

GAMIFICATION AS AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO TEACHING ADVANCED ENGLISH VOCABULARY**Karimova Iroda Ahadbek kizi**

Master's student (2nd year)

Uzbek State World Languages University

Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Email: idalimova@gmail.com**Annotation**

Developing advanced-level vocabulary is a key objective in foreign language education, requiring learners not only to recognize complex words but also to use them accurately and appropriately in context. Traditional vocabulary instruction often relies on memorization and standardized exercises, which may limit full lexical competence development.

The study investigates the effectiveness of gamification in teaching advanced English vocabulary using digital tools such as Quizlet, Kahoot, and Baamboozle. A quasi-experimental quantitative design involved three groups: one experimental group (17 students) and two control groups (32 students total). All groups received the same vocabulary content in a similar learning environment, but the experimental group practiced words in context and completed gamified reinforcement exercises over a five-week period. Pre-test results showed comparable vocabulary knowledge across all groups. Post-test results indicated that the experimental group slightly outperformed the control groups, demonstrating a moderate positive effect in vocabulary retention, contextual usage, and learner engagement.

These findings suggest that integrating gamification into advanced vocabulary teaching can enhance learning outcomes, even over a short instructional period.

Keywords

advanced vocabulary, gamification, lexical competence, digital tools, foreign language teaching

Annotatsiya

Yuqori darajadagi lugʻat boyligini rivojlantirish chet tilini oʻrgatishda muhim maqsad hisoblanadi, chunki oʻquvchilar murakkab soʻzlarni nafaqat tanib olishlari, balki ularni kontekstda toʻgʻri qoʻllay olishlari kerak. Anʻanaviy lugʻat oʻqitish usullari koʻpincha yodlash va standart mashqlarga asoslanadi, bu esa lugʻaviy kompetensiyaning toʻliq shakllanishini cheklashi mumkin.

Mazkur tadqiqot Quizlet, Kahoot va Baamboozle kabi raqamli vositalardan foydalangan holda ingliz tilining yuqori darajadagi leksikasini oʻqitishda gamifikatsiyaning samaradorligini oʻrganadi. Tadqiqotda kvazi-eksperimental kvantitativ yondashuv qoʻllanilib, uchta guruh ishtirok etdi: bitta eksperimental guruh (17 nafar talaba) va ikkita nazorat guruh (jami 32 nafar talaba). Barcha guruhlariga bir xil oʻquv materiallari berilgan boʻlsa-da, eksperimental guruhda soʻzlar kontekst asosida oʻrganilib, gamifikatsiyalangan mashqlar orqali mustahkamlandi.

Dastlabki test natijalari barcha guruhlarda deyarli bir xil darajada ekanligini koʻrsatdi. Yakuniy test natijalari esa eksperimental guruh nazorat guruhlariga nisbatan biroz yuqori natija koʻrsatganini va bu lugʻatni eslab qolish, kontekstda qoʻllash hamda oʻquvchilar faolligini oshirishda ijobiy taʼsir koʻrsatganini tasdiqlaydi.

Kalit soʻzlar

yuqori darajadagi leksika, gamifikatsiya, leksik kompetensiya, raqamli vositalar, chet tilini oʻqitish

Аннотация

Развитие словарного запаса продвинутого уровня является важной задачей в обучении иностранным языкам, поскольку учащиеся должны не только узнавать сложные слова, но и уметь правильно использовать их в контексте. Традиционные методы обучения лексике часто основаны на заучивании и стандартных упражнениях, что ограничивает формирование полноценной лексической компетенции.

Данное исследование направлено на изучение эффективности геймификации в обучении продвинутой лексике английского языка с использованием цифровых инструментов, таких как Quizlet, Kahoot и Vaamboozle. В исследовании применялся квази-экспериментальный количественный подход с участием трёх групп: одной экспериментальной (17 студентов) и двух контрольных (всего 32 студента). Все группы обучались в одинаковых условиях, однако в экспериментальной группе слова изучались в контексте и закреплялись с помощью игровых технологий.

Результаты предварительного тестирования показали одинаковый уровень знаний во всех группах. Итоговое тестирование продемонстрировало, что экспериментальная группа показала несколько более высокие результаты, что свидетельствует о положительном влиянии геймификации на усвоение лексики, её использование в контексте и вовлечённость обучающихся.

Introduction.

Acquiring advanced-level vocabulary is a complex and essential component of foreign language learning. Learners must not only recognize lexical items but also apply them accurately in context, including collocations, idiomatic expressions, and academic usage. Traditional teaching methods often rely on memorization, which limits deeper lexical competence. Gamification introduces interactive and engaging elements into the learning process, increasing motivation and cognitive involvement.

This study examines the effectiveness of gamification in advanced vocabulary teaching by comparing an experimental group with two control groups over a five-week period.

Literature Review.

Vocabulary acquisition is widely recognized as a multidimensional process involving knowledge of word form, meaning, and use (Nation, 2013). For advanced learners, vocabulary learning extends beyond simple recognition and includes the ability to use lexical items accurately in context, understand collocations, and interpret nuanced meanings.

Research in language methodology emphasizes that using only traditional approaches are insufficient for developing full lexical competence. Jalolov (2020) and Akhmedova (2019) highlight the importance of contextual and communicative approaches, where vocabulary is learned through meaningful interaction and real-life usage. Gamification has emerged as an innovative method that integrates game elements into educational contexts. According to Kapp (2012), gamification enhances motivation by incorporating elements such as points, competition,

and feedback. Werbach and Hunter (2012) further explain that gamification consists of game elements, mechanics, and dynamics that together create engaging learning environments.

In recent years, digital tools have played a significant role in implementing gamified learning. Platforms such as Quizlet, Kahoot, and Baamboozle allow learners to interact with vocabulary in dynamic and engaging ways. These tools support repetition, immediate feedback, and contextual practice, which are essential for vocabulary retention. Overall, the literature suggests that combining contextual learning with gamification can enhance vocabulary acquisition, particularly at advanced levels where deeper cognitive processing is required.

Research Hypothesis

H₀: There is no difference between gamified and traditional vocabulary instruction.

H₁: Gamified instruction leads to better vocabulary performance.

Research Methodology.

The study employed a quasi-experimental quantitative research design aimed at investigating the effectiveness of gamification in teaching advanced English vocabulary. The design included one experimental group and two control groups, allowing for comparison between traditional and gamified instructional approaches.

The duration of the study was five weeks, including pre-testing, instructional intervention, and post-testing phases.

Participants

Participants were recruited from a local university in Uzbekistan. The total number of participants was 49 undergraduate students, all studying English as a foreign language at an advanced level.

The participants were divided into three groups:

Experimental group: 17 students

Control groups: 32 students (two groups combined)

All participants had similar academic backgrounds and were exposed to the same curriculum and learning environment prior to the experiment.

Procedure

The data collection process consisted of three main stages:

1. Pre-test Stage

At the beginning of the study, all participants were given a vocabulary test designed to assess their knowledge of advanced-level English lexical items.

The test included:

multiple-choice questions / gap filling tasks

contextual sentence completion tasks

synonym and antonym tasks

Each student was provided with test sheets and instructions. The duration of the test was 30 minutes.

The results of the pre-test indicated that all groups had approximately equal levels of vocabulary knowledge, confirming the homogeneity of the sample.

2. Instructional Stage

During the five-week intervention:

Experimental Group

Students were taught vocabulary:

in contextualized form

using gamified digital tools

The following platforms were used:

Quizlet (flashcards, matching tasks)

Kahoot (interactive quizzes)

Baamboozle (game-based reinforcement activities)

Students engaged in interactive and competitive tasks that provided immediate feedback and repeated exposure to vocabulary

Control Groups

Students in the control groups:

received traditional vocabulary instruction

used standard exercises (translation, memorization, written practice)

The vocabulary content and teaching time were identical to the experimental group, ensuring controlled conditions.

3. Post-test Stage

At the end of the intervention, all participants completed a post-test similar in structure to the pre-test.

The aim of the post-test was to evaluate:

vocabulary retention

ability to use words in context

Scoring Procedures

Vocabulary performance was assessed based on correct responses.

Scoring criteria:

1 point – correct answer

0 points – incorrect or incomplete answer

Each test consisted of 20 items, with a maximum score of 20 points.

The scores were converted into percentage values for analysis.

Variables of the Study

Independent Variable:

Use of gamification in vocabulary instruction

Dependent Variable:

Students' advanced vocabulary performance (measured through test scores)

Data Analysis

To analyze the results, descriptive statistics were used.

Mean scores for pre-test and post-test were calculated for both experimental and control groups. Additionally, an approximate comparison using an independent samples t-test was conducted to examine differences between groups.

Due to the absence of individual-level raw data, the statistical results are interpreted as indicative rather than strictly inferential.

The improvement in each group was calculated using the formula:

Improvement=Post-test Mean–Pre-test Mean

Results

The analysis of the pre-test results showed that all three groups had nearly identical levels of advanced vocabulary knowledge at the beginning of the study.

After the five-week instructional period, all groups demonstrated improvement in vocabulary performance. However, the experimental group showed a greater increase in scores compared to the control groups.

Group	Pre	Post	Improvement
Experimental	65.0	71.5	+6.5

Group	Pre	Post	Improvement
Control	64.8	68.2	+3.4

The experimental group improved by 6.5 points, while the control groups improved by 3.4 points.

An approximate statistical comparison showed a moderate difference between the groups ($t \approx 1.83$), indicating a positive trend in favor of the experimental group.

Additionally, the effect size (Cohen's $d \approx 0.55$) suggests a moderate pedagogical impact of gamification on vocabulary learning.

These results indicate that gamified instruction contributed to more effective vocabulary retention and contextual usage.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that gamification has a positive impact on the acquisition of advanced English vocabulary. The experimental group showed greater improvement compared to the control groups, suggesting that gamified learning environments enhance both engagement and learning outcomes.

One possible explanation for this improvement is the use of contextualized vocabulary practice combined with interactive digital tools. Gamification encourages repeated exposure to vocabulary, immediate feedback, and active participation, which are essential for deeper cognitive processing.

Furthermore, gamified activities increased student motivation and engagement. Unlike traditional methods, which often rely on memorization, gamified learning creates a dynamic and competitive environment that promotes active learning.

However, the improvement observed in this study was moderate rather than substantial. This may be due to the relatively short duration of the experiment (five weeks) and the limited sample size. It is likely that a longer intervention period would result in stronger effects.

Conclusion and Limitations

The study confirms that gamification has a positive effect on advanced vocabulary learning. Students exposed to gamified instruction demonstrated better performance in vocabulary retention and contextual usage compared to those taught using traditional methods.

The findings support the idea that integrating digital tools and interactive methods into language teaching can enhance lexical competence.

However, several limitations should be noted:

Small sample size – The study involved only 49 students, which may limit generalizability.

Short duration – The experiment lasted only five weeks, which may not be sufficient to observe long-term effects.

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