students agree that the content of basic grammar lessons can be complex and challenging, requiring attention to detail. Annisa (2022) states that in traditional learning, administrators place more emphasis on how teachers present materials or learning materials directly and how students can easily absorb learning materials, and how they manage learning in online learning, Annisa (2022) also found that students place more emphasis on how they can learn information topic. Stressing out too many assignments or difficult material can make students depressed and less motivated to learn. Note, however, that not all students are fully committed. Grammar (66%), speaking (22%), listening (7%), writing (4%) and reading (1%) are the most difficult subjects for students to learn, according to a survey by Tambunsaribu and Galingging (2021) is. English.

A second internal task is to prepare students for gamification in the basic grammar class. Annisa (2022) found that students who did not take pre-training notes were unable to complete the final online assessment. Students can watch videos, listen to songs, search for appropriate learning resources, read books, play games with friends who like to learn the same thing, and remember to focus. will help you prepare and focus on your subject (Oxford Royale Academy, 2018). However, some students are not prepared to study basic grammar material before class begins.

A third factor is student motivation. A study by Annisa (2022) also found that lack of motivation prevents many students from achieving or experiencing new things. Many people have the potential to do better and be successful, but lack the motivation to do it. Annisa (2022) found that students lacked motivation to pursue her gamification online. According to Gonzalez et al. (2014) One of the challenges in using gamification for learning is the lack of interest and motivation to continue learning. This is consistent with the online course problem of Gene et al (2014). B. Gamification sessions created by the students themselves. B. Lack of motivation. Motivation can influence two of her internal challenges above. If students are not motivated, they will not be able to prepare and read the material, nor will they be able to fully learn the basic grammar course.



The next internal challenge is lack of understanding. Students also had difficulty understanding the lecturer's explanation of the subject matter. Engagement is one of the strengths of gamification, according to Sabornido (2022), who also found in research. On the other hand, the effectiveness of using gamification for learner understanding of learning is highly dependent on the learner. According to Khaleel (2016), one of challenges in using gamification with students is the presentation of learning content, which affects the speed at which information is assimilated (understood). Graziela (2014) found difficulty in focusing when implementing gamification in learning.

The next internal challenge researchers discovered was a lack of vocabulary. A majority of students said one of their difficulties in completing gamification sessions was their lack of vocabulary. In other words, lack of vocabulary hinders the transfer of other language skills (Al-Khasawneh, 2019). Unfortunately, most EFL students find vocabulary very difficult to learn and slow to remember and retain over time (Çakmak et al., 2021; Waluyo & Bucol, 2021).

The final internal challenge is student time management. Students often struggle with managing their time when completing gamification assignments and homework. In gamification, time management is the most important factor for completing tasks and homework. Annisa (2022) found that students with low self-study skills had difficulty devoting time to self-study. They often overlooked schedules and deadlines. Getting better learning outcomes takes time and effort. Lack of time to complete the course is also a problem (Gene et al., 2014). Students cannot manage their own study time. Most of the respondents said they find it difficult to dedicate their time to their studies. They tend to overlook online lesson plans and due dates for assignments (Agustina et al, 2020).

A previous study found similar results to this study, as described in the paragraph above. The first is a paper entitled Key Challenges and Barriers in Gamification.

A thorough analysis by Sabornido et al (2022). The main difficulties and challenges in implementing gamification at the higher education level were summarized in this paper. We carried out a systematic review between June and July 2021, using PRISMA 2020 to search databases like ProQuest, ResearchGate, and Scopus as well as manually searching Google Scholar. Second, a study titled "Benefits and challenges of using game-based formative assessment among undergraduates" was also carried out by Arif et al. in 2019. The goal of this study is to pinpoint the advantages and difficulties TESL students at Kebangsaan University in Malaysia encounter when utilizing gamification as a tool for formative assessment in their classes. For this study, researchers used a mixed-methods approach to gather both quantitative and qualitative data using survey questions, in-person interviews, and field notes. Researchers used the fundamentals of connectivity theory to create questionnaire items (Siemens, 2005). Individual semi-structured interviews with the student participants were conducted in order to collect more comprehensive data for this study. The third study, "Barriers to learning English for rural students during the Covid-19 pandemic" is by her Annisa (2022). The study identifies barriers faced by students in rural areas and how to overcome those barriers. Responses were received from 10 university students majoring in English education programs. They are rural

students. The authors used a qualitative approach and conducted research using a case study design. Based on preliminary observations, on Monday March 22, 2021, several 6th semester English students of UINFAS Bengkulu were interviewed. The questionnaire contains four potential barriers based on Gerland's theory. It can conclude that first graders encountered some challenges related to the use of gamification in basic grammar lessons. The data also revealed two types of challenges.

External and Internal: Each individual overcomes these barriers in different ways. External challenges are the competitive environment, lack of internet, weather or environmental factors, instructors assigning too many tasks and tasks, and lack of time management. The internal challenges are: Lack of content knowledge, lack of student preparation, lack of motivation, lack of comprehension, lack of vocabulary. This research has promising implications if gamification is used for basic grammar learning.

In summary, her three previous researchers have similar themes of using gamification in the learning process. However, these three studies showed differences from this study by using different methods. The study also explores different research areas. In addition, the focus of this research aims to examine the internal and external challenges faced by students of English faculty when using gamification in grammar teaching.

## CONCLUSION

Results show that students should be more aware of their use of gamification. This work also contributes to the field of language, and future researchers should keep this phenomenon in mind. Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that students faced challenges when using gamification for external and internal challenges. External challenges are the weaknesses of the environment such as competitive environment, lack of internet network, too many assignments and assignments by lecturers, lack of time management. Personal weaknesses such as knowledge and attitudes are examples of internal challenges. Internal difficulties include lack of content knowledge, lack of student preparation, lack of motivation, lack of comprehension, and lack of vocabulary.

It conclude that gamification can help students and teachers make the learning process more effective and efficient, but there are still some challenges. It is important to be aware of these perceptions so that we can develop solutions to the challenges we face, such as: B. Improving infrastructure and teacher skills, and appropriate methods for improving the quality of individuals or students. Although this study revealed many challenges in using gamification, gamification can have a positive impact on basic grammar learning. By making classes more fun and the process of working on gamification sessions more effective and efficient.

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