

**English Tournaments: Using Gamification as a Learning Strategy to Enhance Motivation
and Collaboration in the English Classroom**

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Abstract

Gamification is a strategy that applies principles of games in contexts that are not necessarily related to gaming activities, such as business, corporations, and formal education. Those principles consist primarily of the establishment of a set of rules, common objectives, and the delivery of rewards (Sailer et al., 2017). In this context, the use of gamification in the English classroom offers a rethink of the class and curricula structure. The use of distinctive elements, i.e., leaderboards, teamwork, and scoring systems instead of the more usual classwork and assessment techniques can enhance the motivation of learners (Baranek, 1996).

This study stems from the implementation of a pedagogical intervention, which consisted of a series of English tournaments that faced students with tasks based on collaborative learning and gamification. The tournaments were a way to apply gamification to each class session, merging games and academic activities related to the English curriculum of tenth-grade students at the I.E.D Sorrento, articulated with the English class contents. An alternative class environment was offered, creating a space in which the students grouped with their peers and got involved into their process, making them interested and motivated to learn and practice English.

The character of the study was qualitative. The data was obtained through a series of questionnaires applied during the implementation of the project and the observation of the researcher. Afterward, the collected information was analyzed through “*Thematic analysis*”, which allowed to establish relevant categories and retrieve findings. After this process, it was possible to determine the effectiveness of gamification in the English learning environment to motivate students and increase their interest in being an active part of their learning process.

Key Words: gamification, academic motivation, collaborative learning, English learning.

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Chapter One: contextualization

Contextualization and Problem Statement

The main purpose of this chapter is to give a brief overview of the Colombian context in educational aspects. Also, to give a description of the people to whom this pedagogical intervention is addressed considering basic personal data and more importantly, their interests and issues with the acquisition and use of English. In relation to that, the situation that gives an origin to the pedagogical intervention will be stated along with its objectives, both main and specific.

Context

General context

In Colombia, education is considered as a human right, established at the same level as life, shelter, health, protection, and other basic rights. It is defined as mandatory between five and fifteen years of age through early childhood, primary and secondary stages. Education is also defined as a public service, whose application, surveillance, management, supervision, and execution of programs depends on the Colombian State, which is obliged to offer and guarantee this service to all Colombian people, in order to provide access to information, culture and human development (Colombian Political Constitution, art. XLIV, XLV, & LXVII, 1991).

On the other hand, the National Education Ministry defines English teaching as a priority. Programs such as “*Colombia Bilingüe*” aim to give widespread access to educational resources to Colombian students with the goal of increasing their level of learning and use of English. The Basic Education Rights: English grades sixth to eleventh (MEN, 2016) aim to provide tools able to give the students skills to communicate in English and use it in various contexts, professional and humane.

Local context

I.E.D Sorrento is one of the 15 public schools of the locality of “Puente Aranda”. This locality is the number sixteen of the twenty that conform the political and geographical organization of Bogotá. With a population of 231.090 inhabitants, Puente Aranda is a locality of special importance for the capital city, as it is the placement of the main industry centers. Consequently, the locality hosts a remarkable manufacturing and commercial activity (Alcaldía de Bogotá, 2022).

Regarding the school, it is located in a neighborhood called “San Rafael”. There are two branches, “A” and “B” respectively. The work was developed in the “A” branch, whose address is Street 5 B # 53 C – 74. Regarding the physical structure, it consists of two buildings, the main one with four floors and an astronomical observatory and contains the majority of standard classrooms. The other one has an L-shaped design of one floor and gives place to technology classrooms, an electrical laboratory, a library, and language classrooms. The place also has space for a football and a volleyball field. These facilities are intended for high school purposes and accommodate approximately 600 students both in the morning and in the afternoon shifts.

The pedagogical intervention was implemented in the language specific classroom. In this classroom there was a TV set for the multimedia applications, a set of tablets, and a whiteboard with a closet at its right side, and 35 chairs apart from the teacher’s desk. The size of the classroom was considerably small for the groups (average 30+ students) and there was a column standing in the middle section that generated communication problems. A noticeable detail is that the walls were completely white and there was no printed pedagogical material of any kind.

Institutional context

The next aspect to consider is the institutional structure of the school. Created in 1975, I.E.D Sorrento is known for having high results in the national standardized exams for eleventh grade, occupying one of the top five positions (it is not specified if it was at national or local level) from 2010 to 2018. Also, they occupied top five positions in the tests applied to third, fifth and ninth grade in year 2013. The school has been also recognized for being one of the schools with less school desertion from 2017 to 2018.

Their pedagogical action is performed under the main motto expressed by their institutional education project (P.E.I) “Estrategias interdisciplinarias para el desarrollo de habilidades de pensamiento” (Interdisciplinary strategies for the development of thinking abilities). This main principle is developed under three domains: social-emotional, social-occupational, and social-expressive. The social-emotional domain comprehends the development of positive emotional management and a focus on empathy, guiding the students to a better understanding of their peers and how to behave and act before them. The expressive domain is related to the socio-emotional but is closer to the relations the students build and how to manage them. Also, it gives hints to the students to be better in aspects such as conflict negotiation and public talking, for example. Last, the social-occupational domain emphasizes the vocational guidance of the students, offering options to perform their knowledge and abilities in a future job environments and also the option of entrepreneurship.

In addition, the institution started to recently offer emphasis subjects of free election to their students of last grades (10th and 11th). The emphasis goes under two main areas: exact sciences and human sciences. These subjects are given in an extra schedule according to the main schedule of the students. It means that the morning students go to their emphasis in the

afternoon and the afternoon students do the same in the mornings. The exact sciences emphasis offers four hours of mathematic related content and two hours of reading activities. On the other hand, the human sciences emphasis offers four hours of English and two hours of reading activities.

The intervention was implemented with a tenth grade group in their English emphasis space. This was considered favorable due to the fact that it articulated adequately with the content of the class and the objectives of the project, as it was challenging to keep academic motivation at high levels during these kinds of extra schedules.

Problem statement

As mentioned before, the Ministry of Education in Colombia presents an ideal set of abilities that the students of each level should be able to perform. But in reality, those expectations may seem too high for the contexts in which the students live and study. The collected information during the characterization stage showed that the population feels a general sense of unawareness in respect to the knowledge they are expected to have acquired in the school. It was common for them to answer: “I don’t know what to say”, “please, speak in Spanish” when the expectations for this grades are completely different, they were supposed to know and answer effectively in English, however, the students were unable to respond to simple instructions without the help of translation or constant repetition.

At an individual level, the students showed concern regarding the use of English, the learning of basic structures, pronunciation, and fluency. A common saying when asking for weaknesses was: “everything in English. I know nothing.” Also, some of them expressed that they felt unable to learn or that they had a sheer dislike for the learning of English.

Those feelings derived in a decline of the motivation to go to class, to participate, and to work in English. Feeling unaware and lost generated a fear of being criticized, mocked or ashamed for not knowing what they are supposed to know. Most of the negative answers related to motivation were focused on frustration due to not understanding and also were related to the tiredness after a long school day. According to the work of Gnamb and Hanfstingl (2015), those mentioned factors that affect and reduce students' motivation are related to the unsatisfaction of psychological needs, specifically the need of competence, the need of autonomy, and the need of relatedness, specific for teenagers of their ages (11-14 years). It makes it necessary to think in a way to increase motivation of the students in a more personal consideration, looking for a way to satisfy their needs in the classroom, attending to their interests and aiming to generate, retrieve and maintain their motivation in their educational process.

Rationale

Student motivation is a variable of considerable importance in classrooms. As defined further in this pedagogical intervention, a motivated student performs better in class and shows better learning results. They also work for pleasure and satisfaction of reaching their own goals, instead of working for rewards such as assessment or prizes (Baranek, 1996). Lack of motivation can affect the educational process in students of all ages, making the participants of the classes less likely to participate, engage with others, develop the proposed activities and work on their own learning goals.

In tenth grade, the lack of academic motivation can be crucial, as it typically shows a decline through adolescence. For people in this age range, the school begins to be a less important part of their lives as different interests grow stronger. On the other hand, the current school environment may not fulfil basic psychological needs related to the changes they

experience (Gnambs & Hanfstingl, 2016). This situation can be managed with a change of the academic environment, based on students' motivation and attentive of their needs.

In addition, one way to increase motivation in the classroom is to introduce collaborative learning processes. By communicating and working together to reach common objectives, the students stay interested, feel supported and develop individual tasks keeping in mind the importance of their role in the team they belong to (Laal & Ghodsi, 2012). Thus, creating a collaborative class environment that maintains the interest high can help to stimulate motivation and derive in better performance levels and a better reaching of personal objectives.

The strategy that was used in this pedagogical intervention to work with collaborative learning in the educational context was the use of gamification. One of the foundations of gamification is teamwork, which directly implies the need to participate in teams, engage with peers and mainly, collaborate with others in the search of a common goal. These are factors in common between gamification and collaborative learning that allow them to interact and articulate deeply, relating their contents and giving a path to create a pedagogical intervention based on them, aiming to increase interest and academic motivation in tenth grade students.

Objectives

Research Question

How could a gamified class environment be useful to enhance academic motivation in the tenth grade classroom of IED Sorrento?

General

Analyze the effects of the implementation of a gamification-based program on the level of academic motivation in an EFL classroom of tenth grade.

Specific

- Identify strengths and weaknesses of a gamification pedagogical proposal for the English classroom with a group of 10th graders.
- Explore the impact of using a gamified pedagogical proposal on the academic motivation of the students as well as on their learning process in general.

Chapter Two: theoretical foundations

Literature Review

The main topics considered along the development of this pedagogical intervention are related to gamification in educational contexts, student's academic motivation, and the use of collaborative learning principles. The literature review covers a series of studies conducted on these topics and shows what has been done, providing theoretical foundations and guidelines to construct an innovative pedagogical intervention.

Gamification

How gamification motivates: An experimental study of the effects of specific game design elements on psychological need satisfaction is the first experimental study considered for this pedagogical intervention. In it, Sailer (2017) develops an investigation on the effects of gamification over motivation related aspects. The first methodological step was creating a simulated environment to test the variables that could be applied in an online environment and define the distribution of the studied groups. After the simulation, three groups were established. The control group, which was only using points, the experimental condition one which used badges, leaderboards, and performance graphs; and the experimental condition three which added avatars, meaningful stories, and teammates. The study was conducted with 699 participants who joined online, though only 419 of them fulfilled the requirements.

The study was quantitative and measured the performance of the participants with a statistical designed tool. It considered four concepts: competence, autonomy regarding decision freedom, autonomy in regard to task meaningfulness and social relatedness. The first group showed the lowest performance in all the items, while the second showed the highest in all items except for social relatedness in which was surpassed by the third group. The third group showed a similar performance to the second in the other items (Sailer et al., 2017).

This research contributes to this pedagogical intervention with gamification elements that are proven in a real-life situation. Those elements showed to be useful to keep the interest and motivation to maintain the engagement of the participants in the proposed activities. However, it is important to mention that the study was not conducted in an educational context, but in a social media user environment. Nevertheless, taking into consideration the relevance of virtual spaces in the current situation, its importance and contribution remains completely valid to the objectives of this project.

Assessing the effects of gamification in the classroom: A longitudinal study on intrinsic motivation, social comparison, satisfaction, effort, and academic performance (Hanus & Fox, 2015) is a study in which the researchers conduct an investigation on the use of gamification elements such as leaderboards and badges to determine their role over the motivation of the students.

The study was performed on a sample of 80 university students who were divided in two different classes. One of them had gamification applied and the other did not receive any gamified environment, following the idea of having a point of comparison. However, both of them were given the same class content. For a semester of 16 weeks, four surveys were given, each one every four weeks to measure the motivation and performance of both groups. The

surveys measured intrinsic motivation, class satisfaction, class effort, learner empowerment, and social comparison. Those topics were articulated with the results of the final exams.

For the gamified group, a system of badges and coins was created. The badges represented different achievements and goals and coins were given to access benefits in the class. The badges were mandatory to acquire while the coins were entirely optional. In addition, the students participated using nicknames and their progress was registered in a leaderboard, which took into account the number of badges earned by each student.

The results showed that contrarily to the expected and found in other studies, over time the intrinsic motivation decreased in the gamified group and negatively affected the performance of the students in their exams. Those results lead to the main contribution of the study to this pedagogical intervention. That is, gamification is not necessarily contributive to the intrinsic motivation of the students. It was demonstrated in the study that the leaderboards may induce negative values of social comparison, in which students compare themselves to the others and furthermore, can lead to destructive competition making gamification a double-edged tool.

Academic Motivation

In *The Effect of Rewards and Motivation on Student Achievement*, Baranek (1996), outlines two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. The author defines those forms of motivation based on an extensive literature review. Also, a form of using rewards in the classroom and strategies to manage them without making prizes the main objectives of the activities instead of the academic goals is proposed. In his analysis the author outlines two types of motivation for students and to propose a series of activities to develop in order to create a more interested and participative class group. The resulting concepts of the research consist mainly of the definition on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in the school and ways to identify

and promote them. Intrinsic motivation comes from the very own will of the individual and has to do with their expectations and objectives. It is motivated by desire and pleasure; therefore, it is considered the most appropriate to educational purposes. Extrinsic motivation is that one based on receiving external rewards and shows relatively low interest in the task and the implicit advantages of it, implying negative or reduced achievements. Regarding rewards, they might be used carefully due to their possible impact, depending on factors such as what is the reward itself, when it is given, and how it can be reached, because those factors may affect the motivation of the student. Rewards related to the task showed better results fostering intrinsic motivation than external rewards, such as positive assessments (Baranek, 1996).

This research provides strategies to create an environment of healthy competition based on rewards more related to the activities suggested during the application of this pedagogical intervention. This aspect is of great importance as it permits the use of rewards without leading to behavioristic matters. In this way, the system of rewards, leaderboards and scores will foster the teamwork, and also the individual search of academic and personal goals during the classes that will be mediated by the English Tournaments.

Considering the aforementioned reasons, motivation can be considered very important in education. For this particular case, tenth graders and teenagers in general sometimes can show a decrease of their motivation to develop class activities and also in their interest in things related to school life. *The Decline of Academic Motivation during Adolescence: An Accelerated Longitudinal Cohort Analysis on the Effect of Psychological Need* is a study realized by Gnambs and Hanfstingl (2015) which investigates the reasons that might cause the decline in motivational aspects and establish the decline itself. The nature of the study is qualitative. The study was realized under an accelerated longitudinal design, which allows the authors to analyze the data of

a range of ages using samples of different participants at the same time instead of analyzing the same sample during various years. For this study, a total of 600 students between 11-15 years old were the participants. The main instrument was an Academic Self-Regulation Questionnaire related to three basic psychological needs. Those needs are the need of competence, the need of autonomy, and the need of relatedness. Sailer (2017) also used and defined these needs in a study mentioned before.

The results showed that the unsatisfaction of the basic needs was the main reason that led to the decline of motivation. For this pedagogical intervention, it is important to observe these psychological needs and create activities that try to keep in line with what the students need. Activities that make them feel competent and capable of reaching goals and autonomous and leaders of their own learning processes. Moreover, the activities have to be related to the curriculum but also with their daily life, trying to articulate those aspects of their life and giving the school a significant role for them, as it is another important factor that affects the interest that the students show for their scholar life.

Collaborative Learning

In *Benefits of collaborative learning*, Laal and Ghodsi (2012) develop a viewpoint of Collaborative Learning. They consider that this approach is based on creating teams with a common goal to achieve, giving the students the responsibility of succeeding in the completion of the task, making them involved in activities and supportive of others' processes. This study is a review article that explores stated concepts of collaborative learning, propose a brief definition, discuss the available research, and divide the main concept into four major categories. These categories are based mainly in the benefits of collaborative learning and are defined as social benefits, psychological benefits, academic benefits, and alternate student and teacher assessment

techniques. Some examples given of the advantages of collaborative learning are a high level of commitment to the task, positive interaction, shared thinking about the same topic and thus helping each other to construct more complete ideas. In addition, the study states that higher levels of commitment and interest can foster intrinsic motivation because of students being motivated to reach a goal, autonomous, responsible, in control of the activities and with the power to make decisions (Laal & Ghodsi, 2012).

This research offers a review of collaborative learning and more importantly, its advantages and characteristics that can be useful for the creation of a collaborative educational environment. Its close relation with the teamwork aspects that are also seen in gamification and the way it fosters students' intrinsic motivation, are the main contributions of this approach to the English tournaments' pedagogical intervention.

Theoretical Framework

As mentioned before, the main foundations of this pedagogical intervention are gamification, students' academic motivation, and collaborative learning. They all can be integrated into a sequence of pedagogical activities embedded into the curriculum of a tenth grade English classroom. That sequence will be structured as English Tournaments, following specific gamification elements and with learning objectives in agreement with the syllabus content.

Gamification

Gamification is a relatively new concept that can be related to the modern generation who grew up surrounded by video games and digital technologies. It can be defined as “the application of game metaphors to real life tasks to influence behavior, improve motivation and enhance engagement” (Marczewski, 2013, p. 4). Those elements can be the creation of goals to

reach, rules that determine the ways to develop the game and the reaching of objectives along with a register system that provides information and feedback about the process. One of the central points of gamification is its management of rewards, and how when used effectively, they show effects on workers motivation to develop their tasks, making them more attractive and interesting. This process should be conducted through a conscious knowledge of the students and their context, being aware of their abilities and needs. It also must have clear and realistic objectives as there are a fundamental part of game strategies. In addition, the content created to be played needs to be focused on those objectives, creating activities that are feasible and part of an increasing difficulty process (Kiryakova et al., 2013). In educational contexts the lack of motivation and engagement is one important problem to consider. As those aspects of motivation and engagement are addressed by gamification, its methods can be translated to the classrooms. When making use of a similar system of rewards and awards, a teacher can effectively motivate their students.

On the contrary, the research conducted by Hanus and Fox (2015) revealed that gamification elements are not necessarily effective in increasing the academic motivation of the students and can even be harmful to the process. For example, feeling less competitive than other students may diminish the motivation of an individual to continue participating in the activities. The levels of comparison inducted by leaderboards are a key part of this factor. Moreover, the sense of novelty that gamified activities can induce to a traditional class can decrease over time, making games less interesting and motivating.

In conclusion, gamified environments should be carefully prepared. It is important to relate closely the games to the context of the students in order to keep the positive effects working and avoid the harmful consequences that can appear (Hanus & Fox, 2015).

Gamification requires very conscious work to promote constructive competition and foster collaborative spaces to ensure meaningful and positive learning achievements.

Gamification with English learning targets

For the local context of Colombia, the English Learning process has been divided in stages, with a criteria of increasing topic difficulty and the expected progress of the students with age and advance of grades (MEN, 2016). This subdivision in stages can be gamified in that the acquisition and domain of a singular topic is considered as a level of the game, with the appropriate recognition and reward awarded with the completion of the level (Figueroa, 2015). Also, the use of a meaningful story can increase the engagement of the students as they feel in the role of a player completing a game level (Sailer et al., 2017).

According to the work of Huang and Soman (2013), gamifying a learning context can be done following a five-step process. The first step consists in a revision and thorough comprehension of the context in which gamification will be applied. The knowledge of the people who participate provides an adequate scenario and increases the possibility of success of the project. The second step refers to learning objectives. Those are the goals of the process and have to be clear and give the participants the idea of what is expected and how it is expected to be done. The third step alludes to the structure of the gamification activities, the organization, the scoring system, and the feedback system. The fourth step is a consideration of the available resources. Considering the context, the resources should be related to it, for example, if the activities are online based, the resources have to be digital and related to the needs of the participants. Finally, the fifth step consists of the application of gamification elements, the choosing of the elements that are pertinent and the way in which they are going to be applied.

For the aims of this pedagogical intervention, gamification was a useful way to develop English Tournaments. Its strategies and base elements are closely related to the ones that can be found in a common tournament, for instance, scoring, leaderboards, and rewards. Concerning rewards, they can be used effectively to promote a healthy competition environment which also encourages intrinsic motivation (Baranek, 1996). The pedagogical intervention and the continuity of the activities or games applied were made under the principles of gamification, as it established an appropriate framework for this kind of applications.

Motivation and Collaborative Learning

One important concern in learning contexts is students' motivation. It can define the quality of the academic performance of individuals. Thus, motivation can be considered a central topic for the creation of this pedagogical intervention. The strategy that will be used is to integrate the approach Collaborative Learning with gamification. Regarding this, there are three psychological needs that are relevant to gamification. The first is the need of competence, defined as the will to feel efficient and competent when working in a determined environment. One student feeling competent can show a good level of performance when given a task to accomplish. The second is the need for autonomy, which means being independent and free to make decisions, because it allows the student to make use of his own resources and strategies, and the last is the need of social relatedness, referred as the necessity of being a meaningful part of a team, fostering their abilities to work in groups and recognize their own abilities and those of their peers (Sailer et al., 2017, p. 374).

The creation of realistic tasks that are possible to achieve and lead to a satisfactory reward is useful to increase intrinsic motivation. For this purpose, the student will receive the responsibility of their own performance, letting them be autonomous and aware of their own

work. It is necessary to give continuity to the elements used to motivate the participants to work (Gottfried et al., 2001).

Then, some elements of gamification start playing their role to keep motivation active. The initial rewards, the game points, give information about how the participants are performing but also maintain them interested in how they are performing in the game. Secondary rewards are badges, given to those whose results stand out, bringing the idea of performing well to achieve one of them. In order to keep the scores in mind, the leaderboards give detailed information and do not let the activities and their results to be forgotten, constantly pushing the students to keep playing the games and reaching rewards. Nevertheless, in some cases the use of gamification principles can lead to negative motivation results, derived from destructive competition and the misuse of rewards. To address this possible consequences, the collaborative learning approach plays a key role.

Consequently, a way to maintain motivation is enhancing teamwork. Working in teams can increase the levels of commitment with the tasks because they are now a shared responsibility, and every member of the team is now charged with an important part of the work (Kiryakova et al., 2013). This also makes them more conscious of their own work and the work of others because they supervise the parts of the task that they are developing and the parts that their teammates work on, also making them more supportive with their processes.

The relevance of intrinsic motivation is key in this work. As it was stated before, collaborative learning can provide a theoretical basis to the creation of a pedagogical intervention based on gamification and this approach also gives elements that are useful to increase motivation levels and that at the same time are part of a gamification environment

which responds to the needs of the specific tenth grade context. Teamwork, rewards, roles, and meaningful stories were aspects of great value in the development of the project.

Chapter Three: methodology

The main purpose of this chapter is to discuss the research paradigm the study follows. Also, it reviews the reasons to choose such paradigm and the data collection procedures that were utilized. Moreover, it presents the method of data analysis used.

Research paradigm

When it comes to the research of human and social phenomena is when *qualitative research* excels from other research paradigms. According to Malterud (2001), *qualitative research* parts from a conscious collection of information, its organization and more importantly, its interpretation. *Qualitative research* gives the researcher the ability to interpret situations and construct or deduct knowledge and also propose ways of analysis of the collected data.

In addition, there are some features that can define a qualitative research. They are, first, the reflexivity. It refers to the need of constant analysis from the researcher and its effects over the subject of investigation. Second, the preconceptions of the researchers, which are the previous experiences that lead them to work in a certain area of knowledge. Third, the theoretical principles, which give a solid starting point to know how to act, what to investigate and also to explore new ways of approaching a topic. The next feature relates to metapositions, that is, the distance created between the researcher and his object of study, in order to keep a level of control of the mutual affectation of the participants. The last is transferability, which refers to the capability of the research to be replicated in a different context. It also refers to the limitations of the range of the study. It means that a researcher has to take into account that not all studies can

be replicated in any context, as their particular characteristics might not be ideal for a different population, territory, or time (Malterud, 2001).

Those aspects help define this pedagogical intervention as a qualitative research, as the information collected comes from subjective observation and analysis from the researcher.

Type of Research

This pedagogical intervention is framed within action research. The aims of creating practical conditions for the participants to collaborate and reach out for means to address the problematic situation while also generating valuable information are characteristics of this type of research (Burns, 2015). Also, it is characterized for implementing theory with practical expectations, related to make a positive change in the social and educational surroundings of the participants.

Burns (2015) presents a list of steps that are part of the implementation of an action research. They start with the exploration of the topic and the object of the research. After that, comes an identification of the object, which gives a focus to the research. Having that in mind, the researcher starts to plan his action and proceeds with the collection of information.

The next step is to analyze the information, coordinated with the proposition of hypothesis. The process of creating probable situations helps the researcher to maintain constant control and awareness of the relevance of the information. Right after that comes intervention, which defines the direct application of the research and derives in the observation of outcomes of the intervention. Registering and sharing processes of the collected information conform reporting, writing, and presenting steps.

This study in particular follows as an action research approach as it parted from joint action to problematize situations of the daily life, both of the researcher and the participants of the research. The observation and analysis of a topic led to finding a problem, which gave the starting point to the objectives and purposes of the intervention. For this study, the problematic situation was the decrease in academic motivation that young students suffer and how it can be addressed in an English learning classroom. The study began with an exploratory characterization of the objective population, based on their characteristics as individuals and characteristics related with their feelings and appreciations of their surroundings.

During the time of the study, relevant information was collected as part of the process of implementation of the project. A transversal relation was formed between the participants and the research as they interacted and influenced each other. For instance, for the one hand the project affected the way they conceived their English classes and on the other hand, the performances of the students modelled the way in which the project was developed, generating changes from the initial design, and making it more contextualized and closer to their needs. This kind of transversality is a strong feature of action research as it permits the researcher to be involved and participate directly both with the study and the community (Burns, 2015).

Participants

This pedagogical intervention was aimed to tenth grade students. According to Basic Learning Rights: English grades sixth to eleventh (MEN, 2016) the students should be able to be proficient in the main skills of English learning. First, in terms of reading, the students should be able to interpret, identify and express the main ideas of a text or speech, being able to explain them, answer questions about the text and highlight the information considered to be the most

important. Furthermore, they would give detailed explanations based on their personal opinions about the content of the text.

Concerning speaking skills, the Basic Learning Rights establish that the students should establish conversations in which they share and discuss their thoughts fluently and with a certain level of coherence, also being able to make presentations and answer questions based on the presented information. Also, when it comes to writing skills, they should write short texts using planning and revision strategies, creating clear and organized pieces that reflect their ideas about topics that they know or are interested in. In an ideal situation those abilities would be enough to consider tenth grade as the objective population of this work, considering that they could perform well in teams by communicating clearly in oral and written forms and being able to perform in a competent level of English. This predetermined profile seemed to be ideal for the application of the pedagogical intervention, as that profile matched the expectations of the prior design made by the researcher. Nonetheless, after inquiring the population and evaluating their performance, they seemed to be under the threshold desired by the ministry. This situation made it necessary to contextualize the project and redesign some of its elements to match the real conditions and needs of the students.

The participants were thirty two tenth grade students of the morning shift of the school named I.E.D. Sorrento. They were part of the emphasis in human sciences that the institution offers, specifically directed towards reinforcing the level of English for their particular case. They conformed a homogeneous group in terms of age, with it varying between 14 and 18 years. The average age is 15,25 years. Also, the group is made up of 12 male and 20 female individuals.

Regarding their place of living, one student manifested living in the locality of Rafael Uribe Uribe, another in Antonio Nariño, another one in Kennedy while the rest live in Puente

Aranda, the same locality which the school is located in. Information concerning their socioeconomical level was not gathered as they manifested not being comfortable to speak about that topic and also because they were afraid of being ashamed by their classmates.

In regards of English learning, they were asked about what they considered to be their weaknesses and strengths in English and also about describing their classes and the elements they liked and what they considered that could be a good addition to them. The most common weaknesses presented were related to oral production of the language, more specifically about pronunciation. Another common topics mentioned were related to grammar and reading, while some cases manifested being concerned about their performance in general. Their strengths were most commonly related to listening and vocabulary.

About their classes, they expressed their affinity for the use of multimedia elements such as videos, music, and interactive activities used by their teacher. They found those elements to be entertaining and interesting. On the contrary, they also disliked the use of textbooks to fill, saying that they were resources that contrasted the ones they deemed more didactic and dynamic, therefore, more stimulating.

Diagnosis

In regard to language acquisition level, the students participated in a diagnostic test conducted at institutional level by the school, with support of the British Council and the mayoralty of Bogotá, in charge of the Education Secretary. The results showed that the majority of the students are placed between A1 (2), A2 (28), and B1 (2) according to the Common European Framework classification system, out of a total of 32 diagnostic tests completed. Even though the use of English skills was not the main aim of this project, the gathered information was useful as it helped to structure the implementation in class (see chapter 4).

In order to know more of them, a survey was conducted, asking questions about their motivation to learn, interests, strengths, and weaknesses about English. The participants manifested an important interest in improving their speaking and pronunciation skills while also comprehending conversational skills. They were also interested in getting better listening skills and their interest was lesser in grammar but greater in vocabulary. The results analyzed corresponded to the common answers of the major part of the group.

Data Collection Procedures

The collection of data of this intervention was divided in two stages. The first was during the characterization of the population and consisted of exploratory questionnaires, directed to obtain basic information of the participants, such as their names, ages and distinct opinions and characteristics of the students related to their performance in English and also about their classes, the way they were developed and suggestions to make them better. The second was executed during the application of the project and consisted of the data retrieved by direct observation, the results of evaluations as part of the process, and a final questionnaire that asked them about their opinions about the methodology used in their classes as part of the project.

The information gathered was the result of the conjunction of the observation and interpretation by the researcher of the facts and events that occurred during the intervention along with the results of the applied instruments and the answers that the participants gave during the different stages of the project implementation. The first instruments were questionnaires designed upon the format of open-ended questions, intended to explore their viewpoints about their English classes and how their opinions could be useful to construct a better intervention. They took into account what they wanted to learn and how they wanted to

work, including their appreciations over the general development of the project. There were three of them:

- First: a characterization questionnaire. It was intended to gather information concerning the participants, name, age, place of living, and about the level of motivation they felt to attend and participate in class, along with their thoughts regarding their English abilities. Also, their opinions about their English classes were considered. (See appendix #2).
- Second: this questionnaire was applied during the implementation of the project and reiterated the questioning about their levels of motivation. This was intended to keep a track on the influence of the project among the students. (See appendix #3).
- Third: this questionnaire was applied at the conclusion of the study. This last questionnaire inquired students about their opinions on how the gamified methodology had influenced them in terms of their motivation and how it affected their English learning process. (See appendix #4).

Another instrument used was an English Placement Test (see appendix #5) that was helpful to classify the students and create balanced groups in terms of language skills. The classification was also used to give roles to the students who showed a better performance, turning them into leaders of the teams created during the creation of the gamified environment proposed.

The second volume of data collection was made during the implementation of the pedagogical intervention. In this stage, the data were collected through the results of the games. Three English tests were applied during the implementation of the project and were coordinated with the syllabus of the school in terms of topics and dates. These tests consisted in a set of

multiple-choice questions that were given to each team to be developed in class through a digital platform.

- The first test consisted of 20 questions about the topic “*Demonstratives*” (see appendix #6).
- The second test consisted on 20 questions about the topic “*Quantifiers*” (see appendix #7).
- The third test consisted on 25 questions about the topic “*Present Simple*” (see appendix #8).

The results of the tests were scored according to the achievements of each team and classified in leaderboards. These tests had the objective of providing a gamified way to evaluate the academic performance of the group and provide an appropriate assessment as well.

These instruments were valuable for the intervention as they provided the needed information without being difficult to work with the participants, instead, they helped them to establish a confident and closer relationship with their classmates and the work developed in class.

After finishing the collection of data, it was analyzed following *Thematic Analysis* (Braun and Clarke, 2012). *Thematic analysis* allows researchers to organize and qualitatively analyze data by establishing *themes* which can be defined as common structures of meaning found in a set of data. In this way, the collected information can be systematized, grouped, and analyzed. Also, *Thematic Analysis* helps to define the relevance and meaningfulness of particular concepts and discarding those that may not be helpful or important too (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

The authors propose a series of phases to do a thematic analysis of information:

- First phase, *Familiarizing yourself with the data*: consists in a rapprochement of the researcher with the collected data.
- Second phase, *Generating initial codes*: the generation of codes, which are topics in common found in the collected information, is realized after a thorough reading and comprehension of the information
- Third phase, *Searching for themes*: the initially proposed codes are reviewed and subsequently grouped and consolidated into themes
- Fourth phase, *Reviewing potential themes*: the groups of codes (initial themes) are read comprehensively and related to each other with the intention of determining their relevance and appropriateness.
- Fifth phase, *Defining and naming themes*: after having consolidated the themes, they are labeled using the concepts that are more accurate to define the characteristics of the information and its relatedness to the objectives of the project.
- Sixth phase, *Producing the report*: finally, after the whole analysis of the data, the results are reported and presented.

The first phase was developed by reading the collected results of the questionnaires and relating that information with the situations presented in the classroom. This allowed to have plenty of consciousness and closeness to the data. This consideration of data was followed by the second phase in which the initial codes were determined from the most common topics present in the words of the participants. These codes were: dynamics, didactics, methodology, motivation, and English learning. The generation of codes was done by grouping a large volume of concepts by associating them by categories in common. For example, answers related to language skills (writing, listening, speaking, reading) were

grouped as part of the English learning code. The same process was done for the third phase by grouping codes into patterns of meaning that the codes shared, and the revision of those former themes conformed the fourth phase. Then, the fifth phase was developed and led to establish two themes: “*Academic Motivation*” and “*Gamification and English Learning*”. Finally, the information was organized and reported in the sixth phase.

Ethical considerations

The protection of the minors involved in this project was taken seriously and followed appropriate actions to safeguard their identities and basic rights. Their parents signed an informed consent (see appendix #1) in which they were informed the nature of the study, its application, the role of children in the study and how their safety would be taken into account to avoid any kind of situation that could put them in any danger. In some of the appendices the names of the participants are hidden. For the extracts of their answers, pseudonyms were used to protect the identity of the minors. Those pseudonyms are: *Will, Chris, Lau, Xime, Maddie, and Johann*.

Chapter four: Instructional design

This chapter first encloses how learning and language were considered in the study. Also, it discusses the implementation of the intervention and the instructional design that was followed.

Vision of learning

The key concept of this section is the use of *Collaborative Learning* as the main approach during the application of the study. One of the most important elements of gamification is teamwork according to Kiryakova (2013) and it articulates with *Collaborative Learning* closely

as both are centered in the reaching of collective goals more than individual ones (Laal and Ghodsi, 2012).

Having motivated and active students in the classroom was the main aim of this study, rather than reaching certain established learning objectives. However, the type of motivation that was promoted by the study was intrinsic. An intrinsically motivated student is able to enjoy their learning process, as well as to show more interest and bigger levels of interiorization of the topics by being a leader of their own process and an active part of it (Baranek, 1996).

This specific kind of motivation was promoted by teamwork and roleplaying in the classroom. In this way, the students were allowed to be leaders of their teams, supervisors of their classmates, a reader of texts who also explained to their teammates, an answerer who was in charge of speaking aloud the answers of the team, and a writer who wrote down the requested texts. They were also given the possibility to choose their own learning rhythm and the way they worked for the accomplishment of the proposed tasks. The roles changed constantly, letting everybody participate actively and keeping the responsibilities well balanced and distributed.

In addition, the role of the teacher was oriented towards guidance and accompaniment of the development of the activities. The students and the teacher were at the same level on the majority of time, and this contributed to the class environment by giving the students the sense of being as important as the teacher and also feeling responsible for their performance. Also, they felt free of the pressure of having an authority in the room and this made them confident of being themselves and express their opinions and emotions with their peers and also with the teacher.

Thus, in this project, learning is closely related to creating an environment that motivates, offers freedom, and brings the students prominence on their studies. Instead of being just receptors of information, they play the role of protagonist of their processes. After motivating

them and giving them the responsibility of the enactment of their goals, they are able to reach them successfully.

Vision of language

The study was applied in an English classroom. This was an aspect that made the use of language a central part of the intervention and defined how it was to be worked on along the curriculum and the development of the project.

First of all, English was considered as an objective, more specifically the learning and use of the topics proposed in the syllabus. This was addressed by the planning of activities that followed the curriculum suggested by the school. Second, and more important, English language was considered as a means of communication that allowed the students to say what they were thinking and also English was the main code used to develop the activities and to talk and communicate ideas inside the classroom, giving it an active use of the language and putting into practice the topics dealt with in class.

Instructional design

The study was designed with the aim of transforming the environment of the classroom into a gamified one, giving new meanings to existing elements of the class and adding new ones that helped to implement the project. This process under the principal objective of enhancing motivation on the students by bringing them an innovative type of class and also by applying some of the principles of gamification and collaborative learning that help students increase their levels of motivation.

According to the work of Sailer (2017), in order to apply gamification, some elements or principles have to be considered, as they have a purpose that helps to carry the process

effectively and adequately. Among others, those elements are badges, scores, scoreboards, avatar, stories, teammates, performance graphs, etcetera.

For this particular study, the elements of gamification used were:

- *Scores and points*: the assessment was based in a system of achievable points that were registered during the development of each activity. For example, in quizzes, there were twenty questions, with one point each. After converting the scores achieved, the assessment was recorded in the teacher's main list.
- *Scoreboards*: those were public lists of teams that showed the individual score of each team and their position in the general sequence of the project.
- *Teams*: the students were allowed to form teams of five people to play and compete with their classmates in class.
- *Roleplay*: the roles of each member of the team were established at the beginning with the students and were rotated every week. They were leaders, readers, answerers, collectors, and discipline supervisors. Also, they created fictional roles for some activities that were related to their familiar contexts.
- *Meaningful story*: the idea of a tournament was supported by presenting it in the form of a story. It went in articulation with roleplaying and provided a background to support the concept of having roles inside the teams.

Implementation

Study application

The study was applied since March 14, 2022, until June 7, 2022. It was scheduled in the afternoon shift of the school in two hour sessions, from 13:00 to 15:00 on Mondays. The study

was conducted in a classroom that the school disposes only for the teaching of languages. It was provided with multimedia devices such as a TV set, tablets, and a laptop.

Regarding academic aspects, the teacher received the study plan of the school in order to follow it and keep the current process going on as proposed from the beginning of the course and also to help other teachers to be aware of the work developed in class. The English contents were turned into a game in which the students played while they were taught the topics proposed in the study plan, following the initial idea of playing English Tournaments. Each class session was considered to be a small tournament in which the teams competed for the best scores possible.

The intervention started with the presentation of the teacher and the presentation of the project. They received information about gamification, its elements and also the way in which the program they already had would be turned into a gamified educational environment. The elements of gamification were explained with detail, attempting to make sure the students understood what the project consisted of and its characteristics. The students created their teams and after that, the class activities began. They continued the work with the material that the school provided and also with material proposed by the teacher. For each topic, which typically was every single session, they received a link to participate in an online activity allocated in the platform Quizziz.com. Those online activities helped to evaluate and also provide real-time leaderboards for the students to see, which also came up with scores that were taken into account to evaluate the performance of the students in class, give them accurate assessments and also to keep a tracking of the learning results derived from the application of the project.

The process of gamifying the class environment is presented in Table 1 and was done following the five steps strategy proposed by the work of Huang and Soman (2013).

Table 1*Gamification steps*

Understanding the target audience and the context.	<p>In this step the initial questionnaires and the English placement test were applied. Also, the teacher introduced himself and asked the students their names and ages. They were asked to introduce themselves and their closest friends, also they were asked about their interests, their strengths, and their weaknesses in English performance. They were also asked for suggestions to make the class better for them. Taking that information into account, the initial teams were created.</p>
Defining the learning objectives.	<p>The studies plan was shared with the classroom, and they acknowledged the topics that were going to be taught in the semester. Then, the study was proposed to the group along with the objectives and methodology.</p>
Structuring the experience.	<p>After the proposal was shared, discussed, and established with the students, the first step of the gamification process was applied. It consisted in the creation of the teams, the naming of them and the initial assignation of the roles of each student inside their own teams. Then, the space of the teams inside the classroom was defined and the students re introduced themselves with their new roles as well as they presented their teams. Then, they received an explanation of what is gamification, how it was going to be used in the classroom, how the system of evaluation was going to be put into practice, how the class dynamics would be and the kind of class activities to work on.</p>

Identifying the resources.	In this stage a detailed recognition of the space and the class resources available was made. The presence of multimedia elements helped to define the activities planning. For example, it favored the use of an online platform that allowed to create games and quizzes in which they attained goals and scores in a real-time process.
Applying gamification elements.	The last step was developed during the whole time of application of the study. Since the first session until the last, the team strategy was stablished. Parting from this point, the scores were constantly monitored, and the students received feedback through them. The next elements were roleplaying and the background story that worked together to sustain the application of the project.

Timetable

The table 2 shows how the project was implemented in class over time from its beginning to its end.

Table 2

Timetable

Date	Resources	Objectives	Gamification elements/tasks	Activities
03/14/2022	- Classroo	- Present the	Meaningful story:	At the beginning of

	<p>m</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Class list - TV set 	<p>proposal to</p> <p>the students</p> <p>and discuss</p> <p>details with</p> <p>them to</p> <p>construct a</p> <p>conjunct</p> <p>project to</p> <p>work in</p> <p>class.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apply the <p>first</p> <p>questionnaire</p> <p>to obtain</p> <p>data about</p> <p>students'</p> <p>opinions</p> <p>about their</p> <p>English</p> <p>classes.</p>	<p>the students had</p> <p>their first contact</p> <p>with the structure</p> <p>of the project by</p> <p>involving them into</p> <p>the idea of making</p> <p>the classes into</p> <p>tournaments.</p>	<p>the class, the teacher</p> <p>introduced himself</p> <p>and explained the role</p> <p>and the functions that</p> <p>he would have in</p> <p>class. After that, the</p> <p>students introduced</p> <p>themselves and were</p> <p>also asked to talk</p> <p>about their</p> <p>expectations. Once all</p> <p>the members of the</p> <p>course spoke, the</p> <p>teacher presented the</p> <p>proposal, the work</p> <p>mode, and its</p> <p>characteristics. The</p> <p>next activity consisted</p> <p>in the application of a</p> <p>preliminary</p> <p>questionnaire to</p> <p>explore their thoughts</p> <p>about the way their</p>
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				classes are structured and some ideas they would like to see in action along their classes.
03/28/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Classroom - Laptop - TV set 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present to the students the study plan (syllabus) - Present to the students the gamified version of the class, the structure and the elements that conform it. 	<p>Meaningful story: the students had their first contact with the structure of the project by involving them into the idea of making the classes into tournaments.</p>	<p>The topics that would be taught in class were presented in concordance with the syllabus of the school and the previous revision and correction by the teachers of the language field.</p> <p>In the next part of the session, the students received a clearer explanation of the project, and every single element was deeply approached and the different</p>

				doubts that rose were solved.
04/04/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Classroom - Laptop - TV set 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Start classes. - Start the implementation of the project. 	<p>Meaningful story: the idea of being in a tournament was maintained and reinforced.</p> <p>Teamwork: the students worked in class with their teams.</p> <p>Roleplay: the students assumed their roles inside their own teams.</p> <p>Scores: the activity was graded with points.</p>	<p>According with the program, the first topics worked were “<i>Grammatical functions</i>” and “<i>Possessive adjectives/pronouns</i>”.</p> <p>The theoretical part of the class consisted in the presentation and explanation of the topics using the devices available in the classroom. Then, the implementation of the project started as the students were asked to create their teams to work the whole semester. They were allowed to form</p>

				<p>their teams but some of them were reaccommodated according to their results in the English placement test, in order to balance them.</p> <p>After the teams got established, they assumed their first roles. Each team selected a leader, a reader, an answerer, a writer, and a supervisor. The following activity consisted in a set of questions related to the topics that should be answered as soon as possible. The main instruction was to be faster than their</p>
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				<p>classmates, as the first team would have the highest score and therefore the best assessment, as long as they answered correctly. The activity was developed adequately.</p>
04/18/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Classroom - Laptop - TV set - Mobile phones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue with the development of the syllabus - Apply the first scored test 	<p>Meaningful story: the idea of being in a tournament was maintained and reinforced.</p> <p>Teamwork: the students worked in class with their teams.</p> <p>Roleplay: the students played their roles inside their own teams.</p> <p>Scores: the activity</p>	<p>After organizing the groups of work, the teacher presented the next proposed topic that was called “<i>Demonstratives</i>”.</p> <p>The class was performed similarly to the previous one and the first test was applied. Using the platform Quizziz.com, the teacher shared a previously prepared</p>

			was graded with points.	test with the students, and they joined it by using their mobile phones. The test was evaluated following precision and time criteria and allowed the students to try several times
04/25/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Classroom - Paper - Markers - Printed pictures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop an activity related to the domains of the school (social-emotional, social-occupational, social-expressive). 	<p>Meaningful story: the students created their own fictional families to develop the activity.</p> <p>Teamwork: the students worked in class with their teams.</p> <p>Roleplay: the students created their own roles inside their fictional families.</p>	<p>Previously to the class, the class director proposed to develop an activity able to integrate the three domains that rule the pedagogical mission of the school.</p> <p>It consisted in a representation of alternative families inside the classroom and performed by each team. They were</p>

				<p>allowed to create their own family model and represented it with drawings and pictures they cut out from magazines and other sources. After designing their family structure, the students presented them to their peers, and introduced their fictional roles and professions.</p> <p>This activity was not scored as it was not possible to create criteria to define how a representation could be considered better than the others. In this case, competition was deemed to be an</p>
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				<p>undermining factor for the performance of the students as it could have restricted their freedom to express their own perceptions about what a family should be, guiding them to try to find “perfect” models that perhaps are not what was searched by the activity. It was considered that competing in this activity could lead to negative aspects of social comparison which can generate a detriment in students’ motivation (Hanus & Fox, 2015).</p>
05/02/2022	- Classroo	- Continue	Meaningful story:	In this session, the

	<p>m</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Laptop - TV set - Mobile phones 	<p>with the developmen</p> <p>t of the syllabus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apply the second scored test 	<p>the idea of being in a tournament was maintained and reinforced.</p> <p>Teamwork: the students worked in class with their teams.</p> <p>Roleplay: the students played their roles inside their own teams.</p> <p>Scores: the activity was graded with points.</p>	<p>group worked with a topic called “<i>Quantifiers</i>.” The development of the class consisted in the presentation of the topic to the whole group. The groups organized themselves and the teacher gave further explanations to make it clearer and proposed the students to create examples of the topic using the elements they had at hand. For the next part of the session, a test was conducted, and the results were shown to the group immediately. They received feedback and</p>
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				recommendations to advance.
05/09/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Classroom - Paper - Pens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make a group evaluation of the class process - Apply the second questionnaire. 	<p>Meaningful story: the idea of being in a tournament was maintained and reinforced. The students gave their appreciations in respect to that.</p> <p>Teamwork: the students worked in class with their teams.</p> <p>Roleplay: the students played their roles inside their own teams.</p>	<p>For this session, the students were given the second questionnaire about their motivation, opinions about the methodology, and their ideas to improve the class dynamics.</p> <p>After the questionnaire was finished, each group expressed aloud what they thought and the whole group evaluated their process so far and various opinions in general.</p>
05/23/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Classroom - Laptop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apply the final test of the 	<p>Meaningful story: the idea of being in a tournament was</p>	<p>In the last session, a final test as applied, regarding the topic</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TV set - Mobile phones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - semester. - Conclude the class process. - Finish the implementation of the project. 	<p>maintained and reinforced.</p> <p>Teamwork: the students worked in class with their teams.</p> <p>Roleplay: the students played their roles inside their own teams.</p> <p>Scores: the activity was graded with points.</p>	<p><i>“Present Simple”</i>.</p> <p>Once the exam was finished, the results were shared, and the final assessments were shared with the students individually.</p> <p>After a final feedback session, the project concluded.</p>
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Chapter five: Data analysis

The present study aimed to perform a gamified class environment in order to increase academic motivation in tenth grade students (1001) of the school I.E.D Sorrento. It was applied during eight class sessions which served both as the implementation of the project and also for the collection of relevant data.

The data results of the study were collected by combining student focus questionnaires, teacher focus questionnaires, and direct observation from the researcher of attitudinal nuances of the students and effects of the project in classes during the implementation process. After finishing the collection of data, it was analyzed following *Thematic Analysis* (Braun & Clarke,

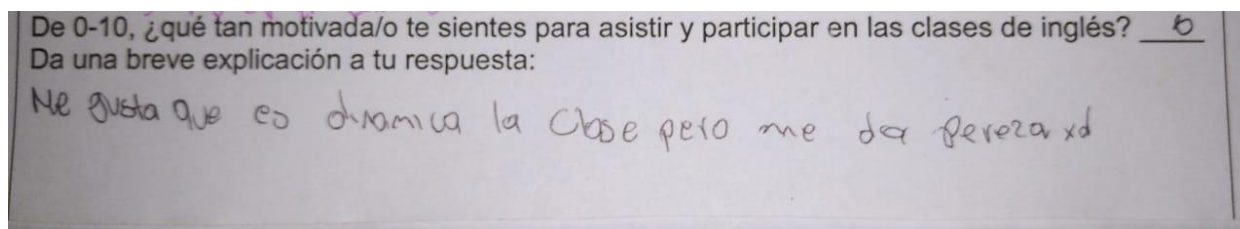
2012). *Thematic Analysis* allows researchers to establish *themes*, which are patterns of meanings found in the collected information. Those *themes* permit to organize the data, determine its relevance, and structure the common meanings that are analyzed.

The analysis started by reading the collected results of the questionnaires and relating that information with the situations presented in the classroom. After that, the initial codes were determined from the most common topics present in the words of the participants. These codes were: dynamics, didactics, methodology, motivation, and English learning. Determining those codes was done by associating concepts with meanings in common. For example, answers related to language skills were grouped as part of the English learning code. The codes had patterns of meaning in common that made possible to join them and establish two general categories: “*Academic Motivation*” and “*Gamification and English Learning*”.

Academic Motivation

Regarding this category, various factors and their corresponding interrelations were considered. For obtaining data about motivation, the students were questioned about their feelings concerning their classes, their desire to participate in activities and how motivated they were to learn English. The names in italics are pseudonyms used to protect the identity of the minors involved in the study.

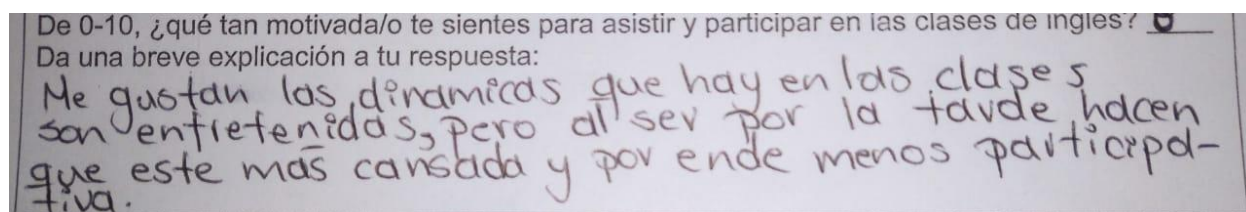
Recalling the work of Gnambs and Hanfstingl (2015), the motivation of students of this age range declines as some external aspects start to influence them and lowers the interest they have for school activities. For example, this student said that tiredness did not allow them to perform the best way in class. This topic was recurrent as the next extracts from the first test can show.



Extract 1 : *Chris* questionnaire 2.

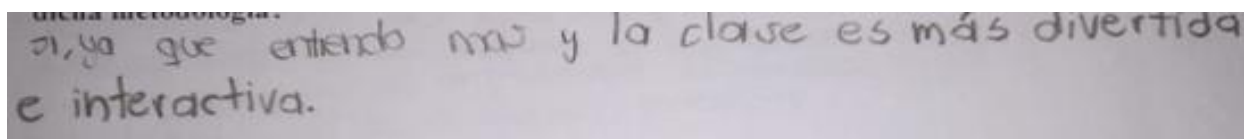
Extract 2 : *Lau* questionnaire 2.

In this case, both of them expressed in diverse ways that being tired affected their class performance. The first one refers to the time of the day in which the class is imparted because of it being in the afternoon, implied a difficult moment to concentrate and pay attention in class. The second expresses the feeling of laziness which is indeed a signal of lack of motivation as it also means having low interest. They both refer to the class as being “dynamic”, which in theory



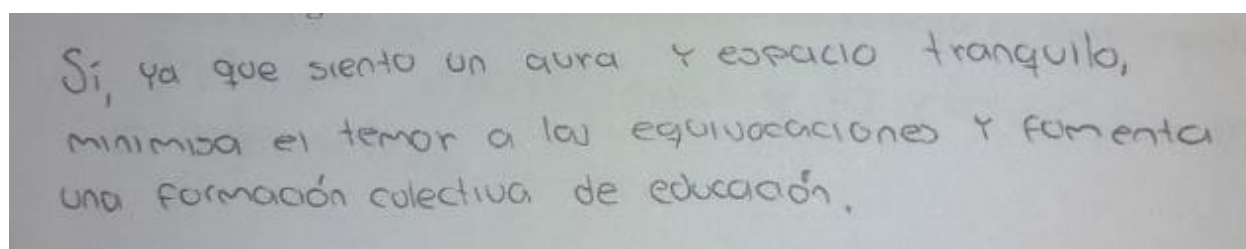
should help them feel more interested in participating but was not enough to address the needs of the students.

These results helped to develop tools to increase the student's interest for the English class and boost their motivation. One of the most noticed was the use of a gamified methodology that changed the class dynamic. Part of them were the interactive class resources created to present and evaluate the class topics. For example, in the final questionnaire, *Maddie* manifested their likes for the use of digital resources and reflected them by defining the gamified class as “más divertida e interactiva” (funnier and more interactive).



Extract 3: *Maddie* questionnaire 3.

Their attitude in class also was observed as curious and participative when using gamification elements and they expressed to have a bigger desire to learn English using the proposed resources. The researcher observed that the students were attentive and prone to speak and be part of the proposed activities, even in exams which are commonly an element that can undermine motivation as students are afraid of being questioned and also getting low grades or scores. Also, *Will* refers that the tranquility of the environment helps to minimize the fear of mistakes and that it promotes a collective learning space.

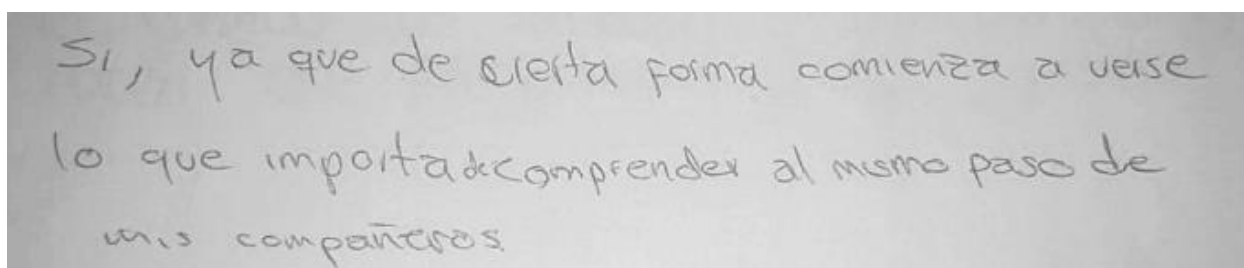


Extract 4: *Will*, questionnaire 3.

These factors can be defined as signals of an increase of intrinsic motivation (Baranek, 1996). Intrinsically motivated students express interest in developing the activities, achieving learning objectives, and they also become active participants of their processes.

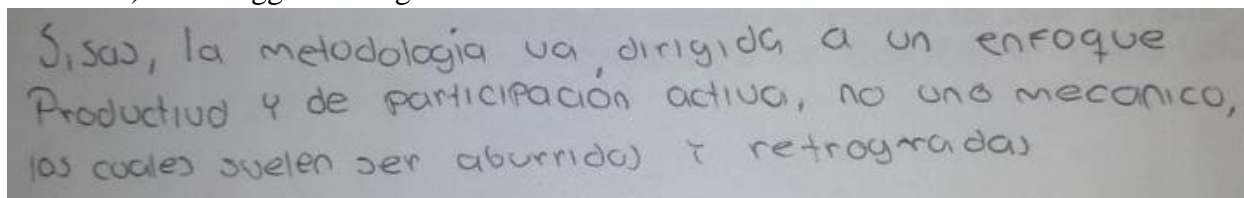
Another valuable resource employed was one of the central elements of gamification, teamwork (Sailer et al., 2017). Working in teams is useful to foster the levels of commitment as it distributes the workload and gives each student responsibility and autonomy (Kiryakova et al., 2013). Teamwork was used in articulation with *Collaborative Learning*. This approach focuses the work in teams in having goals in common, reinforcing the idea of the work distribution. Furthermore, it helps to achieve higher commitment, shared thinking, and positive interactions. These aspects can help to increase motivation as students feel encouraged to reach objectives as well as being responsible, and autonomous enough to make decisions (Laal & Ghodsi, 2012).

Some of the opinions of the students in this regard were positive as they considered useful to work in teams as it allowed them to learn at a similar pace with their teammates and helped them to be less afraid to participate, as mentioned by *Chris*.



Extract 5: *Chris* questionnaire 3.

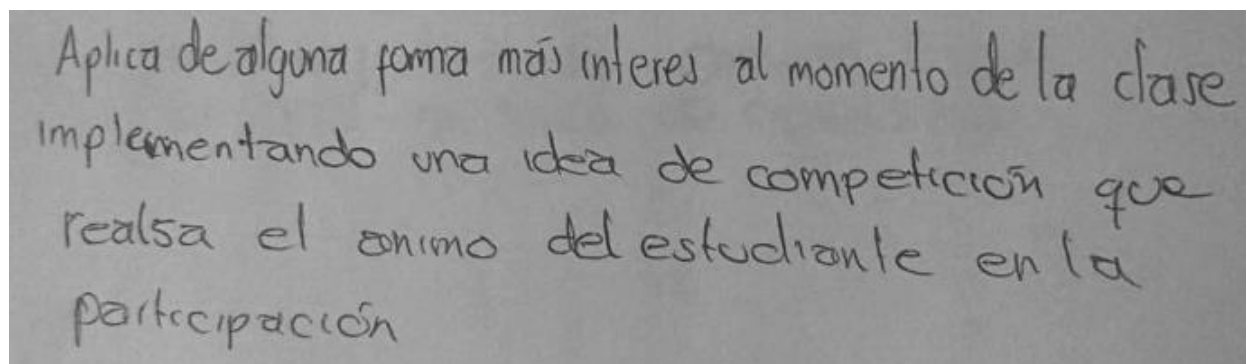
In addition, the students appreciated the active participation approach of the gamified methodology, as it is in words of *Will*, “menos aburrida y retrógrada” (less boring and old fashioned). This suggests that gamification could be able to increase interest and therefore



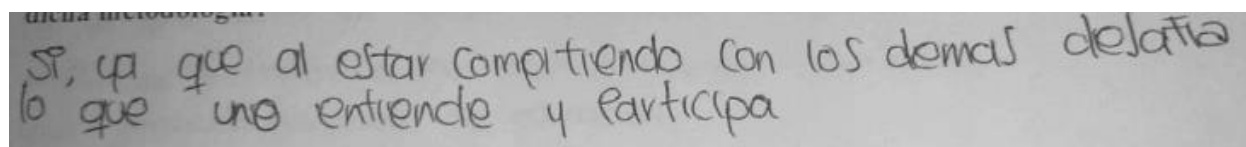
motivation in the students as it proposes a different way of studying to that they are accustomed to.

Extract 6: *Will* questionnaire 3.

Chris and *Xime* also referred to having a better mood related to the competitive method proposed by gamification, as it motivated them to interact more and strengthened their need to achieve goals.



Extract 7 : *Chris* questionnaire 3.



Extract 8 : *Xime* questionnaire 3.

In summary, bonding *Gamification* and *Collaborative Learning* can be useful and effective to increase motivation in students from 14-18 years old as they interact practically to address the needs the children have to become more active and recover their interest in being an active part of the academic activities proposed. In this study, the use of elements such as roleplay, teamwork, scores, and the subtle sense of competition given by the use of tournaments was helpful to keep the students motivated in their academic responsibilities.

Gamification and English Learning

Regarding this category, the students were asked about their considerations about the gamified class environment and their learning after applying gamification to their English

classes. For example, they were asked whether they had learned faster or better and were free to talk about their feeling of confidence about using English. Also, their performance in class was observed and paired with their opinions.

Gamification can be useful to boost learning as it can turn the topics and assessments into game levels to surpass and goals to reach (Figuerola, 2015). Moreover, its usefulness to increase intrinsic motivation can also help students to learn, as an intrinsically motivated student can achieve better results, is moved by pure interest and desires to learn and be protagonist of their learning process (Baranek, 1996).

In the first example, the answers of *Johann's* made it possible to establish a correlation between motivation derived from the gamified methodology and an increase in learning. The student stated that the class dynamic helped him to be more confident in their knowledge had reduced the fear to be more active in class, as he considered to have had a small increase in his learning.

Si, gracias a la dinamica me a motivado a perder el miedo a participar ya que e aprendido un poco mas

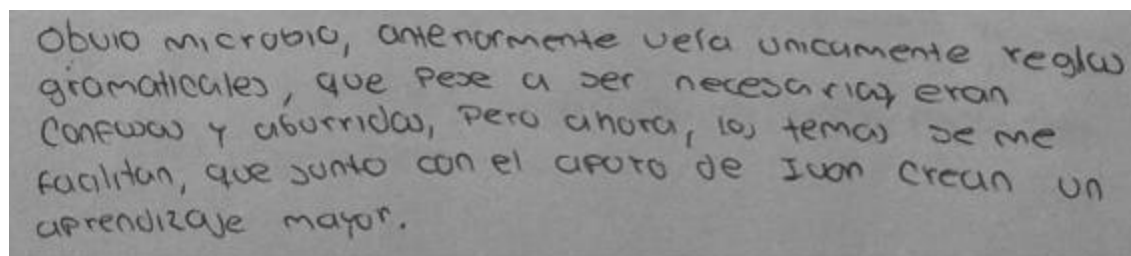
Extract 9 : *Johann* questionnaire 3.

considero que e podido avanzar un poco mas mi nivel de aprendizaje

Extract 10 : *Johann* questionnaire 3.

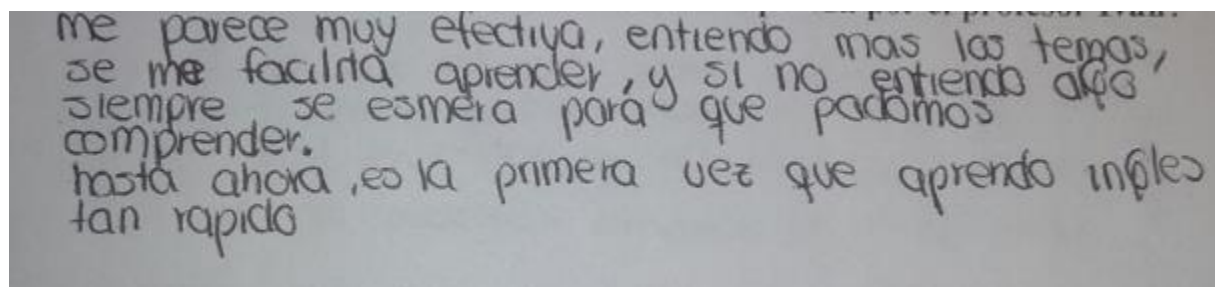
In the next example, *Will* referred to the management of topics. According to the work of Figuerola (2015), the way in which gamification manages topics, that is, considering them as levels to surpass can foster the student's comprehension of them. In this particular case, the

students suggested positive effects of how using gamification made it easier for him to understand the topics proposed in class.



Extract 11: *Will* questionnaire 3.

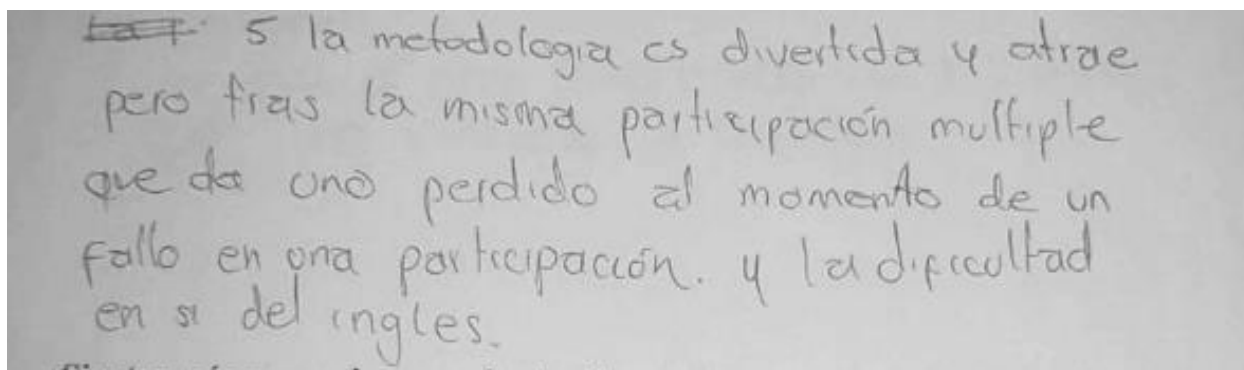
In addition, *Maddie* supports the aforementioned answer. When asked to express an opinion about the use of the gamified methodology, she said that learning was easier and faster as well. However, both of them refer to the work of the teacher more than specifically to the role of gamification. This factor can be considered to be in contrast with the idea of Gnambs and Hanfstingl (2015) that suggests that the fulfilling of the need of autonomy could suffice to enhance intrinsic motivation and therefore learning in students. Relating their advances in learning to the role of the teacher also opposes the work of Laal and Ghodsi (2012) who state the protagonist role in learning of the autonomous student in their team and places the teacher as a secondary factor of the process.



Extract 12: *Maddie* questionnaire 3.















These examples also lead to consider that gamification fosters learning in specific cases more than in a general perspective. For instance, *Chris* manifested that he got lost after making

mistakes during his participation after trying several times. This can be considered a negative result of the use of scoreboards, as these create social comparison that over time can reflect harmful results in the learning process (Hanus & Fox, 2015). In this example it is also possible to find that the difficulty of English was an element that affected the students. The difference in English levels gave advantage to some students, who had more chances of getting better results, affecting the motivation of some classmates and therefore their English learning.
















Extract 13: *Chris* questionnaire 3.


Concerning the group's performance, three tests were applied. They were developed in teams and were based on the topics that were studied in class.

	 3 attempts	✓ 20	100% Accuracy	23550 Score
	 1 attempt	✓ 20	100% Accuracy	22830 Score
	 1 attempt	✓ 20	100% Accuracy	22530 Score
	 1 attempt	✓ 20	100% Accuracy	19830 Score
	 3 attempts	✓ 19	95% Accuracy	18350 Score
	 1 attempt	✓ 18	90% Accuracy	17330 Score
	 1 attempt	✓ 19	95% Accuracy	16270 Score

First test results. The results are organized as a scoreboard and classifies the groups in positions depending of the score achieved. The scores derived from the accuracy of the answers and the time needed to complete it. This scoreboard shows a high level of completion of the task proposed and consequently, high grades. The name of the teams is hidden to protect the identity of the students.

			90% Accuracy	16860 Score
			85% Accuracy	15640 Score
			70% Accuracy	10650 Score
			65% Accuracy	9730 Score
			55% Accuracy	7690 Score
			40% Accuracy	7150 Score
			45% Accuracy	6540 Score
			35% Accuracy	6540 Score

The results of the second test are considerably lower than the ones presented in the first test. The average accuracy of the results of the first test was 97,14% and for the second it went down to 60,6%. Regarding the score, the average dropped from 20098 points to 10100, showing a decrease of almost 50% in the performance.

			80% Accuracy	6800 Score
			80% Accuracy	6430 Score
			80% Accuracy	6290 Score
			80% Accuracy	5790 Score
			70% Accuracy	5360 Score
			60% Accuracy	4570 Score
			60% Accuracy	4380 Score

Final test results: Even though they are higher than the previous ones (72% of accuracy), they are still lower than those of the first test (97%). Two aspects can be taken into account to explain this phenomenon. On one side, the higher difficulty of the topics could have affected the performance of the students in their exams, leading to lower scores. On the other side, the use of gamification was not effective enough to enhance English learning in the classroom. The contrast of the results in this area cannot lead to a clear statement of the effectiveness of gamification to foster learning.

To conclude, it can be possible to use gamification to boost learning. Nevertheless, it could present disadvantages such as effectiveness for only a part of the classroom, that was noticeable in the presented evidence. Furthermore, it can be more centered on motivation but without clear results in learning processes. The application of a gamified environment has to be planned carefully to address those setbacks that can appear over time. After working on those

drawbacks, gamification could be a powerful tool to generate more intrinsically motivated students, who in theory, are prone to better learning (Baranek, 1996).

Chapter six: Conclusions

Gamification is a strategy which aims to apply characteristics of games to several contexts of daily life, not necessarily related to games, for example, business or education (Marczewski, 2013). This strategy presents elements that can be applied in educational contexts in order to provide an innovative way of working, not only by adding features but also by replacing similar ones already present in those contexts, for instance, substituting grades with points. Some of those features are scores and points, scoreboards, teams, roleplay, and a meaningful story (Sailer et al., 2017).

Those elements were used in the implementation of this project with aims of offering a gamified educational environment to the students of tenth grade of the school I.E.D. Sorrento. The application of gamification was made through the use of collaborative learning as its learning approach was based on the close relation between teamwork and collaboration as it is defined by Laal and Ghodsi (2012). Another main foundation of the project is the close relation of motivation with learning (Baranek, 1996). The main objectives of the study were to provide an analysis of the possible effects of using gamification in the EFL classroom on academic motivation of the group. Also, to recognize its weaknesses, strengths, and implications on the learning process of the students.

Regarding motivation, it is possible to say that there was a positive tendency in the students as their opinions varied from lack of interest on their activities to the consideration of classes as interesting and dynamic. The students showed interest to participate in the activities

developed during the sessions. In contrast, concerning the learning processes, the results were inconclusive as the opinions varied from one participant to another and the results of test showed a decline in their scoring during the implementation of the project. Many factors can be attributed to the decline in the results. One of them is the way gamification can offer an entertaining environment which could lead to students getting more interested in having fun and an enjoyable time with their friends instead of a learning space, fostering extrinsic motivation. Also, this situation would have been boosted by external factors such as the schedule, time of the day and personal situations of each student.

This effect over learning can be related to disadvantages of gamification expressed by Hanus and Fox (2015) that are related to a gradual decline over time of the motivation of the students in participating in the gamified environment related to losing the sense of novelty and getting accustomed to the methodology; furthermore, being paradoxically harmful for its main purpose of motivating. Moreover, the social pressure inducted by leaderboards can affect students who may feel compared with their peers, losing their desire to be active in class.

Thus, even though it is possible to generate academic motivation in students using gamification, the teachers should create a balance between fun and academic purposes. Gamification is an innovative way of teaching and has features things to improve and change in order to turn it into an effective learning strategy.

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Appendices

Appendix #1: informed consent.

CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO

El propósito de esta ficha de consentimiento es proveer a los participantes en este ejercicio de práctica pedagógica de la Licenciatura en español e inglés de la UPN con una clara explicación de su naturaleza, así como del papel desempeñado en la misma.

El presente ejercicio de práctica pedagógica se lleva a cabo bajo la responsabilidad de Francisco Pérez en su condición de Maestro Tutor de la práctica pedagógica del departamento de lenguas de la Universidad Pedagógica Nacional y Carlos Iván Chávez Montero en su condición de maestro en formación de la Licenciatura en español e inglés de la UPN.

El objetivo de este ejercicio es: registrar y analizar los datos de carácter estrictamente académico (desempeño de clase, asistencia, opiniones, calificaciones, etcétera) recopilados durante el periodo de práctica pedagógica 2021-2 para apoyar la construcción de un proyecto de investigación en el aula. La información que se recoja en el transcurso de este será confidencial y no se usará para ningún otro propósito fuera de los declarados en el proyecto antes mencionado. Ninguna información de carácter personal será utilizada y los datos de los participantes serán retirados en caso de ser necesario.

Su participación en este ejercicio es estrictamente voluntaria.

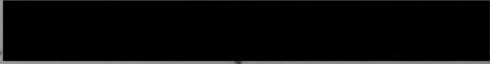
Acepto el uso de los datos anteriormente descritos en el proyecto:

English Tournaments: Using Gamification as a Learning Strategy to Enhance Motivation and Collaboration in the English Classroom.

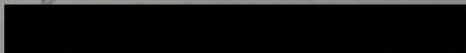
llevado a cabo bajo la dirección de: Francisco Pérez y Carlos Iván Chávez Montero como estudiante de práctica de la UPN.

He sido informado de que el objetivo del ejercicio es:

Que la información que yo provea en el curso de este ejercicio es estrictamente confidencial y no será usada para ningún otro propósito fuera de los de este estudio sin mi consentimiento. He sido informado (a) de que puedo hacer preguntas sobre el proyecto en cualquier momento y que puedo retirarme del mismo cuando así lo decida, sin que esto acarree perjuicio alguno para mi persona.



Apellido y Nombre del Participante (en letras de imprenta)



Firma de la persona a cargo del participante

04-04-2022

Fecha

Appendix #2 : questionnaire 1.

Encuesta de caracterización

Nombre: [REDACTED]

Edad: 15 años

Localidad de residencia: Puente Aranda

- ¿De 0-10, qué tan motivada/o te sientes por asistir y participar en tus clases de inglés? ¿Por qué razón?
 7/10 me parece un aprendizaje bastante útil para un futuro y nunca sobraré conocimiento en este caso el idioma, pero asistir por las tardes al colegio me limita a hacer otros tipos de actividades que en lo personal son muy importantes.
- ¿Qué fortalezas crees que tienes en inglés?
 Cuando le pongo atención y verdaderamente me interesa puedo llegar a entenderlo.
- ¿Qué crees que debes mejorar en inglés?
 La pronunciación, entenderlo, escribirlo y leerlo.
 vocabulario
- Escribe una breve descripción de tus clases de inglés.
 Llegamos al aula, explican el tema que se llevará a cabo en la clase, participan mis compañeros y se hace una actividad del tema visto como profundización
- ¿Qué te gusta o te parece lo mejor de las clases que has recibido?
 La actitud de los docentes es muy buena y se nota que verdaderamente están interesados en que sus estudiantes aprendan.
 Hacen uso de material de apoyo para las clases por ejemplo: diapositivas, sonido, actividades y esto hace que uno sienta interés por aprender.
- ¿Qué te gustaría agregar para ayudarlas a mejorar?
 Como hablan casi el 95% en inglés muchas veces es muy complicado entender todo ya que mi nivel de inglés por el momento es muy bajo, si hacen pausas y se percatan de que todos entendamos y si no explicar sería genial.

Appendix #3 : answers to the questionnaire 2.

Nombre: [REDACTED]
De 0-10, ¿qué tan motivada/o te sientes para asistir y participar en las clases de inglés? <u>6</u>
Da una breve explicación a tu respuesta: Me gustan las dinámicas que hay en las clases son entretenidas, pero al ser por la tarde hacen que este más cansada y por ende menos participativa.

Nombre: [REDACTED]
De 0-10, ¿qué tan motivada/o te sientes para asistir y participar en las clases de inglés? <u>7</u>
Da una breve explicación a tu respuesta: A veces el cansancio no me permite dar lo mejor de mí o concentrarme bien, pero si me interesa aprender el inglés.

Nombre: [REDACTED]
De 0-10, ¿qué tan motivada/o te sientes para asistir y participar en las clases de inglés? <u>6</u>
Da una breve explicación a tu respuesta: Me gusta que es dinamica la Clase pero me da pereza xd

Appendix #4 : questionnaire 3.

Encuesta final

- ¿Qué opinas de la metodología gamificada empleada por el profesor Iván?

Aplica de alguna forma más interés al momento de la clase implementando una idea de competición que realza el ánimo del estudiante en la participación

- ¿Te sientes más motivada/o a participar activamente en clase cuando se usa dicha metodología? (1 - 10)

~~La~~ 5 la metodología es divertida y atrae pero tras la misma participación múltiple que da uno perdido al momento de un fallo en una participación y la dificultad en si del inglés.

- ¿Sientes más ganas de aprender inglés cuando se realizan las clases de esta manera?

En un nivel intermedio tengo mas atracción al aprender así más no quiere decir que es al e esta manera se quiere aprender más

- ¿Consideras que has aprendido más gracias a la metodología empleada?

Si, ya que de cierta forma comienza a verse lo que importa comprender al mismo paso de mis compañeros

Appendix #5 : English placement test.

BOGOTÁ
Secretaría de Educación

Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Bogotá

DANE 11100120161 - NIT 899 999 741-9
Reconocimiento Oficial Resolución 2362 de Agosto 14 de 2002
de la Secretaría de Educación de Bogotá, D.C.
Reconocimiento y acreditación a la Excelencia en la Gestión
Educativa Resolución 025 de Noviembre 26 de 2019

it was supervised by [redacted]

Nombre [redacted] Fecha: 14 Feb 22 Grupo: 1007

TEST ANSWER SHEET DIAGNOSTIC 2022

To choose and mark the correct option A, B, C or D.

PARTE 1		PARTE 4		PARTE 6	
1	A B C ✓	16	A B C ✓	31	A B C D ✓
2	A B C ✓	17	A B C ✓	32	A B C D ✓
3	A B C ✓	18	A B C ✓	33	A B C D ✓
4	A B C ✓	19	A B C ✓	34	A B C D ✓
5	A B C ✓	20	A B C ✓	35	A B C D ✓
PARTE 2		PARTE 5		PARTE 7	
6	A B C D E F G H ✓	21	A B C ✓	36	A B C D ✓
7	A B C D E F G H ✓	22	A B C ✓	37	A B C D ✓
8	A B C D E F G H ✓	23	A B C ✓	38	A B C D ✓
9	A B C D E F G H ✓	24	A B C ✓	39	A B C D ✓
10	A B C D E F G H ✓	25	A B C ✓	40	A B C D ✓
PARTE 3		26	A B C ✓	41	A B C D ✓
11	A B C ✓	27	A B C ✓	42	A B C D ✓
12	A B C ✓	28	A B C ✓	43	A B C D ✓
13	A B C ✓	29	A B C ✓	44	A B C D ✓
14	A B C ✓	30	A B C ✓	45	A B C D ✓
15	A B C ✓				

Appendix #6: sample of the English test 1, *Demonstratives*.

Quizizz DEMONSTRATIVES 20 Questions	NAME : _____
	CLASS : _____
	DATE : _____

1. THIS se utilizar para señalar o mostrar...

- ☐ A 1 cosa o persona cerca de mí
 ☐ B 2 o más cosas o personas lejos de mí

2. THAT se utilizar para señalar o mostrar...

- ☐ A 1 cosa o persona lejos de mí
 ☐ B 2 o más cosas o personas lejos de mí

3. THESE se utilizar para señalar o mostrar...

- ☐ A 2 o más cosas y/o personas cerca de mí
 ☐ B 2 cosas o personas lejos de mí

4. THOSE se utilizar para señalar o mostrar...

- ☐ A 2 o más cosas y/o personas lejos de mí
 ☐ B 2 o más cosas y/o personas cerca de mí

5.



- ☐ A These
 ☐ B Those

6.



- ☐ A These
 ☐ B Those

Appendix #7: sample of the English test 2, *Quantifiers*.

Quizizz Quantifiers: a, an, some, any 20 Questions	NAME : _____
	CLASS : _____
	DATE : _____

- What's the missing word?
Are there _____ girls in your football team?

<input type="checkbox"/> A some	<input type="checkbox"/> B a
<input type="checkbox"/> C any	
- Choose the correct one.

<input type="checkbox"/> A Have you got any paper clips?	<input type="checkbox"/> B Have you got an paper clips?
<input type="checkbox"/> C Have you got some paper clips?	
- What's the missing word?
Here, have _____ coins!

<input type="checkbox"/> A lots	<input type="checkbox"/> B any
<input type="checkbox"/> C some	
- Choose the correct one.

<input type="checkbox"/> A Is there any sugar in my coffee?	<input type="checkbox"/> B Is there a sugar in my coffee?
<input type="checkbox"/> C Is there some sugar in my coffee?	
- Choose the correct one.

<input type="checkbox"/> A My brother has got any new jeans.	<input type="checkbox"/> B My brother has got a new jeans.
<input type="checkbox"/> C My brother has got some new jeans.	

Appendix #8: sample of the English test 3, *Simple Present*.

QUIZZZ Simple present 25 Questions	NAME : _____
	CLASS : _____
	DATE : _____

1. At four o'clock in the afternoon, she _____ a movie with a friend.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A plays | <input type="checkbox"/> B eats |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C doesn't | <input type="checkbox"/> D watches |

2. I _____ to practice soccer after school.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A like | <input type="checkbox"/> B plays |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C don't | <input type="checkbox"/> D likes |



- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A She checks emails. | <input type="checkbox"/> B She reads a book. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C She listens to music. | <input type="checkbox"/> D She plays video games. |



- | | |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A He rides a bike. | <input type="checkbox"/> B He ride a bike. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C He has dinner. | <input type="checkbox"/> D He has breakfast. |