

## **MA in Technology-Mediated Language Teaching and Learning**

# **GAMIFICATION APPROACH IN LANGUAGE LEARNING**

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**Abstract**

Gamification is an educational approach in which the teacher takes a teaching context and adds game elements such as avatars, missions, points and rewards to it so that students feel they are into a real game. People play games for hours only for the fun of playing, and gamification uses that intrinsic motivation to teach content or modify behaviours. Therefore it is a powerful approach since it helps students engage with the subject matter and modify undesirable conduct. This paper summarises the benefits of gamification in education and presents a gamification proposal for a group of fifth-graders in primary school. The aim of the project is for students to discover features from other countries, work on their English language skills, feel more motivated toward learning new subject content and lower competitiveness among them. The gamification proposal presented is about five explorers from another planet who come to Earth to discover different human cultures. It is a four-session project in which students complete missions to achieve a quest. The evaluation of the proposal is through students' self-assessment to evaluate their written and oral contributions and teacher's self-assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of the gamification project.

**Keywords:**

Gamification, Education, Technology, Language learning, Students' motivation

**Resumen**

La gamificación es un enfoque educativo en el que el maestro toma un contexto de enseñanza y le agrega elementos de juego como avatares, misiones, puntos y recompensas para que los estudiantes sientan que están en un juego real. Las personas juegan durante horas solo por el placer de jugar y la gamificación utiliza esa motivación intrínseca para enseñar contenido o modificar comportamientos. Por lo tanto, es un enfoque poderoso ya que ayuda a los estudiantes a involucrarse con la asignatura y modificar conductas indeseables. Este artículo resume los beneficios de la gamificación en la educación y presenta una propuesta de gamificación para un grupo de alumnos de quinto grado de primaria. El objetivo del proyecto es que los estudiantes descubran características de otros países, trabajen en sus habilidades de lengua inglesa, se sientan más motivados para aprender nuevos contenidos de la materia y aminore la competitividad entre ellos. La propuesta de gamificación que se presenta es sobre cinco exploradores de otro planeta que visitan la Tierra para

descubrir diferentes culturas humanas. Es un proyecto de cuatro sesiones en el que los alumnos completan misiones para conseguir un propósito. La evaluación de la propuesta es a través de la autoevaluación de los alumnos para evaluar sus aportaciones escritas y orales y la autoevaluación del docente para evaluar la eficacia del proyecto de gamificación.

**Palabras clave:**

Gamificación, Educación, Tecnología, Aprendizaje de lengua extranjera, motivación del alumnado

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This is an educational project proposal based on the pedagogical application of gamification with the use of technology. The aim of the project is for students to learn about features of other cities and countries, while they practise the present simple tense and learn adverbs of frequency. At the same time, they are to work on the four skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. The proposal will be implemented in a group of eighteen fifth-graders, aged between ten and eleven years old, in a primary school located in Mallorca. They speak Catalan and Spanish as their first languages and learn English as a foreign language. Their general level of English at this stage is A2 according to CEFR levels. These students have no previous experience with the gamification approach, although they are used to learning through games in class. Regarding their technology skills, the students are motivated and excited about the use of technology as it is their first year in possession of their Chromebook in class, which they use daily for subjects like Science or languages. They are familiar with the learning platform of Google Classroom and other Google app services like Drive, Slides, or Forms.

Concerning class behaviour, from my observation as their English teacher, it is a group easy to work with, they are participative and show a great amount of interest when faced with new activities. Past performance in class has shown that students are highly motivated in the English subject when using different materials and methods (mimics, use of flashcards, role-plays, creation of their materials, etc.). They thoroughly enjoy working in groups when given roles and responsibilities. Even with these favourable results, it has been observed that a considerable number of students may rapidly lose

interest and their levels of motivation may drop when presented with new content such as grammar structures. Moreover, there is a general lack of concentration and focus, and few of them can become too competitive in front of activities where they work individually since they prefer to be the first ones to finish rather than do the task correctly. Because of these reasons, gamification might be a valuable approach to help them be more engaged with the subject content and become less competitive.

### **1.1 Justification**

As it has been mentioned before, it is too easy for students to get bored and unmotivated in class, and their quick and stimulated lives can be part of the reason. In these children's daily lives, they receive multiple stimuli from everywhere, videos, music, images, etc. It seems they have neither time nor space to bore and use their imagination. This affects their behaviour in class, difficulting their capacity to pay attention when there is no movement, sound, or image involved. The majority of these students are into gaming, either through smartphone apps, PlayStation, or computer games, so they already know and understand many of the characteristics and rules that come with a game. Considering the features and habits of these specific students, gamification might be a methodology to raise students' motivation and help them pay attention. Figueroa (2016) explains that keeping students engaged and motivated through the learning process is a challenging task for educators depending on the student profile and characteristics. The gamification approach provides an opportunity to help schools in that matter. (Lee & Hammer, 2011).

Regarding individual competitive behaviour, students will be asked to work in groups from the very beginning of the project. They will need to listen to each other, take responsibility for their group actions, and make decisions together. Kingsley & Grabner-Hagen (2015) observed that in gamification students have to collaborate in all the steps to complete the quest. Students shall understand that their actions and behaviour can affect all the group members, so they need to work in conjunction to reach a common goal. By making them feel part of a group their social behaviour and skills will be directly affected, hoping that they give more importance to the task result than the rapidity of doing it.

As for technology, they each have a Chromebook for school work, which allows extensive use of technology in class at any time and ease of access to any kind of searchers, apps, etc. As seen in previous projects, when using any sort of technology students seem more interested in the task they are performing. Moreover, digital competence is important for students to move along in nowadays education and society. Since technology and connectivity are the key aspects of gamified instruction, students get to practise information, media, and technology literacy skills. (Damevska, n.d.).

In conclusion, the gamified educational proposal is to be performed to improve students' interest in learning English grammar, practise the four skills, work on students' capacity for attention and concentration, and reduce individual competitiveness.

## **1.2 Description of pedagogical application of gamification**

To create any language learning educational experience, the 4Cs need to be taken into account and gamification englobes the four of them: communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity (Plucker, Kaufman, & Beghetto, 2016). Communication refers to the capacity of expressing ideas among different people. Collaboration means getting students to commit and work together towards an outcome. Critical thinking refers to solving problems and, finally, creativity means letting students see concepts from different perspectives. Apart from the 4C's, all styles of learning are to be considered when creating the project. In this case, the majority of students are visual and aural learners. Elements like rules or instructions will be presented attractively, using colours and clear text, to ensure that all the students fully understand the gamification project features, mechanisms, and processes.

There is a difference between learning through games and gamified learning. While learning through games refers to playing actual games in class and is a one-time experience, gamification means converting the learning process into a game method and it is an extended experience. In other words, gamification means introducing a game methodology in class with all its characteristics, such as points, sections, levels, leaderboard, etc. Kim, Song, Lockee & Burton (2018) describe gamification as activities and processes which integrate game elements to solve specific problems. Gamification

takes the mechanics of gaming such as points, levels, badges, or leaderboards and applies them to the way a course or unit is taught. This way, students have fun while learning content and practising literacy skills. (Kingsley & Grabner-Hagen, 2015). Damevska (n.d.) explains that gamification encourages students to take risks, makes them work together towards the same goal, and allows them to be at the centre of their learning process. Marczewski (2017) defines gamification as the application of gaming metaphors to real-life tasks to influence behaviour, improve motivation and enhance engagement. Baldeón, Rodríguez & Puig (2016) resolve gamification as the application of game-based thinking and game mechanics within the classroom, for the purposes of motivating and engaging students during the learning process. Games engage people with the use of several mechanisms that keep them interested, often even without reward, just for the joy of playing and the possibility to win. (Dicheva et al., 2015). Gamification in education aims to make use of the power of games in the classroom, among which stands out the willingness of players to play for hours, fail, and try again until they succeed (Damevska, n.d.). Gamification offers the opportunity to experiment with rules, social roles, and emotions, and it reframes failure as an opportunity and a necessary part of learning. Moreover, it can shorten feedback cycles, give learners low-stakes ways to assess their capabilities and create an environment in which effort is rewarded. (Lee & Hammer, 2011).

## **2. THEORETICAL OR CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 21st-century skills**

One crucial competence for learners in the 21st century is acquiring a second language. Based on this, L2 instruction integrates new methods such as more technology-involved activities, and new approaches such as gamification, to motivate learners in their pursuit of achieving language skills. (Figuroa, 2015). Technology and connectivity are the key aspects of gamified instruction, this means that students practice information, media, and technology literacy skills, which are vital for them to navigate in nowadays education and society. (Damevska, n.d.).

The 4Cs, which are communication, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity, are considered key skills for 21st-century learners. Kingsley & Grabner-Hagen (2015) point out that “integration of the content subject knowledge, along with the 4Cs will prepare

students for 21st-century learning.” Therefore, language teachers ought to think about how to promote these skills in the classroom. Gamification is an approach that teachers can use to enhance students' learning of the language and the 4Cs skills. Dicheva, Dichev, Agre, & Angelova (2015) explain that gamification is a promising approach because of its ability to teach and reinforce knowledge, and important skills such as problem-solving, collaboration, and communication.

## **2.2 Definition of gamification**

Games have remarkable motivational power; they utilise many mechanisms to encourage people to engage with them, often without any reward, just for the joy of playing and the possibility of winning. (Dicheva, Dichev, Agre, & Angelova, 2015). Moreover, gamers invest innumerable hours in developing their problem-solving skills to reach a game goal (Gee, 2008), therefore they recognize the value of extended practice. Gamers develop personal qualities such as persistence, creativity, and resilience through extended play (McGonigal, 2011).

Gamification consists of applying game elements and characteristics in learning contexts to get students involved, engaged, and excited about learning. It is not a single activity but a set of relevant activities and systematic processes (Damevska, n.d.). It also introduces concepts like badges, levels, achievements, and game points to the classroom in an attempt to harness the motivational power of games and apply it to real-world problems such as the motivational problems of schools (Lee & Hammer, 2011). When playing a game, children try to master the task until they succeed, no matter how many times they have to repeat it. However, when they fail a quiz in class, they may feel discouraged and unmotivated and not want to do it again. The concepts of urgent optimism and blissful productivity described by game designer Jane McGonigal (2010) explain this. Urgent optimism is an extreme form of self-motivation, “the desire to act immediately to tackle an obstacle with the belief that we have a reasonable chance of success. Blissful productivity is the level of engagement in a difficult repetitive task that allows gamers to play for hours, every day.” (cited in Damevska, n.d.). Therefore, gamification is a hopeful educational approach since it helps students reinforce their knowledge and literacies and be engaged and motivated. Figueroa (2015) describes game elements or game components as the design of patterns that construct the games. Some of these elements appear explained in Table

1. They have different purposes and can be adapted to any work, business, or education-related environment.

Points	Numeric accumulation based on certain activities.
Badges	Visual representation of achievements for the use shown online.
Leaderboards	How the players are ranked based on success.
Progress bars/Progression	Shows the status of a player.
Performance graph	Shows player performance.
Quests	Some of the tasks players have to fulfill in a game.
Levels	A section or part of the game.
Avatars	Visual representation of a player or alter ego.
Social elements	Relationships with other user through the game.
Rewards/reward system	System to motivate players that accomplish a quest.

**Table 1.** Game elements (Figuroa, 2015).

Schools already have game elements in them. For instance, students get points for completing assignments correctly and these points translate to grades. Students are rewarded for desired conduct and punished for undesirable ones. In fact, as Smith-Robbins (2011) claims, “education has been a system of status and points since the dawn of the Industrial Age. Scores on assignments serve as points. Graduation is a level achieved. A diploma is a badge of confidence from an accredited institution”. However, this environment does not seem enough to keep students constantly engaged. For that reason, “educational gamification proposes the use of game-like rule systems, player experiences, and cultural roles to shape learners’ behaviour” (Lee & Hammer, 2011). Then, gamification is a useful resource to engage students and modify their behaviours. The teacher may impose certain rules, making students earn or lose points depending on their conduct. (Dicheva, Dichev, Agre, & Angelova, 2015).

### 2.3 Gamification frameworks

While gamification in education increases student motivation and engagement and can modify behaviours, its design and implementation require a significant effort by the teachers (Dominguez et al., 2013, cited in Damevska, n.d.). Creating creative tasks means that teachers need to try to be up to date with the latest technological advances and apps. The teacher gamifies an activity by including mechanics such as achievement badges and levels for mastering a given level. To gamify a class, the first thing to do is add a game layer to the already existing course structure. This means that the teacher would still teach the class normally but in the background, the gamified infrastructure would allow students to role-play, earn rewards, and make progress through tasks.

Gamification frameworks serve as guidelines for teachers to adapt according to their teaching needs and objectives. For the creation of this gamification project, two frameworks have been used as guidelines, which are Marczewski's (2012) and Baldeon, Rodríguez & Puig's (2016). Marczewski (2012) declares a simple and general gamification framework that consists of three stages: define, design, and refine. Define, the first step, is when the teacher decides what and why wants to gamify and how it is going to be evaluated. Design, the second step, is when the teacher builds the project. It is important to consider the students' behaviour and interests and then explore the mechanics that will drive the project and engage the students. Refine, the last step is when the teacher improves the design through testing and feedback. Baldeon, Rodríguez & Puig (2016) define the following learner-centred gamification design framework:

1. Identify the intended learning outcomes to be gamified. The teacher states why and what he/she wants to gamify, the behaviours to influence, and what are the benefits that the gamification project provides to the system.
2. Know the learners/players and the context. The teacher should aim at understanding different players' personalities and their preferences to choose the appropriate gamification mechanics.
3. Design gamified learning activities and metrics. Here the teacher should combine both external rewards, such as points or badges and those related to intrinsic motivation (autonomy, self-confidence, social relatedness, etc). The

teacher should also aim at balancing the difficulty of the activities to maintain a state of flow throughout the gamification process.

4. Deploying: here the teacher deploys gamification with the users in the teaching context.
5. Evaluating the effectiveness of gamification: Here the teacher should define the metrics he/she wants to measure the gamification results with. This involves collecting and measuring data to analyse and reflect on it. The information collected will help refine and improve future gamification designs.

### **3. OBJECTIVES**

The project's objectives are to tackle students' language knowledge, technology skills and behaviour. Regarding the language, the general aim is for students to learn about features of other countries such as the languages, typical food or currency while making use of the four skills: writing, listening, reading and speaking. At the same time, they will be encouraged to practise the present simple tense and the adverbs of frequency. The specific language goals are:

- to review and apply the knowledge of the present simple tense through reading, listening, writing, and speaking.
- to introduce adverbs of frequency always, usually, sometimes, and never.
- to practise the four skills that are reading, listening, writing, and speaking.
- to learn vocabulary related to places of the world and their cultural features (city, country, flag, currency, typical food, tradition).

As for technology skills, the aim is for students to manage the learning management system of the school which is Google Classroom and associated apps such as Google Forms, Slides and Docs. Concerning behaviour, the aim is to get all students engaged and motivated for the subject and reduce individual competitiveness.

### **4. METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.1 Language learning context**

This project is to be carried out in the English subject in the 5th grade of Primary School. The English level of the specific group is A2 according to CEFR levels. While they are fluent in reading and writing, they need improvement in listening and

gaining more confidence in terms of speaking. In addition, they manifest a lack of interest when introduced to new grammar content unless using different teaching materials such as games, quizzes, videos, etc. This gamification proposal has been designed to be implemented at the beginning of the course, to review and consolidate the present simple tense and introduce adverbs of frequency, in addition to working on the four skills that are listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

#### **4.2 Learner profile and needs**

The students are 18 children aged between 10 and 11 years old, who are in the 5th year of Primary Education in the school CEIP S'Hort de Fassers located in Alcudia, Mallorca. The students' mother tongues are Spanish and Catalan. They are learning English as a foreign language and their level is A2 according to CEFR levels.

This group of students shows good behaviour in class, which facilitates the implementation of new methodologies and approaches. They are interested in learning the English language and enjoy working together. However, students' capacity for attention is short. When they are introduced to new grammar content their motivation level drops unless using new learning strategies or games. Besides, some of them can become too competitive when it comes to individual work and they perform a better job in pairs or groups.

Regarding their interests, these are related to TV shows, video games, and role-playing games. They make use of technology at home with smartphones, Playstation, computers, etc. Their technology skills are far from acceptable. In class, they have a Chromebook on their own and use it daily for subjects like Science or languages. They are familiar with various apps and platforms from early stages, given the fact they have a weekly computer hour at school dedicated solely to developing their digital competencies. The learning platform they use is Google Classroom and other Google app services like Drive, Slides, or Forms.

When it comes to their socio-economic context, they are children from an acceptable social and economic background with western culture or with many influences from it. Given the fact that Alcudia is a tourist town, the majority of their parents work in the tourism industry.

### **4.3 Design of the application**

Upon consideration of the context and needs of this group of students, a gamification approach has been selected as an effective method to improve students' language knowledge and interest and their capacity to focus and pay attention.

The first step to design the proposal has been to think about the content to be gamified and why. For this, the teacher's observation in past lessons has been crucial to meeting the students' interests and necessities. The following step has been to design a proposal where students learn new vocabulary, review grammar and improve their English reading, listening, writing, and speaking skills. Moreover, to lessen competitive urges, and foster cooperation, students will be working in groups all the time and help each other to progress through the tasks.

The [materials](#), which can be found in the appendices, have been created to be visually attractive and easy to understand, so students feel interested in the missions and the tasks. The teacher needs to explain the gamification's narrative and rules at the very beginning of the project, so students know what is expected from them. Teacher's feedback is to be provided during and after each task so that students feel supported and that they are making progress constantly.

The last step is to evaluate the gamification proposal (See section 6. Evaluation of the application). Students are asked to reflect on their work by self-assessing their contributions and the teacher will assess her work and the effectiveness of the gamification to improve the design of future proposals.

## **5. THE PEDAGOGICAL APPLICATION/INTERVENTION**

### **5.1 Instruments and procedures**

The project's narrative is about five explorers from another planet called planet B24 who have been sent to Earth to learn from different human cultures. They have orders to split and learn from various places around the globe, and only when they get enough information will they be allowed to return home. They are required to complete a table containing six features from each place they visit.

The game elements chosen for this gamification are five avatars, corresponding to the five explorers of Planet B24, points that students can get after completing the missions, a leaderboard that maintains children's interest during the project, and progression through the tasks, mystery, achievement, and reward.

The technology materials and tools required for the development and procedure of the project are the students' Chromebooks, the class interactive whiteboard, and the teacher's computer. Technology apps are Quizlet, Quizzes, Padlet, Google Slides, Google Docs, Voki, Canva, and Google Maps. Links to missions and websites are shared from the teacher to students via Google Classroom. Students work in groups at all times.

## **5.2 Implementation proposal**

Students can see the [lesson plan](#) of the gamification (see Appendix A) from the first session and before and after each mission, so they keep track of the tasks already completed and the ones to come.

The first lesson involves the explanation of the gamification, the introduction of the explorers and the mission 1. The gamification elements used in this lesson are avatars, mystery, points and leaderboard.

### **5.2.1 Introduction to the gamification**

To introduce the proposal to the students, the teacher needs to take some time to explain the gamified project they are about to carry out. The students are first shown the image with the 5 explorers (see Appendix B, Figure 1) and asked if they know them. Then, the teacher shows the secret message from the explorers (see Appendix B, Figure 2) for students to decipher. Once they do, the teacher explains that they are going to be helpers of those explorers for the next four English lessons, while doing some English language review. The teacher tells the students they will be working in teams (groups are formed by the teacher in mixed-ability to ensure fairness and diversity).

### **5.2.2 Explorers' introduction**

The first activity consists of reading the explorers' presentation letter (see Appendix B, Figure 3) and the quest in which students are required to help. The teacher presents the Explorers' letter on the whiteboard for students to read altogether. After reading it, the teacher makes sure students have understood everything through questions such as where are the explorers coming from?, why do they visit other planets? and for what do the explorers need our help?

After the reading, the teacher presents the leaderboard (see Appendix B, Figure 4) and explains that they earn 10 points after each rightly completed mission. The teams can lose points if they show rude behaviour or the team does not work cooperatively. The teacher emphasizes the importance of good conduct towards the other students and to lower competitiveness. Once they are in teams, the teacher gives an empty table of features (see Appendix B, Figure 5) to each group, which they will fill in through the missions.

### **5.2.3 Mission 1 - Location of the explorer**

For the first mission, the teacher shares two links via Classroom. The first one is a Padlet where each team finds a recorded [message](#) from their explorer, explaining where he/she has landed and an interesting fact about the place (see Appendix B, Figure 6). Students listen to the message and then, through the second link, they get access to a shared [world map](#) with five location pins corresponding to the five explorers' locations (see Appendix B, Figure 7). Each team has to find their pin location, write the number and name of the explorer, and the interesting fact the explorer has explained about the place.

The second lesson involves mission 2 and 3, and the gamification elements used are progress, points and leaderboard.

### **5.2.4 Mission 2- Halfway through the features**

In this mission students receive the name of three features from the table (see Appendix C, Figure 8). Each team looks for the information corresponding to the place where their explorer is and completes them.

### **5.2.5 Mission 3 - Study and Quiz**

First, students are asked to study the adverbs of frequency with the flashcards and the games of the following [Quizlet](#) (see Appendix C, Figure 9). Later, they perform a [quiz](#) in teams to review the present simple tense (see Appendix C, Figure 10). The quiz has got 6 questions related to the narrative of the project.

The third session involves missions 4 and 5, and the gamification elements used are building and leaderboard.

### **5.2.6 Mission 4 - Complete the table of features**

In this mission students receive the three features left (see Appendix D, Figure 11). Each team looks for the information corresponding to the place where their explorer is and finishes the table of features.

### **5.2.7 Mission 5- Presentation building**

This mission consists of creating a presentation of the place where the explorer is. The teacher explains that there has to be a minimum of 6 slides, one for each feature of the table and that they ought to use the present simple tense correctly during the presentation. Moreover, they will get extra points if they use some adverbs of frequency and if they explain any other extra feature of the place that they are interested in. It is important that the information is clear and the presentation is attractive to the audience.

Example of Group 1: [Explorer Ax presentation](#)

The fourth session involves mission 6 and the closing activity, and the gamification elements used are achievement, leaderboard and reward.

### **5.2.8 Mission 6 - Time for the show!**

It is time for the teams to display their presentations in front of the class. The teacher emphasizes the importance of every member of the team speaking during the presentation. Every team has between 5 and 10 minutes to present. They can be as original as they want to as long as the information is clear and precise.

### **5.2.9 Closing activity - We are good explorers!**

After the presentations, the teacher congratulates students on their great job helping the explorers and rewards them for the completion of all the missions. First, each student is given a certificate of a good explorer (see Appendix E, Figure 12). Then, the winner team, according to the points on the leaderboard, chooses the film to watch at the end of the unit between a selection offered by the teacher.

## 6. EVALUATION OF THE APPLICATION/INTERVENTION

The evaluation of the application is through two rubrics. The first one is for students to self-assess their written and spoken presentations. The second one is for the teacher to assess the effectiveness of the gamification proposal.

### 6.1 Students' assessment

With the following rubric, students self-assess their capacity to work together as a group in making decisions over the presentation of the contents, such as who will explain each slide to make everybody participate in the presentation and to use a written and spoken correct language. (See Table 2).

<u>ITEMS</u>				
EACH MEMBER OF THE GROUP SPEAKS				
EACH FEATURE OF THE PLACE HAS GOT A SLIDE OF INFORMATION				
WE MAKE CORRECT USAGE OF THE PRESENT SIMPLE TENSE				
WE MAKE USE OF ADVERBS OF FREQUENCY				
WE TALK ABOUT EXTRA TOPICS (JOBS, ARCHITECTURE, ETC.)				
THE INFORMATION WRITTEN IS CLEAR AND UNDERSTANDABLE (SHORT BUT CLEAR TEXT)				
THE PRESENTATION IS ATTRACTIVE TO THE EYE (LIGHT COLOURS AND CLEAR IMAGES)				

**Table 2.** Students' self-assessment rubric

## 6.2 Teacher's assessment

The following rubric is for the teacher to assess their work in designing the gamification proposal (see Table 3). Its purpose is to evaluate the procurement of the project goals and the use of technology, as well as identify the shortcomings and strengths to improve the actual proposal plus take them into account in the making of future proposals.

INDICATORS	YES/ NO	COMMENTS
Students show interest in the narrative		
Students are encouraged to participate in class tasks		
Students interact with technology materials such as the whiteboard, apps, etc.		
Students work in groups cooperatively. There is a dialogue between students in order to complete the tasks.		
Students produce and display a presentation of a place		
Students show good behaviour and controlled competitiveness		
Students keep focused during the gamified lessons		
Students have fun with the tasks		
Students self-assess their work		
Students make correct use of the present simple tense		

Students start use adverbs of frequency during their presentations		
Students receive the teacher's feedback after each activity		
<b>Observations:</b>		

**Table 3.** Teacher assessment rubric

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

Gamification is a potential education approach due to its motivational power. It takes real game elements such as badges, points, missions and avatars and applies them to teaching contexts in a way that students feel they are actually playing a game. It helps students engage with the content they are learning and keep interested through the lessons. Gamification can make content interesting or can modify undesirable conduct to a better one. It is a student's self-centred approach since they are the main characters of their learning process. Any gamification proposal starts analysing students' interests and needs, deciding which content to gamify and why. In the specific case of this paper, the students need to improve their listening and speaking skills and increase their motivation when working with language grammar. Also, they need to lower their competitiveness. The gamification proposed is about learning features from other cultures while practising the present simple and learning adverbs of frequency plus practising the four language skills that are reading, writing, listening and speaking. To lower competitiveness, students will work in teams during the project and they will need to work cooperatively to overcome the missions. The materials of the proposal are attractive to the eye and easy to understand with the aim of engaging the students with the missions. The missions are quite simple since the aim is for students to improve their language skills and level of motivation, rather than feeling

frustrated for completing the tasks. This way, they feel they are progressing adequately through the quests while learning without realising it.

Regarding possible limitations of the proposal, the whole project is to be done using technology. While this can be a positive experience for schools that have resources such as Chromebooks and students with acceptable digital skills, it can be an inconvenience for schools without these resources or in which students are not used to the use of technology or apps such as Padlet or Google Slides. In that case, the proposal should be redesigned adapting it to the resources of each school. Also, the English level of this specific group of students is pretty similar, which makes the design of the tasks and materials easier. In the case of having different language levels in class, the teacher can shape some tasks to make them more affordable or more challenging, depending on the students' needs. Finally, after applying the gamification proposal, an evaluation of the effectiveness of the materials and tasks and achievement of the objectives is necessary to identify weaknesses and be able to improve them for future applications.

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## APPENDICES

## Appendix A

## Lesson Plan

**Mission plan**

**The first message of the explorers**

1. Decode the message of the explorers.
2. Reading of the explorers' quest.
3. Make groups with your teacher's help.
4. Receive the table of features empty.

**Mission 1 - Discover the location of the explorer**

1. Listen to the message of your explorer.
2. Define the explorer's location in a shared world map and write something interesting about what he/she says about the place.

**Mission 2 - Complete 3 features**

1. Receive the table of features with 3 features.
2. Look for information to complete the features of the place where your explorer landed.
3. Hand in the table of features to your teacher to receive feedback.

**Mission 3 - Present simple and frequency adverbs quiz**

1. Study the adverbs of frequency with Quizlet flashcards and activities.
2. Make the quiz as many times as you need until you master it!
3. Show the results to your teacher to receive feedback.

**Mission 4 - Complete the table of features**

1. Receive the table of features with the 3 features left.
2. Look for information on the rest of the features of the place and complete the table.
3. Hand in the table of features to your teacher to receive feedback.

**Mission 5 - Write what you learned**

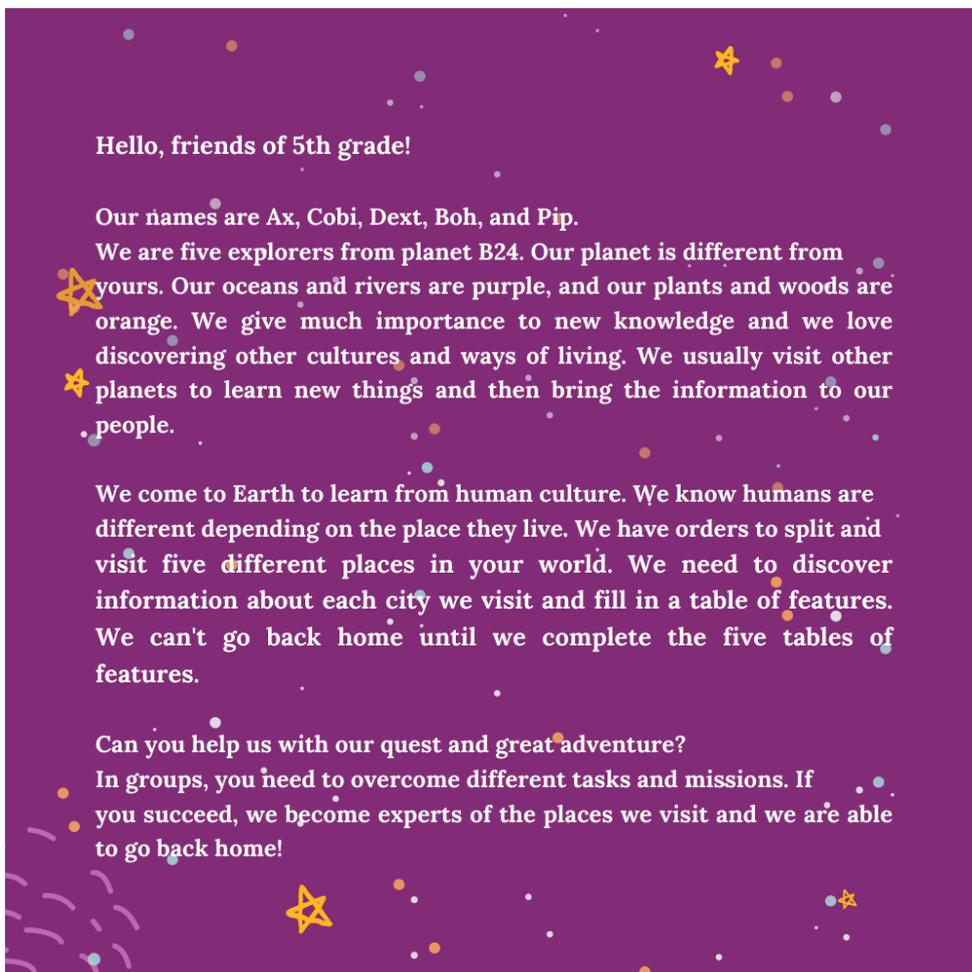
Create a presentation with Google Slides about your explorer's location with the information from the table of features. **Each feature must have a slide in your presentation.**

**Mission 6 - Show time!**

Display and explain your presentation to your classmates. **Each component of the group must speak during the presentation.**

You can be as original as you want to. 🤖



**Figure 3:** Explorers' letter

**Figure 4:** Leaderboard



EXPLORERS	LOCATION AND FACT IN MAP	TABLE OF FEATURES	QUIZ	PRESENTATION OF THE PLACE	BEHAVIOUR	TOTAL
GROUP 1 - EXPLORER AX						0
GROUP 2 - EXPLORER COBI						0
GROUP 3 - EXPLORER DEXT						0
GROUP 4 - EXPLORER BOH						0
GROUP 5 - EXPLORER PIP						0

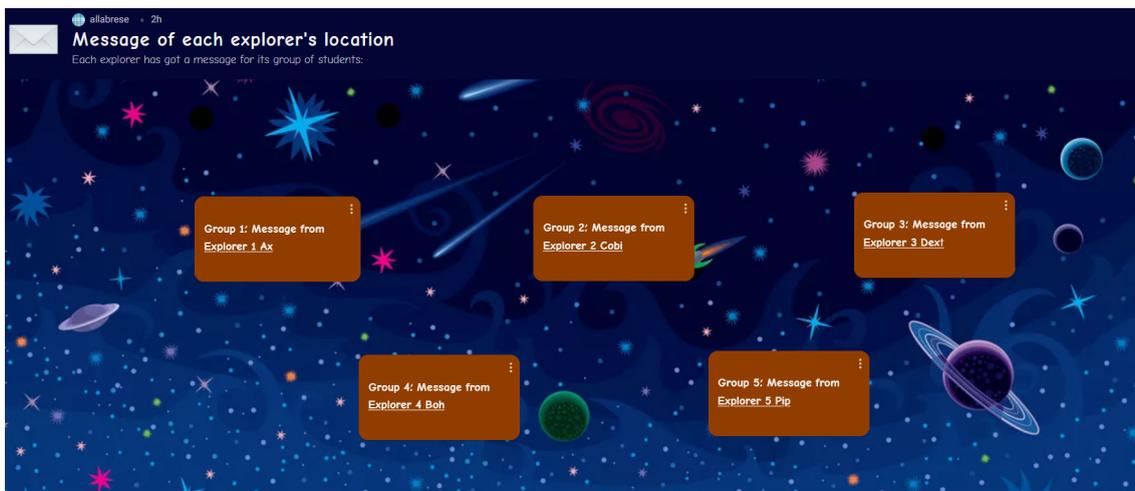
**Figure 5:** Table of features empty

Name of Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Explorer number and name: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_


**Figure 6:** Message from the explores with their location



**Figure 7:** World map with the explorers' locations



## Appendix C

### Session 2

**Figure 8:** Table of features with three characteristics

CITY: _____					
COUNTRY AND CONTINENT	LANGUAGE	FLAG			

**Figure 9:** Frequency adverbs flashcards

**Frequency adverbs**

Terms in this set (4) Original ▾

Always	Something that you do on all occasions.		★ 🔊 ✎
Usually	Something that you normally do, but not always.		★ 🔊 ✎
Sometimes	Something that you do occasionally.		★ 🔊 ✎
Never	Something that you don't do, not ever.		★ 🔊 ✎

**Figure 10:** Example of a question on the quiz

2/6 Opción múltiple Participants view x



Explorers from planet B24 \_\_\_\_\_ visit other planets to learn about their cultures.

does

hate

usually

never

**Appendix D**  
**Session 3**

**Figure 11:** Table of features complete

CITY: _____					
COUNTRY AND CONTINENT	LANGUAGE	FLAG	CURRENCY	TYPICAL FOOD	CULTURAL TRADITION

**Appendix E**  
**Session 4**

**Figure 12:** Good explorer certification

