

GAMIFICATION AS A STRATEGY TO PROMOTE AUTONOMY IN EFL CLASSES

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**The effect of gamification in the autonomy development of fifth grade students
during EFL classes.**

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Abstract

The present research explores how gamification influences the development of autonomy of fifth-grade students in English as a Foreign Language (EFL). This research results from learning and exploring the changes that gamification makes in the lack of autonomy in English students. The methodological framework was based on qualitative and action research to explore students' interactions with gamification elements when learning a foreign language. The objective focuses on describing how implementing gamification in an EFL classroom improves 5th-grade students' autonomy and motivation levels. The evidence was documented through observations and field notes demonstrating how autonomy, motivation, and learning processes could be developed through various gamified learning activities, making them more meaningful and allowing students to strengthen such skills during the learning language experiences.

Keywords: Autonomy, gamification, English as a Foreign Language (EFL), motivation, learning.

Resumen

La presente investigación explora cómo la gamificación influye en el desarrollo de la autonomía de los alumnos de quinto curso de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL). Esta investigación es el resultado de conocer y explorar los cambios que la gamificación produce en la falta de autonomía de los estudiantes de inglés. El marco metodológico se basó en la investigación cualitativa y de acción para explorar las interacciones de los estudiantes con los elementos de gamificación en el aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera. El objetivo se centra en

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describir cómo la implementación de la gamificación en un aula de EFL mejora los niveles de autonomía y motivación de los estudiantes de 5º curso.

La evidencia se documentó a través de observaciones y notas de campo que demuestran cómo la autonomía, la motivación y los procesos de aprendizaje podrían desarrollarse a través de diversas actividades de aprendizaje gamificadas, haciéndolas más significativas y permitiendo a los estudiantes fortalecer tales habilidades durante las experiencias de aprendizaje de idiomas.

Palabras clave: Autonomía, gamificación, inglés como lengua extranjera, motivación, aprendizaje.

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List of abbreviations

AR: Action Research

EFL: English as a foreign language

I teach to train but also to learn, looking for new methodologies helped us to grow and gamification sought its way and found a good destination, to strengthen autonomy in educational environments.

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INTRODUCTION

The field of education faced great demands on the dynamics of teaching and learning. Over time, educators have had to adapt to new methodologies that the contexts are requiring. The virtual modality has made students and teachers change how they share their knowledge and adapt to new forms of education, incorporating virtual learning and face-to-face classes. With this, several shortcomings have shown the necessity to promote *autonomy* in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes.

Likewise, after the appearance of a global emergency, a new form of teaching and learning emerged and promoted changes and readjustments in transmitting essential content in education. Over time, schools have returned to normal activities, having normal interaction with their students and some from home. According to the last point, autonomy gained importance in developing critical thinking in decision-making scenarios playing an active role in the learning process. However, there has been evidence of the lack of students' autonomous learning and motivation when they are in an English learning environment.

Since learning a foreign language requires more commitment and interest from the students, autonomy becomes paramount to reaching those learning goals. According to Blidi (2017), autonomy is associated with self-control in the face of constraints or obstacles, freedom, independence, and decision-making. From this perspective, the inference can be drawn that these are behaviors that human beings must have to strengthen the learning processes. According to this, Reinders (2010) explains that instead of the other way around, autonomy is a mindset that progressively develops and calls for particular skills. The overall learning atmosphere in the

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classroom must value and encourage reflection as well as the unique viewpoints and contributions of each student to develop autonomy in English language learners to promote meaningful learning experiences in the classroom.

As it was mentioned before, the lack of autonomy is a consequence of unmotivated students. Thus, we seek to improve our pedagogical strategies to implement elements that motivate students and engage their learning in a didactic way. Likewise, teachers have had to look for new teaching techniques in the English language to help students to be more self-directed. One of the fundamental tools that have gained strength in education throughout the current situation is *Gamification*. This has become an essential element for teachers to implement their activities and enhance learning opportunities.

Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the connection between these four elements: "*gamification, autonomy, motivation, and foreign language.*" Being the basis of our project, students may acquire a foreign language, in this case, English, becoming autonomous people who make decisions regarding their learning process dynamically. Likewise, the purpose of this research is to comprehend how autonomy can be developed or improved through the implementation of gamified elements as a strategy in a group of fifth-grade students in an EFL context.

This document presents the problem in which the needs are exposed in front of the lack of autonomy in an English class. This was carried out in a private school with an A2 English level with fifth-grade students. Therefore, it was decided to initiate this first stage by exploring the following constructs: *gamification, autonomy, motivation, and EFL*. For this purpose, an

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exhaustive analysis of different works that helped to guide this process was implemented; collecting data through observations and field notes, presenting consistent results and clear conclusions according to the initial research question.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since virtual classes were implemented as a consequence of the 2020 pandemic, learning environments began to show a diversity of important changes, which affected educational contexts. Consequently, the generation of learning strategies has been evolving to create and use different platforms looking for innovative alternatives that enhance skills such as *autonomy*. It was shown that students lacked responsibilities and autonomous learning behaviors during their computer-based academic tasks. This can prove that autonomy seemed to them as something that needed to be guided only by the teacher. In other words, Serafini R (2021) supports this when she mentions that the students had a heavy academic load without the presence and accompaniment of a real face-to-face teacher. Therefore, this has produced great significant transitions today in the forms of teaching where educators must be prepared to innovate and strengthen students' autonomy during any remote or face-to-face assignment

According to the above, we have evidenced that remote classes had a direct emotional, autonomous, and social impact on students. In some cases, they did not enter the assigned classes due to various situations such as lack of family support, connectivity, and resources. Based on the above, the OECD (2020) conducted research in which it reports a focal point of obstacles presented by the pandemic, directly involving parents who, on many occasions due to personal responsibilities, could not make a constant accompaniment after schoolwork, hindering

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autonomous and effective participation of students with the institution. Therefore, we as teachers had the arduous task of looking for different strategies to improve each of the needs they presented. Consequently, the lack of autonomy in teaching a foreign language was more visible since the students completed the assigned activities and they delivered low-quality work. As the days went by, times changed, and they returned to school, which made the lack of autonomy more evident; students stopped being active and became passive, significantly affecting their learning process and generating a loss of interest in the basic concepts of the foreign language.

For this reason, while we were making observations, it was shown that students felt less interested in keeping developing the activity; some specific aspects of evidence were: not interacting with peers during the socialization in class, lower levels of achievement in tasks, lack of participation, and low motivation. Under those circumstances, we explored how gamification could help to improve students' autonomy in learning a foreign language environment.

Research question.

The study is guided by the following described research question given in the context:

How do gamification-based lessons influence the development of autonomy of fifth-grade EFL students?

Research Objective.

Based on the research question, the following main research objective arose

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- To describe how implementing gamification in an EFL classroom affects 5th-grade students' autonomy in the acquisition of a foreign language

Specific objectives.

These specific objectives were proposed in line with the aforementioned question and objectives:

- To develop autonomy-demanding activities based on gamification elements and characteristics to increase students' autonomy.
- To better understand the relationship among autonomy, instruction, and learning to enhance EFL learning and acquisition.

Justification

The research aims to address the use of gamification lessons as a strategy to foster the autonomy of 5th-grade students in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. For that, we found it relevant to improve autonomy as it is one of the most important skills to engage the active role, participation, and achievement in the students. Likewise, Holec (1981 cited in Littlewood, 1999, p.7) mentioned: '...who is considered as one of the earliest advocates of autonomy, defined it as the ability to take charge of one's own learning.' Saying that, the primary focus of this research is to provide guidance on the effects that gamified lessons may have when developing and fostering autonomy based on the engagement that emerges from implementing activities that involve students' attention and interests. The research guides us to understand the importance of knowing how such elements enhance decision-making, goal-

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directed learning, and achievement, boosting and motivating a classroom to take action on their learning.

It is considered that gamified tasks appeared as an alternative to reinforce autonomy within the English classroom since they generated interest in students as they navigated their own learning path. *Autonomy* became a skill that allowed students to improve their performance in class and their learning experience. Reinders (2010) explains that autonomy is a worldview that gradually emerges and needs specific talents. The general classroom environment must value and promote reflection and the students' perspectives and roles in the learning process. According to the above, we can infer that the teacher must explore and guide the student to acquire his own learning.

Yan (2012) also states that:

Learner autonomy can help achieve high degrees of creativity and independence. The most common notion for autonomy is a goal of education. Fostering a learner's autonomy should be regarded as one of the most important goals that teachers and educators try to pursue. (p, 558)

It is worth noting that when we mention the word *game* in a non-game context, a door is opened and a connection with the new modality of gamification that focuses on helping students to acquire knowledge into the classroom becomes meaningful and enjoyable. Therefore, it is important to recognize that gamification is the vehicle for empowerment. As Dale (2014) mentioned:

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Activities are intrinsically motivating if they help satisfy the inherent desire for personal growth through the achievement of some kind of competence ("I'm good, I'm getting better, I've mastered this"); if they help students feel that they are working toward their own goals with some autonomy ("I have the control to do things that match my values"); and if they contribute to the sense of relatedness students feel by being part of a group or an intentional movement larger than themselves ("I'm part of something I think is important"). (p.86)

This means that our approach is based on stimulating interest and motivation at the autonomy levels of the learners by guiding their behavior to explore content. Additionally, it is recognized that it can be an alternative to be implemented in English classes as a teaching strategy.

Thus, in an English as a foreign language classroom, the skill known as autonomy requires students to be involved in their learning process so that they feel attracted to the content and look forward to working on their own. In this sense, *Gamification* is relevant to generate a learning environment that allows students to strengthen their sense of autonomy since its application and integration during EFL classes have demonstrated to have positive results and, therefore to be determinant in the development of specific aspects that have been categorized as autonomy indicators in the emotional progress, some of them are: curiosity, security, and positivism in the moment of failure, optimism, autonomy, and motivation.

Hence, as Healy (2019) stated, Gamification has been demonstrated to be an important addition in EFL contexts because it promotes effective learning as a consequence of its effects on

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improving the four basic language skills (Speaking, Listening, Writing, and Reading), as well as making choices skills. In the same way, she states that game elements or gamification may reinforce the fact of taking an active part in their learning activities and paths. Thereby, learners of English as a foreign language become autonomous and more involved with their learning.

Consequently, we as researchers consider it as a matter of importance to have an EFL learning setting that fosters learners' autonomy. According to Tso (2018), the use of Gamification has significant benefits for students, and they make part of the indicators of autonomy. It allows the interaction between students and the subject matter through a dynamic environment focused on game elements. She also argues that through this way of instruction, students can feel enthusiastic, see the importance of their autonomous learning, and develop language and thinking skills. Because of this, we contemplate the idea of implementing innovative gamified lessons as a way to study its impact on students' autonomy.

Additionally, according to Benson & Voller (2014), “Advocates of autonomy and independence have also drawn upon ‘constructivist’ approaches to learning, which suggest that learners construct their own system of knowledge as experience is filtered through ‘personal construct systems’” (p.6). Additionally, we recognize that it is important that students are also immersed in the teaching-learning process of acquiring a language in an enjoyable way while they configure their knowledge from experience. For this reason, different perspectives were taken from several authors who reinforce our thesis regarding gamification's effect when developing autonomous learning.

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Therefore, considering the importance of having English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning environment that fosters students' autonomy, gamification was a coherent approach to work on it. For that reason, gamification allows interaction between students and the subject matter through a dynamic environment. Additionally, Tso (2018) argues that through this form of instruction, students can feel excited, see the importance of their own learning, and develop learning, language, and decision-making skills. Like this, the idea of implementing an innovative technological methodology such as Gamification was contemplated as a way to evaluate its impact on students' autonomy.

Likewise, this study was developed in a private non-bilingual school located in Bogota, Colombia, with a population target of fifth-grade students who presented a low level of autonomy and motivation during their English classes. The research was carried out with the goal of strengthening these skills through the use of gamification elements in different scenarios.

To conclude, our study is based on the difficulties that students presented without having autonomy, and were evident at school where the project was developed. Some of the mentioned phenomena were identified cognitively and physically, to generate consequences in decision-making as well as in the result of actions. Therefore, this paper seeks to comprehend how students' levels of autonomy arise by implementing elements of gamification within their English learning experiences.

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CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

There are endless definitions about the concepts we used in our investigation. Therefore, as a first point, we will briefly examine the similarities between the authors that support our research project. In the first place, we will explore the conceptual framework of gamification, then motivation, following autonomy, and finally, we will talk about the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) through gamification.

Gamification

Gamification is the most commonly used term today by educational institutions. This word refers, according to Deterding et al. (2011), to the use of game elements in an environment where the context is not merely a game. This means that teachers use certain elements of gamification, whether in the classroom or any other space, in order to improve the behavior, motivation, interest, and autonomy of students in a specific situation. This methodological strategy implies increasing motivation and involving the students in suitable scenarios where they will have significant learning and be interested in continuing to acquire knowledge. As Burke (2014, cited in Herrera, 2018, p.7) tells us, gamification “implies the use of game mechanics and experience design to digitally engage and motivate people to achieve their goals” (p.6)

Additionally, gamification comprises a series of stimuli and rewards that are considered essential to influence and improve the learner's behavior. Zichermann & Cunningham (2011) mentioned that gamers become interested and spend much more time on the activity provided when certain gamification elements are used, such as badges, points, levels, progress bars,

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avatars, etc. This is why it is worth noting that the involvement of gamification elements in the classroom should go hand in hand if the teacher strives to plan and develop strategies that involve students, thus always looking for ways to be educationally updated on new platforms, applications, etc. As Garcia-Ruiz et al. (2018) mentioned,

If teachers want to improve the chances that gamification will bring real value to schools, they should propose projects that address real challenges in schools and focus on areas where gamification can provide the most value for both teachers and students. (p. 71).

In this sense, Lee and Hammer (2011) explain that the use of gamification enhances and works certain emotions, such as curiosity, optimism, pride, and security, through the positive treatment of failure through play, which allows learning through repetition without taking risks. Similar to this definition, Herrera (2018) carried out research in which he wanted to prove how the use of gamification could generate more comfortable learning of a foreign language and help students to acquire autonomy. Thus, we can say that gamification is the one of the most used methodologies in these times where circumstances have evolved the thinking skills and the way of teaching and learning, starting to look for new alternatives and strategies that benefit students and also improves developing abilities like problem-solving, critical thinking, and more 21st century skills according to this.

There is no doubt that some studies conducted by several authors about gamification have been of great help for our research since our main objective is to determine how gamification impacts the autonomy and motivation of students to learn English as a foreign language. In general, many of these studies affirm that gamification has a significant effect on student

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learning due to the interactive ways of teaching by the teacher and the increase in motivation and interest.

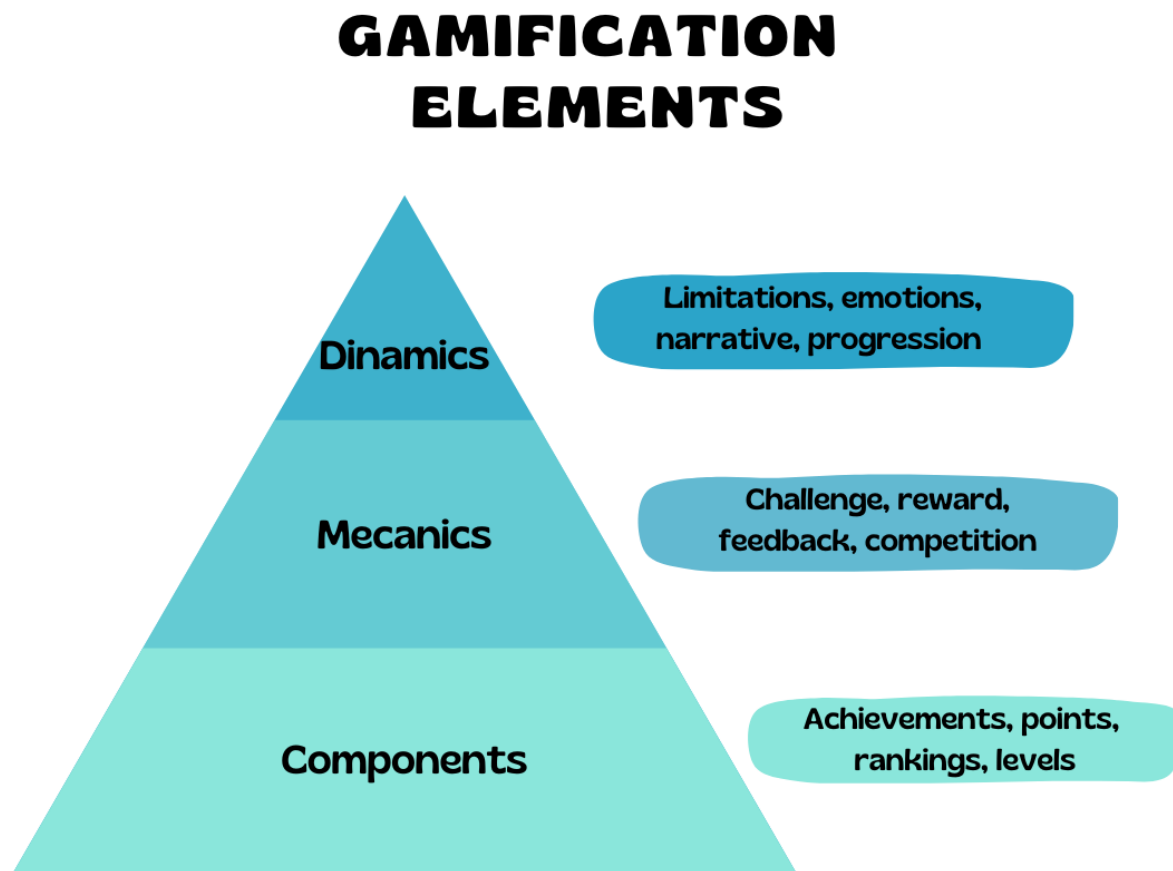


Figure 1 Gamification elements (Werbach, 2012, own design, copied from Quintanal, 2016)

However, to better understand gamification, it is necessary to analyze the elements that compose it. According to Werbach and Hunter (2012), the application of gamification through dynamics, mechanics, and components while using a qualitative methodology based on content analysis, creates successful gamification experiences that can raise user engagement, motivation, and commitment levels; which Werbach and Hunter point out that those three elements of gamification mean, dynamics refer to constraints and emotions, mechanics refer to challenges

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and competencies; finally, components refer to points, levels and achievements that can be reached by each player in this case, each student. (Wood & Reiners, 2015). With these components, it is possible to develop activities that generate cohesion and efficiency. In such a way, they become more aware and active in their EFL learning process.

In view of the above, it is mentioned by Foncubierta & Rodriguez (2014 cited in Instituto Politécnico do Porto et al., 2018, p.68) that:

Gamification is a pedagogical strategy that integrates game elements (logos, time, limit, punctuation, dice, etc.) and thinking into the design of learning activities (challenges, competition, etc.) whether analog or digital. The objective is to enhance the learning experience and alter student behavior in the classroom, increasing motivation, engagement, and critical skills.

With this, the student will not only feel motivated but will also generate awareness of his or her learning process through the significant experience. So, in this order of ideas, Olsson (2020) mentions "... gamification as an emergent teaching approach foremost aims at increasing student motivation and engagement for schoolwork to promote their learning processes and knowledge acquisition" (p, 72).

Taking into account the above, it is possible to conclude that all of the authors mentioned before, like Deterding (2011), Burke (2014), Herrera (2018), Zichermann and Cunningham (2011), etc., agree with the fact that gamification is the most used methodological strategy nowadays, not only in the classroom but also in all areas. That is why it is of utmost importance for our project since we seek to help students who lack motivation and autonomy through

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gamification elements.

Motivation

Regarding motivation, this is a fundamental factor in education as it is students' willingness to learn and engage in academic tasks. When students are motivated, they are more likely to put forth effort and persist in the face of challenges, leading to improved academic performance and success. Motivation inspires us to achieve whatever we set our minds to as it improves performance and enhances learning. Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000) mentioned that “Motivation is concerned with energy, direction, persistence and equifinality - all aspects of activation and intention. Motivation has been a central and perennial issue in the field of psychology, given that it lies at the heart of biological and social regulation”. (p.3)

According to some research projects, we can say that motivation is a series of behaviors linked together to achieve an objective. Thus, Lipnevich, A. A., & Smith, J. K. (2016) states that “Motivation has been defined as the process whereby goal-directed activities are initiated and sustained. In expectancy-value theory, motivation is a function of the expectation of success and perceived value”. (p.997). Therefore, students must find the right way to engage their motivation. In the first place, we have intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. As Hennessey, Moran, Altringer, and Amabile (2015) stated:

“Intrinsic motivation is the motivation to do something for its own sake, for the sheer enjoyment of the task itself. Extrinsic motivation is the motivation to do something in order to attain some external goal or meet some externally imposed constraint. (p.1)

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Additionally, we want to point out that intrinsic motivation is when the student feels the satisfaction of achieving something of his or her own. As Amabile (1996) cited in Hennessey (2015) “This phenomenon is summarized by the intrinsic motivation principle of creativity: people will be most creative when they feel motivated primarily by the interest, enjoyment, satisfaction, and challenge of the work itself and not by external pressures or inducements” (p.2). Chang and Chin (2011) Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can be effective in different situations, depending on the individual and the task to be performed. Intrinsic motivation is often associated with higher levels of engagement and satisfaction, while extrinsic motivation can be effective for tasks that require specific outcomes or goals.

Considering what Hadre et al. (2007, cited in Filgota et al, 2020, p.17) argue:

Motivation is among the most powerful determinants of students’ success or failure in school. In the learning sphere, spurring students’ motivation to engage in academic activities is part of teachers’ teaching-learning strategy if the teacher wants to see consistent and quality results.

For this reason, it is intended to generate new teaching methodologies through motivation and to generate and develop autonomy while acquiring a second language. Therefore, there is a process in which all people go through and begin to develop different skills according to what is needed. In this case, we will know a little about the hierarchies of Maslow (2000), who proposed that:

The degree of fixity of the hierarchy of basic needs. -- We have spoken so far as if this hierarchy were a fixed order but actually it is not nearly as rigid as we may have implied.

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It is true that most of the people with whom we have worked have seemed to have these basic needs in about the order that has been indicated. (p.94)

This means that every human being presents different hierarchies. In this way different roles are identified and also this hierarchy expresses different levels in which the human being is exposed in their daily lives and with it, values that normally should be worked to strengthen the motivation in the things that each one wants to do.

With respect to this situation we intend to make known what the needs are that we must work and how gamification strengthens the self-esteem of each student.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

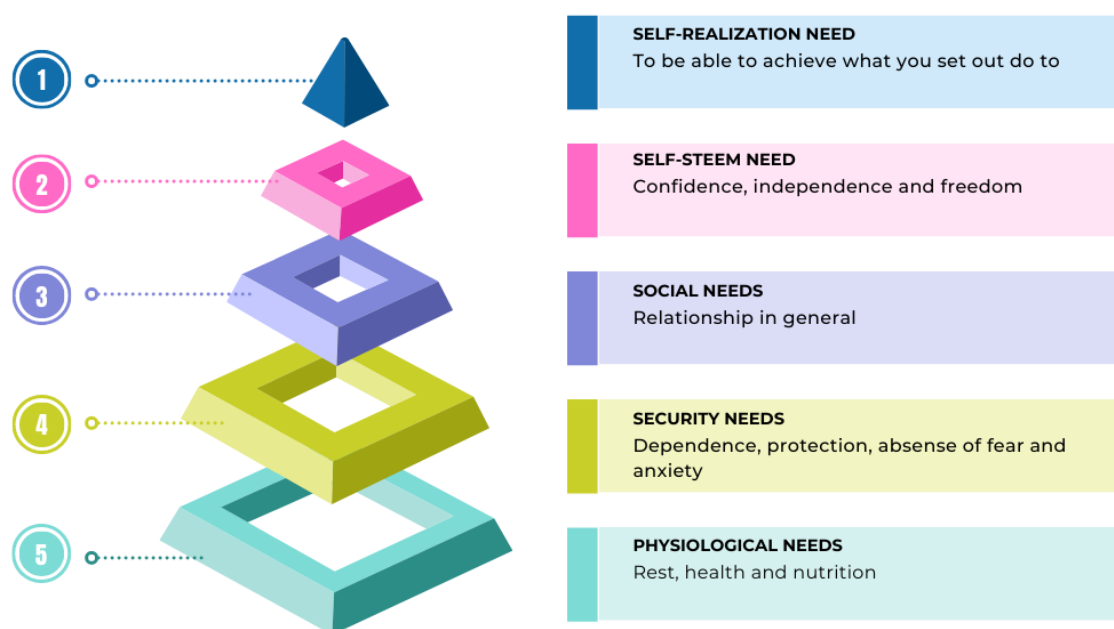


Figure 2 Maslow's Hierarchy of needs. Our design.

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With all the above, we can infer that motivation is important for the development of people, and the best way to strengthen this process is through gamification. Therefore, our study is also focused on one part of the pyramid, that is self-esteem, as it is the balance that students should have; also, it is related to motivation and the use of gamification for foreign language acquisition. To support this idea, Yildiz et al. (2021) defined "it was thought that the learner would participate more actively in the process thanks to the motivation aroused in any gamified teaching environment" (p.5).

Autonomy

Regarding autonomy, it is known that this skill plays an important role in any learning process. We can infer that students develop autonomy when they have to decide about their own learning process, which we can refer to as the power to lead and construct our own learning process. In the book *"Autonomy as the purpose of education: implications of Piaget's theory"* written by Kamii (1984), referring to Piaget (1948), it is stated that: "autonomy is achieved when the human being is able to think for himself, being critical, moral and intellectual in his different points of view", in other words autonomy is having the power of controlling ourselves when making decisions. Alternately, Collier (2002) defined autonomy as "self-governing distinguishing the active independence of organisms and intellects from the sort of independence...and that places more emphasis on self-governance" (p.1). By giving that understanding autonomy is the ability to react accordingly to our values and sense of what we follow as acting coherency with our beliefs, ideas and ethics.

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It can be said that a connection between autonomy and gamification can be established as is key to allow choice and autonomy in self-directed learning in the gamified experience, because autonomy, as one of the three principles of self-determination theory, is connected to intrinsic motivation (Gibson & Jakl, 2015; Nicholson, 2015). Similarly, autonomy is an element of game play that contributes to effective gamification (Dale, 2014). This is because the efficacy students develop while having a game role, for such a reason, it is critical to consider the impact that autonomy engagement has on the learning process, especially in the acquisition of a second language. All this seems to affirm that gamification-based learning enhances and increases learner autonomy to its fullest advantage. Gee (2005) refers to learners as gamers and mentions that each learner likes to be autonomous in choosing his or her level of expertise and pace. Since each person is a different mindset, teachers must learn to know each one of them, decipher the context and reality in which they live and guide them towards autonomous learning, making their interests something that allows them to explore and continue participating in a harmonious and calm environment.

Secondly, recognizing the factors that can affect students' learning is important in order to look for possible strategies that can be used during English classes to foster motivation and autonomy. According to Benson (2014), "Advocates of autonomy and independence have also drawn upon 'constructivist' approaches to learning, which suggest that learners construct their own system of knowledge as experience is filtered through 'personal construct systems'" (p.6). This is why we want to make it clear that our approach is not purely constructivist since what we seek to avoid is that this methodology can interfere with and diminish the flourishing of autonomy. But at the same time, we recognize that it is of utmost importance that students are

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also immersed in the teaching-learning process of grammar in an enjoyable way while they configure their knowledge from experience. Jaramillo y Ruíz (2010) stated the following:

The non-autonomous student is heteronomous, his learning depends on external factors that are outside the learning environment, he is a follower of instructions by the teacher. He requires the teacher to be very close to his learning process, since he demands organized steps and procedures for the completion of tasks. (p.13)

With this in mind, identifying that non-autonomous students do not have the ability to choose or decide on their own learning having a certain dependence on the teacher, which makes them fearful and self-conscious of not having autonomy over their own being, thus avoiding leaving the comfort zone. Therefore, it is necessary to use dynamic activities that enhance learning skills and lead to the fact that students are involved in their own learning paths. In addition, with these types of activities, students can also become more aware of the choices they have to make in order to arrive at a powerful idea or solution. Thus, Qiangqiang (2021) suggests: “in an autonomy-supportive class climate, learners have greater interest, more noteworthy energy, better relatedness, and less pressure” (p.4).

Likewise, autonomy plays a very important role in student learning. Aligning with this, Benson (2001) refers to autonomy as “[...] the ability to take control of their own learning, largely because the concept of control seems to be more open to investigation than the concepts of taking charge or taking responsibility” (p.47). Based on this, we can infer that students develop autonomy when they have to decide about their own learning process.

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Conducting their learning process and recognizing the result that is obtained engages the student to achieve and become self-governing their process. Agich (2009) said that “idealized autonomy seems at odds with an understanding of the mature person as one who has a developed self-identity that gives substance to the meaning and scope of his unique personal sense of being autonomous” (p.268). Therefore, autonomy is described as the faculty of acknowledging our own potential in order to take action and create awareness of the process of acquiring learning skills.

Nevertheless, autonomy must be helped to be developed in a learning environment in which students apply the main concepts of such competence. Kunni Han (2021) stated that “Learners have the power of choice over their actions when they are autonomous since they can attribute their actions to an inner source of authority” (p.4). Bringing students to an environment in which intentionally they are engaged and autonomous through elements that motivate them guarantees a meaningful learning process during the acquisition of a foreign language through gamification elements.

EFL (English as a Foreign Language) through gamification

In recent years, it has become common to implement teaching English as a Foreign Language into the curricula. Learning EFL is a challenging task for many students and teachers, but it can also be an exciting and rewarding experience. It is important to understand English as a Foreign Language EFL definition before approaching teaching EFL through gamification. According to Yoko Iwai (2011 cited in Si, 2019, p.33), EFL refers to those who learn English in non-English speaking countries, which means learners start to acquire a new language in a

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context where it is not primarily spoken.

Regarding EFL context learning through gamification, as mentioned by Zhang and Hasim (2023), the fact of rewarding and increasing motivation through gamification engages students to become more interested and autonomous towards their learning as they find motivation while learning happens. Gamification integrates game-like elements into non-game contexts, such as learning environments, with the objective of fostering engagement and motivation. Currently, gamification has become increasingly popular in language learning. This is because gamification has been found to have numerous benefits, both for learners and educators.

Gamification is relevant to generate a learning environment that allows students to strengthen their sense of autonomy and motivation since their application and integration during EFL classes have shown positive results. As mentioned by Healy (2019), gamification has proven to be an important complement in EFL contexts because it promotes effective learning as a consequence of its effects on the improvement of the four basic language skills (speaking, listening, writing, and reading) and decision-making skills.

Therefore, both EFL and gamification intentionally purpose is to engage students in a way where they are aware of their learning. In accordance with this Zhang and Hasim (2023) when citing different authors “Gamification has become an innovative trend in education which aims to make the learning process more attractive to students in a fun and humorous learning environment and is believed to facilitate and encourage students to participate in learning” (Deterding et al., 2011; Lee and Hammer, 2011; Kapp, 2012; Bicen and Kocakoyun, 2018). In concordance with this perspective Redjeki and Muhajir (2021) mentioned:

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Acknowledging the importance of facilitating students with innovative and captivating grammar learning activities, the research on exploring gamification in the grammar lesson as part of EFL classroom is very important to be conducted to support teaching and learning in the 21st century (p.70)

This refers to the fact of facilitating gamification elements and learning experiences in which students do not feel much captivated aiming at expanding opportunities to achieve learning experiences. In conclusion, gamification can make learning more engaging and motivating for EFL learners. This is because games are inherently fun and engaging and can provide learners with a sense of achievement and satisfaction as they progress through levels and achieve goals. By incorporating game-like elements into EFL learning, such as points, badges, and leaderboards, educators can make the learning process more enjoyable and motivating for their students. This, in turn, can lead to increased participation and better learning outcomes as well as help to foster a sense of autonomy among EFL learners.

To conclude, the constructs *gamification*, *motivation*, *autonomy*, and *EFL* provide a theoretical framework in which it can determine how they relate to each other, especially in a learning environment. Motivated students tend to be more autonomous as they look forward to engaging and achieving their learning goals; gamification increases interest and allows students to be more self-directed towards their learning, significantly impacting an EFL experience where autonomous learning and motivation are considered relevant when acquiring and interacting with a second language. As English teachers, we see the fundamentals to improve teaching practices and advocate to identify opportunities to boost students' skills.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section will present some of several studies that have explored the use of gamification in the EFL classroom and its impact on students' motivation and performance. In the following paragraphs, some of these studies will be described, and their results will be discussed.

The first thesis that will be described in this project is “*La gamificación como estrategia didáctica en el proceso de enseñanza de gramática del inglés en los estudiantes de grado sexto*” [Gamification as a didactic strategy in the process of teaching English grammar to sixth grade students] developed by Realpe (2021). This research aimed to assess gamification's effectiveness in teaching English grammar to sixth-grade students. To achieve this objective, a quasi-experimental study was conducted with two groups of students, one that received traditional teaching and another that received teaching with gamification.

Based on the above, we can conclude that the use of gamification implemented in the research carried out by Realpe (2021) shows that it was possible to enhance the English language teaching and learning process as well as raise the performance levels across all competencies and criteria used to gauge learned knowledge. The mechanics of the games were appropriate for the methodology since the students were able to comprehend, apply, and maintain interest throughout all sessions.

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Aligning the findings of this research, we can refer to what we discuss in this research. The implementation of gamification is an opportunity to improve the English language, as the use of mechanisms improves a foreign language through the use of gamification with the objective of fostering autonomous learning.

The second study developed the idea of the Role of gamification in classroom teaching, *Role of gamification in classroom teaching: Pre-service teachers' View, (2020)*. This research aimed to assess a group of 33 pre-service teachers using gamification in a language context and implementing strategies showing the increase of 21st-century skills such as autonomy, problem-solving, and responsibility. The researchers did a quantitative survey in which they found that implementing gamification improved students' skills.

The study was conducted to collect information based on the questions answered in the surveys. Those results were intentional towards the functioning of implementing gamification elements and how these will foster such skills. The researchers analyzed the pre-service teachers' perception of the effectiveness of using gamification in language teaching during 16 weeks which allowed them to collect meaningful data in order to get to the following conclusions by the researchers; The study found that incorporating games into teaching resulted in favorable results as learners were able to perform better without experiencing the pressure of learning. This approach also acted as a source of motivation for learners.

Moreover, the research revealed that games contributed to improving learners' creative, critical, and problem-solving skills. (Mee, Shahdan, Ismail, Ghani, Pek, Yee Von, Woo and Rao. 2020). The educational benefits of gamification, which explained that gamified activities are

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stimulating, motivating as well as entertaining.

The results showed that gamification does play a meaningful role in an EFL learning environment as the students get to engage in the learning process they are having while developing skills that lead them to be aware of their role in the learning process as well as helping to increase interest, motivation, and autonomy guaranteeing an EFL classroom successful regarding meaningful learning. On the other hand, teachers reflect and conclude that the use of gamification in a class reinforces not only students' behavior towards the role they play in their learning process as well as in the classroom but teacher's performances and a way to interact and intervene in the classroom.

According to above, their results support the idea suggested by this study in which it is mentioned how gamification influences the development of skills like autonomous learning in an EFL class; from the reflections made by teachers, they observed that applying gamification elements engage students to be more active and motivated during the classes reinforcing the fact that motivated and autonomous students will acquire a language in a more meaningful experience while fostering skills.

The last study reviewed was a research article that presents how the Kahoot application is a gamified online system that strengthens the motivation and attitudes of students to focus on anxiety and overcome exams with greater autonomy and success (Öden, Bolat, Goksu, 2021). Therefore, a study conducted on a group of 88 eighth-grade students from a private school presented difficulties in exams and foreign language acquisition. This study evidenced the motivation that students obtained when they had to use their electronic tools to fulfill a purpose

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which was to dynamically develop a test. This is aligned with what Al-Hadithy and Ali (2018) stated: "integrated Kahoot! into the learning environment and found an increase in students' engagement, self-efficacy, and independent learning"(p.684). With reference to it, this study presents a qualitative approach, and real data were collected from the students' experiences.

To sum up, it can be said that this study is a good opportunity to implement different methodologies to improve English classes using gamification-based technological tools where was demonstrated the improvement of the students in the classes in terms of autonomy and behavior, which is considered important for this investigation, due to this research allowing us to have a better overview about the results obtained through this strategy.

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

In this section, we specify the research methodology that was carried out during the project process in 5th-grade students of a private non-bilingual school in Bogota, which entails a qualitative design, a constructivist paradigm, and an Action Research methodology. This research project is framed within a qualitative approach, which Creswell in his book *Research Design* defined as:

Qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals' groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the research making. (Creswell, 2009, p. 22).

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Such qualitative research takes into account different tools in order to allow close observations and behaviors, trying to identify patterns by the implementation of gamification elements through lessons proposed and what effects might have on students' autonomy. Apart from this, a constructivist paradigm was involved to emphasize the subjective nature of reality and the importance of understanding how individuals interpret and construct meaning from their experiences (Mogashoa, 2014). In this paradigm, researchers seek to understand the complexities of participants' experiences by exploring their subjective meanings and interpretations (Creswell 2009). Thus, the goal is to emphasize the importance of understanding the subjective meanings and experiences of individuals in their social and cultural context, in this case, students' interactions and behavior in an EFL environment that incorporates gamification elements to foster and improve autonomy.

On the other hand, this paradigm has a qualitative perspective that focuses on the social point of view. In order to understand social constructivism, it is important to understand that each person has their own distinct knowledge or information related to a particular subject, depending on their context. According to Crotty (1998 cited by Creswell 2009), human beings shape and create meanings as they interact with and interpret the world around them.

To conclude, such a paradigm was implemented during the intervention made for this research. It was critical for the researchers to acknowledge the constructivist approach and see it as useful when researching complex, subjective phenomena that may be difficult to measure or define using traditional research tools. In this study, it was very important to visualize how the data was collected to have the information and to connect with students' needs inside the classroom. For that, it was necessary to recognize that students actively construct meaning from their experiences.

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Based on this qualitative approach and research paradigm, we identified that the best research strategy was Action Research (AR), since it involves the active participation of the people involved in the process, generating analysis of problems and contextual situations. Additionally, we as teachers can enhance our educational practice by reflecting on and analyzing the context where we are. For this reason, in this strategy, we will focus on strengthening our daily work.

The organization of our AR

When we began to talk about AR, these two words were understood separately. When we talk about action, there are things that a teacher does on a daily basis in his or her pedagogical work in the classroom. On the other hand, there is research, which is the way to conduct a good lesson, considering the theoretical support to meet the objective. For this, the teacher must be a researcher that shares knowledge to students in the best way.

According to the above, over time, the association of these two words was made to form the union of a strategy that seeks to identify specific questions and find the best learning strategies for students through a systematic process. Bailey, Curtis, and Nunan (2001,p.134) quoted by Burns, (2015) say that action research involves three dimensions which are 1. to identify the questions, 2. to collect information and 3. to analyze the codings.

In this strategy, there is a diversity of models of AR but we took this spiral to focus and recognize the four steps that describe the process that teachers engage in at each step. According to Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) cited by Burns (2015) there are four steps to carry out AR, which are: Observe, Reflect, Planning, Action.

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In the following spiral, we describe how the four stages mentioned by Burns were implemented in our research project; we have observation, reflection, planning, and action. Such steps were aligned with our data collection instruments, our didactic unit, the resources, and the participants.



Figure 3 Action research, own design.

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According to the above, each step has its characteristic that is developed as follows:

Planning stage is when the teacher identifies the problems in the classroom by observing and reading some articles that helps to focus on the difficulty of the group that is expected to improve or change. Acting stage is the action plan to be taken; observing stage is when the action taken is observed, the information is analyzed, the findings are reported and the final information is shared. Finally, the reflecting stage evaluates the previous process and decides if any of the steps need to be restructured.

With the above, we can conclude that each teacher must perform a thorough follow-up in their teaching work and identify the phenomenon of action plans and evaluate what is done. In this line, Burns, (2015) states “Action research as a form of alternative professional development can be seen to offer teachers opportunities to professionalize their work by investigating how effectively teaching and learning are carried out in their classrooms” (p.8).

In the following sections, we explain an initial description of how the cycles of our action research were developed to gather information, analyze findings, make improvements, and implement changes that allowed us to engage in a continuous enhancement process. In the finding section, it will be described furtherly.

Cycle I

We started our class on March 4th, and we took our three lessons by our work. (three weeks)

Stage 1: Observation

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This was a group known since the 2021 school year, where the pandemic started to generate consequences regarding fear when coming back to school. With this previous experience, we identified that the group of students did not have any interest in developing their learning responsibilities in the English class, and the interest was very low. As they came back to the school in 2022, we evidenced a rejection of the subject; therefore, in order to have detailed information the following lessons were recorded through the Microsoft Teams platform as the teacher had remote and face-to-face students at the same time. Students were aware they were being recorded because they shared the class with a partner that did not come back to face-to-face classes. Once we had the recorders, we started a rigorous observation of each pattern presented during the class.

Stage 2: Reflection

We focused on students' interactions during the classes, their behavioral responses toward their responsibilities, and the factors that could potentially motivate them in order to implement strategies that could foster their engagement and interest as early as autonomy. We reflected on taking actions that would improve their performances, and for that, we decided to create a first cycle - one unit composed of three classes which were carried out by means of activities that involved their interests in which the objective was to motivate them and detect their responses to those activities implemented like *Say and Tell* this with the purpose of recognizing the difference between the two words in order to be used when they wanted to present information about what they knew and what they wanted to tell.

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Stage 3: Planning

For each of the cycles, three different classes were planned in which the students learned dynamically, recognizing the importance of autonomy and the true value of the use of technology. Therefore, in this first *Didactic Unit 1 planning format* (Appendix 2), interactive activities were planned, in literature stories were read through MyOn, and based on them, a role-play was performed. The objective of each lesson was to identify how students interacted, motivated themselves, and showed autonomy in the development of the lesson class.

Stage 4: Action

It was decided to carry out a series of activities like reading comprehension, creation of the script, and the creation of an avatar in order to correlate it with the text they were reading, which was about Greek gods, *Didactic Unit 1 planning format* (Appendix 2). They created the powers of each avatar taking into account the reading they did, they decided to do a story that represented the gods and giants of an animated tale

Cycle 2

Step 1: Observation

According to cycle 1 it was observed that along with the implementation of gamified activities, it was noted that there was a significant increase of both motivation and autonomy among the students. As for us, we identify a more meaningful interaction and disposition in the classes where they become more motivated to actively participate, taking ownership of their learning, and developing achievement and satisfaction that clearly was shown in their

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performances during the classes.

Step 2: Reflection

In the course of time, the students began to improve in their delivery of work, and we reflected on the attitude and quality of work presented by the students, which is reflected in the methodologies and instruments that were used in the first phase and that we could improve in the second phase. Based on this, we reflected on the activities in which they could interact with each other, made their attention last longer, and generated meaningful learning.

Step 3: Planning

At this point, the lessons were focused on motivation and autonomous learning. Which was delivered by a PPP (presentation, practice, production) structure implementing gamified elements such as Kahoot and avatars other tech tools like a PowerPoint, interactive video, and a story about the planets. *Didactic Unit 2 planning format* (Appendix 3).

Step 4: Action

The final step was for the students to create an avatar through a web page and link it to the literature class to become a god. This is in order to focus on the motivation and identify the autonomous growth of the students.

According to the AR process, individual and group work was fundamental to fostering autonomy in the classroom in English lessons. With this, it is important that through these lessons, students perform an interaction with peers to generate a collective learning. In addition, the gamification elements made learning more accessible.

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Furthermore, it is important the planning of English classes, which is the basis for the development of a topic, and also the students are prepared for what they are going to achieve in the course of it. We must keep in mind that each planning has a process that consists of an agenda for the students to prepare, warm up, previous knowledge, presentation of the topic, practice, production, and evaluation of the class.

Context and Population

This research project was focused on fifth grade students who have an A1 level in the area of English and is made up of 7 boys and 8 girls between 9 and 10 years of age from a private school located in the south of Bogota. It is a population that was selected for various behaviors they showed in English classes, considering this a starting point for our research which is intended to improve. The students were interested in learning a foreign language through different resources and methodologies that promote autonomy in the realization of active activities using gamification. It is important to highlight that the students had a first approach to the process, through the creation of a monster that was called "Kimera" and a short story that told the creation of this monster. Likewise, it was identified that the students have previous knowledge in videos, which was a great help to know the tastes, advantages and disadvantages for the creation and planning of materials and classes. Thus, all the characteristics mentioned above were the starting point for us to begin to investigate and solve our research objective about the effects that the use of gamification could have on fifth grade students with low self-esteem in EFL classes. The gathered evidence that was shown in our research problem allowed us to apply our strategy and use of technological tools to help improve and demonstrate the effects of the use of gamification.

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Ethical Considerations

The present study was supported by the security of the personal data of the participants who are part of the research exploration. That is, law 1581 (2012) was complied with, which refers to the proper use of the personal data of each of the participants and the correct use of the data, as stated in this part.

That said, the researchers and the educational institution made an informed consent of data processing for each of the students, which was reported to each of the parents, who agreed to collaborate with the research and, in this way, safeguard the integrity of each of the participants. Pseudonyms were used in order to protect students' identities and to guarantee confidentiality. The data was exclusively handled by the researchers and will be deleted once the researchers are over.

Role of the Researcher

The researchers actively developed different learning strategies during the research process with the students. Based on this, a series of steps were carried out that were of great help in the route of the research process. First, each of the students, principals, and parents were informed about the project of which they would be part, as well as the law that protects the personal data of each of the students. Secondly, they were presented with the ESL activities that they should perform autonomously through gamification, and the development and changes that the students had in these activities were observed. In addition, the surveys, videos, and field notes were of great help at the time of collecting the data and evidencing the significant

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development of the students. Therefore, the role of the researcher was active, as he was involved in each of the planned steps of the project, and it was carried out without any inconvenience.

Data Collection Instruments

Specifically, different instruments were used at the time of data collection. The implemented techniques were observations and field diaries, which helped comprehend the perceptions of each participant regarding physical and virtual activities. Additionally, instruments such as observation formats and rigorous diary entries served as tools to navigate and answer the proposed research question. In addition, lesson plans, surveys, observation classes, and field notes served as evidence to plan the necessary strategies in relation to the lack of autonomy of the fifth-grade students.

Observations

Regarding observations they are defined in qualitative research by McKechnie (2008, cited by B & Onwuegbuzie, 2018) “is one of the oldest and most fundamental research methods approaches. This approach involves collecting data using one’s senses, especially looking and listening in a systematic and meaningful way” (p.573). This means that we aimed to observe in detail, and what was happening in each video taken with the purpose of identifying the behavior. According to Mulhall (2002), “... observation is used to understand and interpret cultural behavior.” (p. 306). Hence, each of the four classes recorded were observed in order to collect data about the students' interaction with the class. It is important to take into account that the

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classes were taken in English with Literature and Social studies subjects. Some videos were recorded using TEAMS.

As it was mentioned above, the observations were taken from recorded classes and then analyzed by the researches, every pattern identified was documented in a observation format (see appendix 7), in which some actions propose a reflection, a hypothesis and a possible solution to the observed phenomenon, then these ideas were compared with what the literature has mentioned about the same concepts.

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Field notes

In the case of this research, the notes were taken with the purpose of documenting the main features of a student's behavior when developing learning experiences in which they work with and without autonomy. Such data was collected focusing on their performance and analyzing it critically with the objective of providing an assertive critical reflection about the observation made. As mentioned by Lauderdale and Phillippi (2017), “Field notes can improve the depth of qualitative findings. How they are used is highly dependent on the researcher. As long as participants are protected, researchers can use, archive, and disseminate field notes in a variety of ways” (p.386), therefore field notes in this project were applied as a way to observe and understand the patterns during the learning experiences.

Therefore, in the collection of the data in the field notes, aspects such as the date on which the observation was made, the place, the description of the event, the interpretation of what was observed, and what we can reflect on in each of the classes were taken into account. This was done in order to follow up, identify needs and create new support material to strengthen autonomy and motivation. In addition, we can conclude that field notes and observations work together to collect data, providing complementary perspectives and capturing different aspects of the research in order to triangulate the information obtained, so as to we considered that these

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two instruments were determinants to identify, understand and go deeper on the intervention we wanted to study.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data management and coding

Based on Charmaz (2006) Grounded Theory, we obtained meaningful data through a rigorous codification. Such a process was approached in 3 stages the first; initial codification, where an examination begins to identify and label concepts that emerge from the data, creating initial codes that came from the fragments of field notes and observations such as: *learning through fun and dynamic activities, self-regulated learning, student progress monitoring, gamify the topics of exploration, autonomous participation, students behavior, and class engagement, Initial coding* (Appendix 8), which they become into broader codes in the focused coding, for instance; *How gamifying the learning experiences improved students performance and How the teacher's role is determined when applying gamification elements inside the classroom. Focused coding* (Appendix 9).

Finally, we reached the Axial coding, in which we integrated the codes obtained from the second phase with the purpose of finding macro categories that tried to answer the research question, *Active learning environments promote students' autonomy and motivation,*

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Gamification works as a boosting strategy for language learning skill and Students' and teachers' performance evidence significant and autonomous learning processes when applying gamified lessons. Axial coding (Appendix 10)

The objective of this data collection process was to answer the research question: How do gamification-based lessons influence the development of autonomy of fifth-grade EFL students? In this investigation, we implemented two instruments for data collection: field diaries, and observations, in order to guarantee a triangulation process that assured validity and reliability. Thus, this research was done to observe students' performance on autonomy levels when implementing gamification elements and what implication it has in the development of the same. The triangulation was carried out with the purpose of verifying the accuracy of the results to validate the information collected and find evidence of what this project aims to propose, as mentioned by Heal and Forbes (2013):

The objective is to increase confidence in the findings through the confirmation of a proposition using two or more independent measures. The combination of findings from two or more rigorous approaches provides a more comprehensive picture of the results than either approach could do alone (p.98)

For this reason, triangulation allowed us to have a wide opening in terms of the information that could be collected through the two instruments in order to understand the phenomenon of autonomy and motivation in an EFL environment in relation with gamification

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elements. Additionally, such triangulation was developed by the organization of the plan of Action Research; observation, reflection, planning, and action.

The following chart (Figure 4) shows the data saturation we reached after our triangulation process, from which 3 main categories and 11 subcategories emerged and represent different connections to answer our research question.

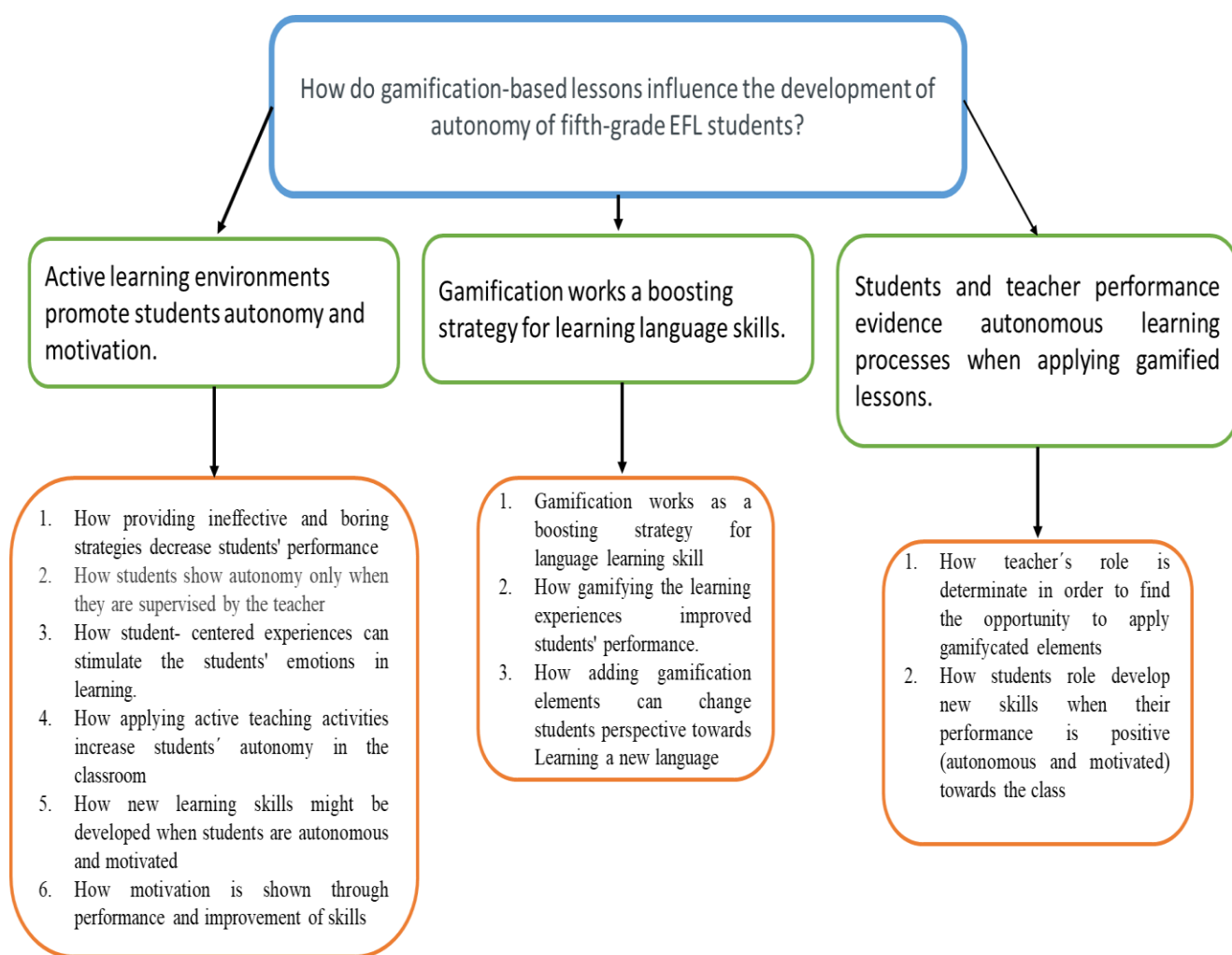


Figure 4 Triangulation process, own design.

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Taking into account the findings to answer the question; How do gamification-based lessons influence the development of autonomy of fifth-grade EFL students? The main category evidence how meaningful and active learning environments developed scenarios that promoted students' autonomy and motivation; the second one explains how gamification boosts strategies for language learning; and the third, how students' and teachers' performance are indicators of significant learning processes.

In general terms, three macro categories were found to answer our research question, the first macro category is Active learning environments promote students' autonomy and motivation, the second one; Gamification works as a boosting strategy for language learning skills and the third one; Students' and teachers' performance evidence significant and autonomous learning processes when applying gamified lessons. Each one of the macro categories will be explained in the forthcoming sections through the subcategories that relate to or support them. Therefore, the first category will be described into six categories, the second will be defined in the light of three subcategories, and finally the last will be based on two categories.

Cycle 1. Macro Category 1

Active learning environments promote students' autonomy and motivation

In order to understand the first cycle, it was important to understand the impact of having a learning environment that promotes student's autonomy and motivation. Therefore, we aimed at creating experiences in which we could observe detailed students' behaviors toward

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autonomous learning. To explain the process, the following questions will introduce us to the way we developed the analysis in all the subcategories that prevailed: *What did we observe? What did we plan on? How did we act, and What did we reflect on?*

This macro category will be explained through six subcategories that emerged from the phenomena observed. Such ideas were constructed based on the word **HOW**, which allowed us to have a specific overview of how gamification elements into an EFL class can make students experience a more immersive and enjoyable learning process as well as make language learning feel less like a chore and more like a fun activity, which could potentially increase students' behaviors towards autonomy. Last, but not least, it is relevant to take into account what we want to achieve from this, and it is how our role can be determinant not only in the classroom but in the way we approach the facts of understanding our student's needs, and how we can take them as an opportunity to change for better their learning experiences.

How providing ineffective and boring strategies decrease students' performance

What did we observe?

In this first step, we were curious to know and explore the academic perspectives of the students. As mentioned from the beginning, we began a process of virtual observation, which revealed the lack of strategies and methodologies that directly involved the students, which generated a low performance. For this reason, we began to observe the attitudes, participation, autonomy, and motivation of the students. With this, we gave rise to undertaking this project.

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Therefore, we decided to carry out a socialization process according to the data collected in advance. At first, we conducted a survey to know the interests of the students and the perspective they had towards EFL classes, which two of the fifth-grade students expressed the following:

"We would like to learn English in a way that is not so difficult, with more conversational activities and knowing the use of WH questions. This, so that the classes are not boring and are taught in a more fun way". (Field Diary, Date- March 14th, 2022)

Therefore, in these annotations, it is evident the concern of us as teachers in our pedagogical work to strengthen and improve the lack of an academic process that brought remote classes due to the pandemic. This, in turn, generated an educational neglect of the responsibility and autonomy of the students who were part of grade 5. With this in mind, we returned to the past to remember how the classes were at school, since at that time, the technological era was not so developed, invalidating virtuality, giving way to a face-to-face and integral education.

During this phase, we were able to observe the disinterest of the students in English classes and the possible alternatives that the students gave to improve in it, creating a meaningful learning.

How students show autonomy only when they are supervised by the teacher

What did we observe?

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Taking into account another observation made during this process, it was evident that students began to retake their classes in a hybrid way, which exposed two academic horizons: 1) On-site, Face to Face classes: autonomous students under the supervision of the teacher. Therefore, there was a direct teacher-student Face to Face interaction. 2) Remote classes: students who did not attend school and did not have a continuous accompaniment, lacked autonomy in their academic work.

“I knew the group from the previous year and with my virtual classes I was able to identify many difficulties in them with respect to the delivery and disposition of the activities, which was key to determining the course of our research”. (Field note, Date- March 4th,2022)

“Teacher began the class with the virtual and face to face students. She took a picture of the students connected. Then, she started the class with the story that we created, which was “where do the planets come from”. Each student read a page of the book, even the ones that were from home. After each reading, the teacher corrected the students and they repeated”. (Observation, Date March 11th,2022)

Through these fragments, we, as researchers, were able to identify that the students who were at home were not able to concentrate fully in class, due to the distractions of their environment. Additionally, it was observed that it was necessary that the teacher made sure that the camera was not turned off, and that each task assigned to them could be carried out without any mishap.

To conclude this phase, we can say that the observations above, allowed us to identify how non-engaging tasks had a detrimental effect on student's performances in remote learning, which took us to rethink the strategies put in practice, in order to minimize distractions and

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ensure students were engaged and focused, showing interest and improvement in self-directed learning.

How student- centered experiences can stimulate the students' emotions in learning.

What did we plan?

When we began this planning phase, we asked ourselves about what factors motivated and stimulated students emotionally in learning; and based on those questions we began to design a plan to build meaningful learning through experiences. Such questions were:

"What could motivate them? Are they really interested in the topics? Are they following instructions? Do they feel engaged in the class?" (Observation format, video 1)

Likewise, based on those questions, we could start working on our lesson plans that were developed thinking in those conditions previously mentioned, and that have as a purpose the next:

"We aimed to propose intentional learning experiences in which we could identify interests that would foster their motivation and autonomy towards the class". (Observation format, video 1)

Consequently, the students' mood throughout the process started to change, due to the teacher involving them in different activities, where all of them had the opportunity to participate

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and express their thoughts and feelings towards the class. And the following observations can attest to this:

"We can conclude the students were more attentive to the class, due to most of the time they were participating. " (Observation format, Video 2)

"Students were active in the reading. All of them participated in class, and they asked the teacher about some meanings" (Observation format, Video 3)

" Two girls and a boy were the ones who came to complement the group, each with different abilities but one of them had difficulty in English." (Field diary, Date - March 4th, 2022)

Finally, we were able to reflect on the significant changes that the students had through the experiences lived in the classroom, according to the planning that was carried out. We were able to identify that most of the students were happy with the development of these experiences and that by taking into account their opinions and comments they were able to increase their interest and participation.

How applying active teaching activities increase students' autonomy in the classroom

How did we act?

During this phase, with the observation and planning already done, we began a process of materialization. Where the idea was to carry out all those strategies mentioned above in the research and apply them in the educational institution with the students. We were able to observe

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that in order to carry out our action plan, we had to take into account those factors that could attract the attention of the students within the school activities, and where their autonomy in front of these could be evidenced.

In the following segments, we want to show how the students were engaged and demonstrated to be autonomous during the classes:

"The students were motivated and showed interest in the topic" (Observation format, Video 1)

"Then, she started an activity with the students, where they really were motivated because they were winning points. Most of them participated in the class and were very excited" (Observation format, Video 4)

As we mentioned since the beginning of this paper, the student's motivation and engagement from a gamification lens depends on a series of stimuli such as points, rewards, levels, etc, that allows them to feel engaged towards a specific activity or situation; this, in turn, generates in their autonomy and satisfaction in the classroom.

Here we can observe more examples about it:

"Finally, most of them stand up and show the notebook to the teacher. Also, most of them were interested in learning and asked about the topic." (Observation format, Video 4)

"different strategies should be sought to motivate students and get them involved in the classes so that students understand and begin to strengthen their autonomy and responsibility in English classes" (Field diary, Date - March 11th, 2022)

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"In addition, it was evident that most of the students performed the exercise autonomously, providing fluency and understanding of the topic in class" (Field diary, Date - March 14th, 2022)

She started an activity with the students, where they really were motivated because they were winning points. (Observation format, Video 4)

Finally, we would like to make known our position regarding the situations that were experienced in the classroom, while the students challenged us to innovate and demand to the maximum our strategic capabilities to implement new ways of teaching, we enjoyed the process of re-inventing what was already established. This is in order to promote autonomy in the students and make them feel at ease in their learning, taking into account that significant experiences are kept as treasures in their memories, and through them they can achieve a more effective progress in their development.

How new learning skills might be developed when students are autonomous and motivated

What did we reflect on?

We decided to leave our reflections to the end in this last phase, in order to deepen these new skills that students could develop by being autonomous and having motivation towards teacher-directed activities.

Given the observations previously made, we were able to identify that through the planning units, students began to develop and improve skills that were previously lacking, such

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as participation, active reading, text comprehension, the four skills (reading, listening, speaking, and writing), creativity, decision making, among others.

Likewise, they were attracted by the activities designed by the teacher using gamification elements. For this reason, a series of questions were asked to identify what students wanted to learn in English classes, and this is what they responded:

"These were the questions and some of the students' opinions:

1. What would you like to learn in the English classes?

Emmanuel said "something that is not difficult to understand".

Luciana said: "more conversational activities".

Mariana said: "Las Wh- questions" (Field diary, Date - March 14th, 2022)

At this point, we began to understand that students were interested in learning English, but not in the usual conventional and boring way. They were looking for meaningful learning where they could be part of the process and at the same time enjoy it. Some of the segments explain it better:

"Students were active in the reading. All of them participated in class, and they asked the teacher about some meanings" (Observation format, Video 3)

"Continue implementing the use of gamification elements to strengthen the students skills" (Observation format, Video 3)

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"When we started to listen and explain each part of the story some of them were paying attention" (Field diary, Date - March 4th,2022)

Moreover, we had the opportunity to not only evidence the new skills that the students were able to acquire through this project, but also to reflect on the significant contribution that this investigation had in our lives. Undoubtedly, it was one of the most wonderful experiences to carry out and be part of the learning process.

How motivation is shown through performance and improvement of skills

What did we reflect on?

At the end of this first cycle, we could reflect on the improvement that our students had in the learning path that was carried out in this process. We were able to see that the students were excited when fun activities were performed, and most of the time the participation in the classroom increased. As we had already seen in the planning phase, some activities were created by us, such as short story books, flashcards, and presentations, among others, with the aim of improving the skills and behavior of the students. This led us to ask ourselves the following question:

"Do the students increase their motivation through stories?" (Observation format, Video 2)

Likewise, the connection with the teacher was good, as the students felt confident in expressing their thoughts and communicating them in an assertive manner. Some of the examples are evidenced in the next segments:

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"Most of the time the teacher spoke to the students in English. However, she switched to Spanish when they didn't understand. We can observe a good interaction between teacher and students." (Observation format, Video 1)

"However when the teacher implemented some gamification activities, the students felt motivated and pay attention" (Observation format, Video 4)

"When I told them it was about the planets they started to give their opinions about what they knew about the topic." (Field diary, Date - March 4th, 2022)

"We also identified that the use of technological tools can help students in their learning process" (Field diary, Date - March 14th, 2022)

"At the beginning everyone was motivated by the game after the activity was finished I showed them a video that explained in detail the use of the two, but after the video, the students were a little unmotivated, as the topic was a little difficult." (Field diary, Date - March 16th, 2022)

In general, we can conclude that the motivation of the students was performed by the new learning skills developed in the classroom. Such as (writing, speaking, listening, and reading) were refined through observations and feedback. And using gamified elements as a strategy to promote engagement and autonomy was crucial in the whole process.

Closing this section, we can conclude the end of the first macro category that answers our research question, now we are moving towards the second macro category and its subcategories.

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Cycle 2. Gamification works as a boosting strategy for language learning skills

In this second phase a description of the results obtained during a research process is presented, this was done with the implementation of several learning strategies in order to find the key point for the implementation of gamification by means of tangible and virtual activities. For this purpose, three subcategories were planned to answer the following questions: *What did we observe? What did we plan? How did we act? And what did we reflect on?*

This second macro category will be explained through three subcategories that were aimed at answering the research question focused on the patterns found when gamification boosted the learning language experiences.

How language skills are developed in a EFL environment through interaction

What did we observe?

At this point of the research we already knew the results of a survey that the students had done previously in which the objective was to know a little about the dynamics of the teachers and the strategies that were used during the EFL classes. On the other hand, we found that the students shared ideas on how they could work to learn in a more playful way and thus generate interaction between students and teachers.

It was evident that the students felt committed to the activity and in addition to this, there was a class where a somewhat difficult topic was presented and that at the beginning it was

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evident that they were not interested in the topic, but when different activities were used (video about the topic, word wall, interview, and role play), then, they began to show attitude and interaction with respect to the topic.

According to the above, we will share some of the experiences we had and what happened, we will also add our own experiences about it.

In this class we identified several factors that we as teachers often do not see and that are important for the autonomous development of the students. By means of the meeting we were able to know the interests of the students and to make a self-evaluation to strengthen some important aspects that contribute to the academic development of each one of the students.

We also identified that the use of technological tools can help students in their learning process. (Field diaries - March 14th, 2022)

“More activities should be proposed that involve some of the common interests of the students and work together to create cooperative groups” (Field diaries - March 16th, 2022)

In this class we identified several factors that we as teachers often do not see and that are important for the autonomous development of the students. By means of the meeting we were able to know the interests of the students and to make a self-evaluation to strengthen some important aspects that contribute to the academic development of each one of the students.

We also identified that the use of technological tools can help students in their learning process. (Field diaries -March 14th, 2022)

In this part of the research, we began to identify what aspects were the most important in the students such as: what they would like to learn in English classes, through what activities they would learn best, what topics they are interested in reading about, and how they feel when they are in English classes and how they acquired an interaction and motivation in English classes. Therefore, at this point, the students shared with us some of their feelings about the

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classes, which helped us to focus and direct the correct pedagogy to find the strategy that best suits their learning process.

Therefore, at this point, the students shared with us some of their feelings about the classes, which helped us to focus and direct the right pedagogy to find the strategy that best suited their learning process. Additionally, in this section, activities that strengthened language skills were developed in the following way:

1. Interaction games such as "Simon Says", word organization, creation of gods, and role-playing presentations were carried out.

2. Reading books through the MyOn platform in which the children read according to their interests and then had the opportunity to listen to the story.

3. According to the readings, a script was created by joining the most representative parts of each book and with them to create the play "magic world".

Through these activities, the students began to strengthen each of the skills and enjoyed the result.

In this part of the investigation, we realized that looking for the right strategies to encourage pedagogical training in the area of English through gamification and integration activities strengthens autonomy and motivation, resulting in a change in the academic development of each one.

How gamifying the learning experiences improved students' performance.

What did we plan?

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In this part of our project, we started to look beyond observation and began to create various gamified strategies that would help strengthen the autonomy and allow for peer interaction. However, we began to navigate through the observations and identified some methodologies that we began to implement in the classroom.

Therefore, in this section, we are looking for everyone to integrate and generate a common learning process.

We started the class with the game Simon says, adapted to Simon tells. At the beginning everyone was motivated by the game, after the activity was finished I showed them a video that explained in detail the use of the two but after the video the students were a little unmotivated, as the topic was a little difficult. Online games were played, the topic was explained in detail and the students did the activities but it was a bit confusing for them. For which a group work was assigned where they had to create a dialogue and after performing the role play, it is evident that the attitude of the students changed because when they were made corrections in the script they did not understand and they were explained in every way and in the end a group of 12 students understood the topic, the rest were left for review at home (Field diaries -March 16th, 2022)

We believe that as teachers we should have at our disposal a variety of material to be able to approach the subject from different perspectives, generating a meaningful learning in which the knowledge imparted is provided in a timely and concrete manner where students have more possibilities of interaction with the proposed topic. (Field diaries -March 16th, 2022)

We aimed to propose intentional learning experiences in which we could identify interests that would foster their motivation and autonomy towards the class. (Observation format, March 2022)

Most of the time the teacher spoke to the students in English. However, she switched to Spanish when they didn't understand. We can observe a good interaction between teacher and students. (Observation format, March 2022)

After the reading, the students started to build new vocabulary.

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They were working on a new topic, “the newspaper”. The teacher created groups of 3 and allowed each student to assign a role.

Student will create the cover

Student will create the glossary and draws

Student will create a short paragraph (Observation format, March 2022)

At this point in the research, we began to realize that the learning process has a variety of branches in which many of the students have been leading and how the teacher begins to evidence strategies and methodologies of learning and in many occasions are the children.

Therefore, these excerpts show the objectivity with which students participated and through the didactic unit number four, a series of gamified activities that students adopted and employed generating significant learning through interactive videos, word sheets, tongue twisters, interactive reading, interactive PowerPoint, and creating an avatar.

How adding gamification elements can change students perspective towards Learning a new language

What did we reflect on?

This subcategory was created to learn about the transition of our research and how the implementation of the resources helped to encourage the autonomy of the students and motivate them in English classes.

Therefore, in the course of the research we discussed how we could implement gamification in English classes to change the student's perspective on learning a foreign

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language. Then, we designed two didactic units, which are divided into three classes each one in which a gradual process was carried out to gradually implement the gamification activities observing the results of the same. Then we started with a survey, then platforms that the school had such as Santillana and MyOn, reading books of interest, implementation of classroom activities such as Kahoot which was done through colored paper, and PowerPoint presentation of topics according to the school curriculum (Solar System). A story about the topic was made through the platform Storybird and through "Create your avatar" an avatar was made.

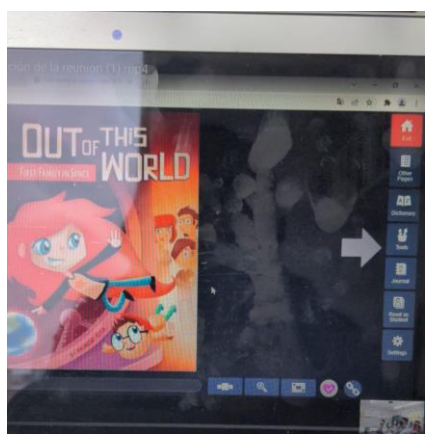


Figure 5 Virtual book: reading book. Cycle 2

“They are sitting in rows. The teacher begins the class by greeting them and calling the attendance. They were reading the first chapter or a book called “out of this world”.

Most of the time the teacher spoke to the students in English. However, she switched to Spanish when they didn't understand”

In literature classes, students interacted with the teacher every time they finished reading each page to contextualize the students. In this activity, the MyOn platform was used.

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"Then, she started the class with the story that we created, which was "where do the planets come from. Each student read a page of the book, even the ones that were from home" (Observation format, March 2022)

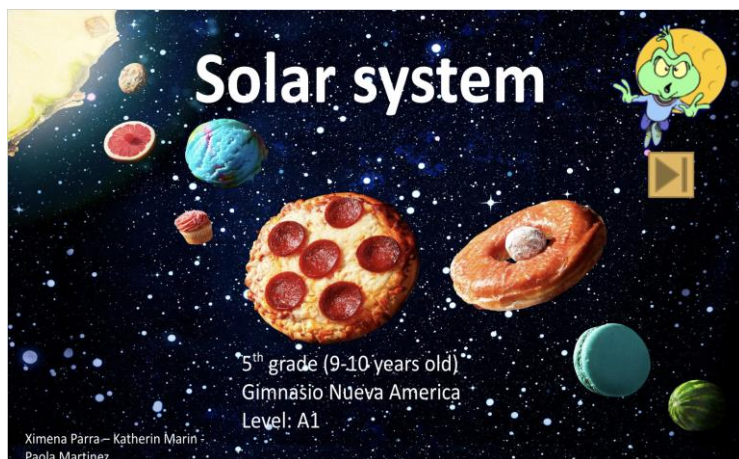


Figure 6 Powerpoint Universe: version of our presented to students, cycle 2

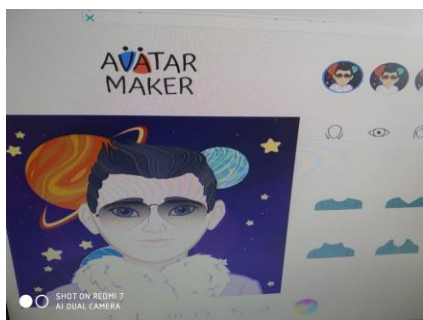


Figure 7 Virtual avatar: The cycle 2: Arturo's Super 1

"We gave a presentation in Canva, showing what an avatar is and their characteristics. The idea is that each student can identify the main concept and can put into practice what they learnt using their imagination and experience" (class 4, dynamic unit 4)

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“Students already wrote a short story in a draft, it is time to create it in 3D. The teachers will provide to the students all materials they need in order to create the avatar. At the end of the class, students must present their creation and explain why they chose the avatar and their characteristics” (class 4, dynamic unit 4)

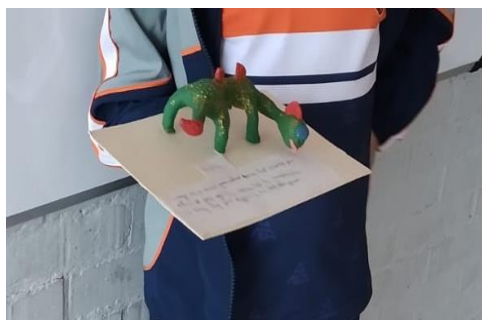


Figure 8 Avatar: The gods, cycle 1: Juan's Super God

These are some of the activities that were carried out in this research and with them gave us very positive results with respect to our objective and we were able to reflect little by little on the importance of implementing gamification in our classes and how the students gradually became motivated and more autonomous in their process.

This is the end of the macro category number two, now we are moving forward to our final macro category which is related to students' and teachers' performance.

Cycle 2.2 Students' and teachers' performance evidence autonomous learning processes when applying gamification lessons.

In this part, the third macro category contained two subcategories that focused on the performance of both students and teachers that served us as indicators of how significant learning impacted the classroom while gamification elements were being applied. By tracking

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progress, providing personalized learning experiences, giving immediate feedback, and encouraging collaboration, their roles could improve the learning experience and lead to better performances. We were able to identify the importance of teachers' and students' autonomous performances in the classroom. It is known that teachers must create learning environments that provide students the opportunity to engage in their own learning process, so we intended to perceive what their role was when providing and developing teaching and learning experiences that improve learners' actions inside the classroom.

How the teacher's role is determinant when applying gamification elements inside the classroom

How did we reflect on?

Subsequent to putting in practice the experiences designed, we were able to start to identify how relevant the learning experiences were to the fact that teachers provided elements that encouraged students to appropriate their processes. We reflected on how important it is to identify *opportunities and failure* in order to take actions that allow our students to develop and improve skills that guarantee success during the autonomous learning process.

During this phase, we were able to *point* to specific situations where the teacher's role determined students' performance towards the class that was being developed:

In the following segments it can be seen how there is no interest in the class so the teacher needed to act in order to engage as well as improve the student's autonomy.

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"the teacher would come and do her class but nobody paid attention to her, they didn't present any work and the classes became boring" (Field diary, March 2022)

"Today before class started a 5th grade student came up and told me that there were classmates who didn't do their homework and that they were asking the other students to do it" (Field dairies, March 2022)

In the previous segments, it can be seen how there is no interest in the class so the teacher needs to act in order to engage and improve the students' autonomy. It was an urge for us to find the solutions.

"As teachers we should have at our disposal a variety of material to be able to approach the subject from different perspectives, generating a meaningful learning in which the knowledge imparted is provided in a timely and concrete manner where students have more possibilities of interaction with the proposed topic" (Field dairies, March 2022)

"Investigate more about the student's interest in order to use them as strategies to teach meaningful learning." (Observation format, April 2022)

"Do we think that including topics of general culture is important to motivate the students?" (Observation format, 2022)

Based on our findings, a significant factor that contributed to students' lack of engagement in literature classes was the perception of the material as irrelevant to their own

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contexts. To address this issue, we took action to make the materials more meaningful by establishing connections with contextualized topics. Moreover, the integration of gamification elements, adapted to students' interests and connections, emerged as a way to approach and provide contextual learning and raised levels of engagement.

"Today in a literature class the fifth graders came to class motivated and asked "What book are we going to read today?" (Field dairies, March 2022)

The results we got made us reflect on how meaningful it is for teachers to recognize their experiences as an opportunity to create and improve; students need teachers that are able to identify what is not working and what potentially could. It does not matter, the kind of class is being developed, in this case, we know it is an EFL class; However, at some point, learning experiences need intervention in order to demonstrate that learning is really happening in the classroom and that the tools that are being used help learners to approach their process as well as develop skills that guarantee a meaningful learning experience. Finally, teachers must provide feedback, and ask students to reflect on how they are getting the strategies if they are working and are being meaningful, that will encourage students to help them feel more engaged and autonomous in the class. By acknowledging students' progress and providing constructive feedback, teachers can help to build their confidence and motivation.

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How students' motivated or unmotivated role positively or negatively impacts their learning process and class dynamics

How did we reflect on?

Regarding this part, we were focused on determining how students' roles positively and/or negatively impacted the classroom according to the way the class approached them. Motivation was a critical factor in a student's learning process and behaviors in class. When students were motivated, they were more likely to engage in the learning process, retain information, and perform better academically. Conversely, when students were unmotivated, their performance and engagement in the learning process showed to suffer, which negatively impacted their learning outcomes and class dynamics.

"At the beginning everyone was motivated by the game, after the activity was finished I showed them a video that explained in detail the use of the two but after the video the students were a little unmotivated, as the topic was a little difficult." (Field diary)

"In this class it was essential to identify that students get frustrated with things that generate a high degree of difficulty." field diary

"In the class it is possible to identify that they are very quiet respecting to the delivery of work" (Observation format, March 2022)

As we see, students can easily have a positive attitude towards the class, but as they can not get involved with the topics in a way that directly engages them, the unmotivation may appear. Unmotivated students tend to perform poorly academically, as they did not put in the

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same level of effort as their motivated peers. Students that created a negative learning environment, were disruptive in class and showed disinterest in the subject matter, and discouraged other students from participating. That allowed us to understand how students' roles may play an important part in the learning experience.

On the other hand, we noticed that when students delivered positive behavior, their performance improved, and that would generate motivation and autonomy in the classroom.

"Students were active in the reading. All of them participated in class, and they asked the teacher about some meanings" (Observation format, March 2022)

When there was interest shown in the activities proposed, the class environment became more dynamic and enjoyable for the whole class.

"Online games were played, the topic was explained in detail, and the students did the activities, but it was a bit confusing for them." field diary

"The students were motivated and showed interest in the topic" (Observation format, March 2022)

"More activities should be proposed that involve some of the common interests of the students and work together to create cooperative groups" (Format observation, March 2022)

This is the end of our final section, in which we answer the research question: How do gamification-based lessons influence the development of autonomy of fifth-grade EFL students? Through three macro categories, results showed that gamification-based lessons influence the

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development of learning autonomy because students started to show interest, motivation, and active participation and enhanced their autonomous learning by looking for commitment and achievement. Their performance allowed us to see how significantly their autonomy increased.

CONCLUSIONS

In this section, we summarized the important key elements of this research, whose main question is “How do gamification-based lessons influence the development of autonomy of fifth-grade EFL students?” Some conclusions describe the findings and tackle implications for pedagogy and learning.

- An AR was designed in order to help us to understand closely what happened in an EFL classroom while having hybrid lessons and implementing gamification elements to demonstrate how these strategies would potentially develop, improve and foster students' autonomy and engagement during a second language lesson. Likewise, we decided to create two didactic units, which were divided into three lessons to improve the four skills using the four stages of the Action Research. In order to implement gamification, we had to carry out a process of observation, planning, and reflection where each step we took in our classes had a purpose in order to respond to our research approach, which was to strengthen autonomy and motivation through the use of gamification. This was a rigorous and arduous process that gradually showed changes in the students where over time, the children began to show interest in the classes and stopped being boring to be an enjoyable and motivating learning space.

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- Three main categories were obtained during the discrimination of the results; *Active learning environments promote students' autonomy and motivation*, *Gamification works as a boosting strategy for language learning skills*, and *Students' and teachers' performance evidence significant and autonomous learning processes when applying gamified lessons*. Such categories correspond to the cycles of intervention and allow us to understand all the impacts of the research. According to the categories we decided to create different strategies to teach in order to improve the foreign language that helped to identify the necessities that students need.
- As all the academic patterns showed that students needed a meaningful learning experience. Therefore, gamification elements were applied with the objective of motivating and developing autonomy during the classes; avatars, badges, and points were used as an intentional way to promote autonomous learning and interest in the classes. Moreover, to promote the development of other skills, such as critical thinking, collaborative work, self-esteem, creativity, among others.
- Regarding the data collection, we intervened with observations of the classes we designed; we knew we were going to get valuable information. On the other hand, field notes were taken by the teacher who conducted the classes. It was important for us to correlate the information we were getting. To design the classes and apply gamification elements, we did a little survey that was asked of the students with the purpose of having information about the possible topics that could engage them in the class. All elements that were used in this project helped to create a monitoring sheet in which a report of what happened in the middle of the class and how the activities were developed, in addition to interpreting and analyzing the behavior of students was written. A survey was

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conducted through the "Forms" platform in which important aspects of the students' interests in the way of learning were taken into account.

- During this research process, several parts of our project were restructured since the data changed during the course of the classes and the analysis of the same, but little by little it took shape and was adapted to our main objective, which was to generate a change, in the acquisition of the foreign language by implementing gamification, which through this process we consider that the objective was achieved.
- We observed that when students felt unmotivated, they did not show any interest in developing their ideas and concerns about the class; they needed teachers' instruction in order to complete the tasks that were assigned. Therefore, it was important to establish autonomy-demanding activities in order to improve their motivations and interests in EFL classes.
- To better understand the relationship among autonomy and instruction we identified that the strategies used in classes are vital for the improvement of autonomy, as evidenced throughout the research where the main element was the use of gamification in different scenarios starting a computer where the students participated in each of the activities proposed such as Kahoot, interactive videos, stories, role plays, among others. Therefore, it was evident how these resources fostered autonomy at the time of production and motivation in the acquisition of English.
- Based on autonomy-demanding activities we comprehended that student performance is taken by the importance of having autonomy and self-directed response to the learning

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experiences proposed in a classroom; in this case, we focused on an EFL learning environment. We were able to see their responses to autonomous learning and how motivation and the way the class was delivered helped them to improve such skills.

- We understood the relevance of teachers' actions regarding the identification of students' low performances and engagement in a language class. We determined that a successful learning experience depends on how much engagement and autonomy the students deliver in a class and how it requires a proactive approach from teachers based on the autonomy demanding activities and instruction. This is by making the material relevant, using interactive teaching strategies, integrating technology, providing choice, and offering feedback and encouragement.

LIMITATIONS

In this section, we described the limitations that were presented in the realization of the project since it took many trajectories along the same path due to the sanitary conditions that the country was going through. The inconveniences of the beginning of face-to-face classes with the virtual ones were a starting point for the data collection to become a little difficult, since the difficulties of technological resources and the support of parents or guardians was not the best.

On the other hand, before making the decision to choose the fifth-grade as the research grade the previous year (2021), we had started the observation process since one of our colleagues had the opportunity to be their English teacher when they were in fourth grade, and one of the motivations for choosing this course was the fact of generating a change for this

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population. However, we did not know how difficult it was to have remote classes which gave us a setback in the data collection, since in the year 2022 when the students entered the school, some of them could not go and they had to stay at home. Consequently, the teacher had to connect from the school and at the same time conduct her classes with the two groups (face-to-face and virtual).

Another limitation during this time was that at the beginning the students did not show improvement and this made us change the methodology, the learning strategies for the execution of the classes. Therefore, at this point, we felt distressed because we were not achieving our purpose, and many times we tried to give up but the desire to generate a change made us stronger and we decided to continue.

Finally, another limitation was the use of technological elements in the school since we did not have the total availability of the technology room, so we were forced to generate gamification in the classroom, which was another way to use this resource as a strategy to promote autonomy and motivation.

THE WAY FORWARD

In this section we encourage the researchers who want to keep doing further research about the effects of gamification in the EFL learning environment. Education has suffered many changes; it has been trying to adapt to the several improvements that have had the last years. In concordance with that, we consider our job goes farther than the 4 walls inside the classroom. We need to do interventions that allow us to identify our and students' needs.

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Regarding gamification experiences, we need to take into consideration the relevance of implementing new strategies that guarantee students are having meaningful learning experiences.

Arnold (2014) mentioned:

As educators continue to explore better and more effective ways to engage a wider audience of learners in a broader context of environments, the adoption of gamification methods will continue to offer quicker and more effective catalyzing tools than traditional sage on stage instruction. (p.8)

Also, it is important to take into consideration the importance of the intentionality of the learning experiences proposed in order to develop, foster or improve skills in students that allow them to have meaningful learning not only in the classroom but that in fact prepares them for life. Our teaching/learning actions in the classroom should be focused on the reflection of the impacts of having such skills that go further than motivation or autonomy. In the 1996 *Life Skills Planning For Education of the World Health Organization (WHO)* it was stated: “Methods used to assist skills acquisition therefore include modeling of the use of skills. and practice of skills, primarily in classroom-based activities”(p.3).

Finally, we encourage you as a teacher and researcher to reflect on your teaching practices and take actions about what you identify in the classroom. This is a permanent search that will make learning experiences more meaningful not only for students and teachers but for the whole society. Big changes start with opportunities of improvement.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1: Parents Informed consent

Carta dirigida a los padres de familia

Autorización de padres y/o representantes legales y/o acudientes de estudiantes que hacen parte del proyecto de investigación a cargo de la docente Ximena Marcela Parra Moreno.

Establecimiento Educativo:

GIMNASIO “NUEVA AMÉRICA”

Educador investigador:

Ximena Marcela Parra Moreno CC. 1020793281 de Bogotá D.C.

Yo, _____ [madre, representante legal o acudiente], y yo, _____ [padre o representante legal], mayor(es) de edad, del(la) niño, niña _____ de _____ años de edad en calidad de estudiante del Establecimiento Educativo, Gimnasio “Nueva América” he (hemos) sido informado(s) acerca de la grabación del video e imagen del proyecto de investigación a cargo de la docente Ximena Marcela Parra Moreno que tiene como propósito registrar 15 clases en la institución.

Teniendo en cuenta lo anterior, manifiesto (manifestamos) que entiendo (entendemos) que el tratamiento de datos comprende la recolección, almacenamiento, uso y/o conservación, del video e imágenes obtenidas del registro, así mismo y luego de haber sido informado(s), comprendo (comprendemos) que la participación de mi (nuestro) niño, niña, en el video:

- No tendrá repercusiones o consecuencias en las actividades escolares, evaluaciones o calificaciones en el curso derivado de los resultados obtenidos.
- No generará ningún gasto, ni remuneración alguna por su participación o realización.
- No habrá ninguna sanción en caso de que no se autorice su participación.
- No será publicada la identidad de mi (nuestro) niño, niña, así como, los videos, imágenes, sonidos y datos personales registrados durante la grabación.

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• Los sonidos e imágenes del video se utilizarán únicamente para los propósitos de la investigación.

Así mismo entiendo (entendemos) qué:

• Las imágenes y sonidos registrados en el video de mi (nuestro) niño, niña, adolescente o representado legal que sean recolectados serán tratados por el responsable y/o encargado dentro del marco del cumplimiento de la política de protección de datos contemplada en la Ley 1581 de 2012 y su Decreto Reglamentario 1377 de 2013.

• Los sonidos e imágenes del video podrán ser usados para temas investigativos y/o académicos propios del proyecto de investigación.

En ese orden de ideas, manifiesto (manifestamos) que comprendo (comprendemos) en su totalidad la información sobre esta actividad y autorizo (autorizamos) el uso de los videos, imágenes, sonidos y datos personales, conforme a este consentimiento informado de forma consciente y voluntaria.

☐ SI AUTORIZO (AUTORIZAMOS)
(AUTORIZAMOS)

☐ NO AUTORIZO

.....

FIRMA MADRE CC/CE

.....

FIRMA PADRE CC/CE

.....

FIRMA REPRESENTANTE LEGAL

Project

GAMIFICATION AS A STRATEGY TO PROMOTE AUTONOMY IN EFL CLASSES

Name: Gamification as a tool to promote autonomy in EFL classes.

Type of study: Qualitative research.

Research Objective: The objective of implementing gamification in English as a foreign language is to improve their autonomy and teach them in a dynamic way through the game.

Researchers: 1. Ximena Macela Parra Moreno

2. Katherin Marin Valencia

3. Paola Alejandra Martinez Romero


Specific objectives.

- To develop interactive activities that increase autonomy through games of interest.
- To strengthen foreign language teaching through gamification.
- To provide knowledge about the use of video games and the importance of video games through gamification as a foreign language.

Justification: English as a foreign language classroom, the skill known as autonomy requires that students become involved in their learning process; that they feel attracted to the content and look for ways to work on it on their own. In this sense, Gamification is relevant to generate a learning environment that allows students to strengthen their sense of autonomy, since their application and integration during EFL classes has shown to have positive results and therefore to be key in the development of specific aspects that have been categorized as autonomy indicators in emotional development such as: curiosity, security and positivism at the moment of failure, optimism, autonomy and motivation.

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Appendix 2: didactic unit 1 planning format

	Licenciatura en Bilingüismo con Énfasis en la enseñanza del Inglés – Universidad el Bosque		
	FORMATO PLANEACIÓN DE CLASES PROYECTO:	Versión: 01	
PROFESORAS: Ximena Parra	Paola Martinez	Katherin Marin	FECHA:
CURSO: Quinto			AÑO: 2023

PLANEACIÓN GENERAL

UNIT	WEEK	CONTENTS	OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS
home rules	1	<p>What are the rules at home?</p> <p>Vocabulary: Greetings: Good morning, good afternoon, good evening. Say, please and thank you.</p>	<p>To identify autonomy in the development of basic activities.</p> <p>To recognize and practice the rules to be followed at home.</p>	<p>Warm up: Prior knowledge activation: brainstorming Teachers will start the class asking students what are the rules they have to follow in their homes. This, in order to verify the most common answers and identify their previous knowledge about the topic. The brainstorming would be built by each student's answer.</p> <p>Presentation: Flashcards Teachers will show a Canva presentation about the home rules. They will explain the importance of following the rules to have good relations with others. Also, in order to observe how much autonomy the students have, the teachers will ask how many of those rules they apply at home. Finally, teachers will ask if they understood the meaning of each rule.</p>	Canva

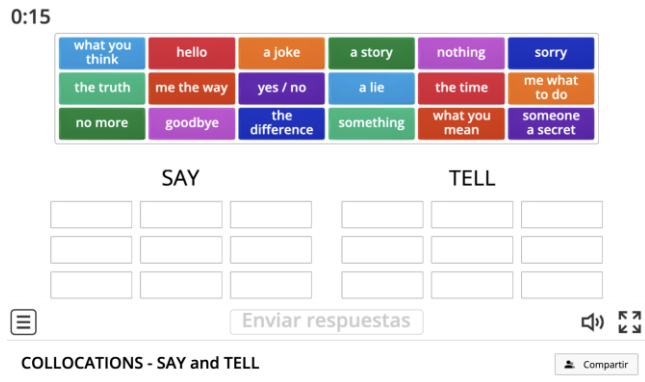
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		<p>Ask for permission</p> <p>Share with others</p> <p>Apologizes</p> <p>Tide up your room</p> <p>Speak without shouting</p> <p>Respect your parents</p> <p>Do the homework</p>		<p>The flashcards were created by the teachers with the most common rules.</p> <div data-bbox="1115 316 1518 574">  </div> <p>Practice: Identify the rules Teachers will choose 10 home rules and 10 different words. They will paste the words on the table and they will ask the students which rules belong to home and which do not.</p> <p>The home rules words are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thank you 2. Good morning 3. Good afternoon 4. Good evening 5. Please 6. I'm sorry 7. Do the homework 8. Share 9. Clean the room 10. Respect my parents <p>Here, the teachers want to make sure that all of the students have the meaning of each word clear and can practice them at home.</p> <p>Production: Create a poster Each student will receive a sheet, where they will use it to create a poster based on the previous rules with minimum 5 of them. The idea, is to promote the creativity of the students and identify if those rules are</p> <p>Evaluation: Socialization Once the students finish their posters, they will make a circle where each one will socialize the 5 home rules they create and tell us which rule is the easiest and which one is the hardest.</p>	<p>Sheet, colors, pencil and markers.</p>
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<p>Tell and say</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Differences between “tell and say”</p>	<p>To understand the meaning of each word</p> <p>To describe the differences between “tell and say”.</p> <p>To identify the use of reporting speech through different situations.</p>	<p>Warm up: Simon says, adapted to Simon tells. Teachers will start the class with a game called Simon says. However, as the topic is “tell and say”, the game will be adapted. Teachers will choose some words for say and some others for tell:</p> <p>Say: body parts Tell: a truth, a gossip, a story For example, teachers will say, Simon says touch your head, and the students must follow the instructions. Also, the teachers will say Simon tells them that Camila was crying. This is in order to show the students different contexts in which tell and say are used.</p> <p>Presentation: Watch a video Students will watch a video where it explains the differences between “Tell and say”. Also, they will take some notes about it.</p> <div data-bbox="1117 746 1516 986" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6RamZgF2Cyg</p> <p>Practice: Group work In this section, the teachers will present the next online game, where the students will practice in groups the different ways the words are used. So, teachers will ask to the students which word belongs to say and which for tell.</p>	<p>TV, internet.</p>
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				 <p>Link: https://wordwall.net/resource/10701970/collocations-say-and-tell</p> <p>Production: Create a dialogue Based on the topic seen, the students will be divided in two (pairs). The idea is that each group must create an interview where the dialogo can be evidenced through the report speech. They must use the words “say and tell”.</p> <p>Evaluation: Roll play Each group will do a role play using the dialogue seen in the previous task of the interview. The idea is to identify if the group understood the meaning and use for the two words.</p>	Sheet, pen, pencil.
God's stories	3	Words about god's powers: Divination War Fertility Wisdom Fire	To create a new story using the information about all books. To build a God with different materials.	<p>Warm up: describe the god powers Teahers will start projecting different images of gods, in which only the studens will choose one. The idea is that each one gives at least 1 power that the god could have, and each one will have 30 seconds to respond. For example, one student can say, my god has the power of thunder, divination, etc.</p>	

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		<p>Storms and floods Thunder Marriage Joy and theater Adjectives: Tall Strong Fat Fast Happy Brave</p> <p>What characteristics do you identify in Gods?</p>		 <p>Link: Greek gods</p> <p>Presentation: god's characteristics Then, teachers will show a presentation in PowerPoint, which will explain the characteristics of each god. Here they will see some adjectives.</p> <p>Practice: description As the students already checked the powers and some characteristics of the gods with the teacher, they will make a circle, where the teachers will give each student a paper with one god, and each student will describe the main characteristics of the god.</p> <p>Production: Books and class combination According to all books seen before in Literature class, the students will start from scratch creating a short story where they include the most important aspects of each book.</p> <p>Evaluation: gods presentation Each student will have 1 minute to present their gods to the class. As homework, the students must use the draft to create his/her god with different materials, which they must bring to the next class.</p>	<p>PowerPoint presentation, internet, TV</p> <p>Notebook, paper, pencil, pen.</p>
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Appendix 3: Didactic unit 2 planning format

	Licenciatura en Bilingüismo con Énfasis en la enseñanza del Inglés – Universidad el Bosque		
	FORMATO PLANEACIÓN DE CLASES PROYECTO:	Versión: 01	
PROFESORAS: Katherin Marin	Ximena Parra	Paola Martinez	FECHA:
CURSO: Quinto			AÑO: 2023

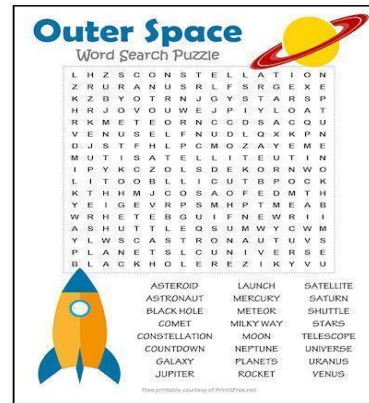
PLANEACIÓN GENERAL

UNIT	WEEK	CONTENTS	OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS
Solar system	4	<p>What exists in the universe?</p> <p>How can we go to space?</p> <p>What would you do in space?</p> <p>Vocabulary: Solar System. Galaxies. Stars. Planets Satellites. Asteroids and comets.</p>	<p>To describe the elements of the universe</p> <p>- Understand what is the function of all of the elements of the space.</p>	<p>Warm up: Previous knowledge Teachers will make a circle with all of the students where they are going to play a game called “eenie meenie miney moe” in Spanish called “tingo, tingo, tango” using a small ball. So the idea is that when some student gets the ball the teacher will ask questions about what he/she knows about the universe, if they know the solar system, about the stars, etc.</p> <p>Presentation: Video After playing the game, students will watch a video about the space. All of them must take notes for the next activity.</p>	<p>TV, internet</p> <p>Youtube, colors, worksheet, sheets, pencil,</p>

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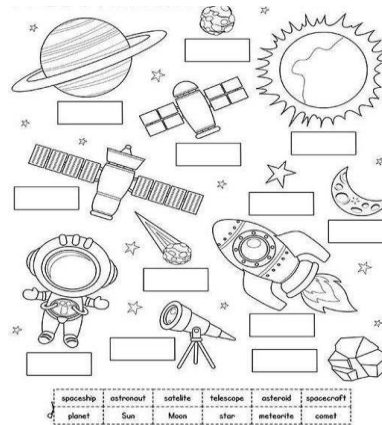
		<p>Meteorites. Astronaut. Milky way Moon and sun. Telescope Rocket Black hole Lauch</p>		<div data-bbox="1115 220 1532 459" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Link: Learn English for Kids Space - Cosmos</p> <p>Practice: Word search</p> <p>In this section, teachers will give each student a sheet. They should practice the new vocabulary about the space given in the sheet and after that, they played an online game called (Kahoot)</p> <div data-bbox="1115 691 1830 1059" data-label="Image"> </div>	
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Production: Cut and paste/ Create a short story




























Now, the students have a different overview of the elements that compose the space. Therefore, teachers will give a worksheet and they will have to color the drawings, cut and paste the words in the boxes. Then, the idea is that each student creates a short story using the drawings. The most creative story will win 5 points for the final exam.





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				Evaluation: Story presentation The students will expose their stories to the class. However, just the best story will win 5 points. Here, teachers will identify if the students understood the meaning of the vocabulary learnt in class about the space, and the way they can write the text, (structure, sense, vocabulary, grammar).	
Planets	5	Which planet is the hottest? How many planets are in the solar system, and what happened to Pluto?	To recognize the planets through fun activities. To understand the differences in each planet. To describe the reason why we cannot leave in a different planet To recognize the planet's characteristics.	Warm up: Tongue twister Teachers will start with a game called “tongue twister”. The idea is that each student try to repeat it without making mistakes. Here they go: <i>She sells sea shells by the seashore And the shells she sells by the seashore are sea shells for sure.</i> Presentation: Video Teachers will present the topic through a video that explains the planets and some main characteristics of each one.  Link: The Solar System Song Learn about Sun and the Planets Practice: Video and worksheet Each student will pay attention to this other video of the eight planets and their characteristics. As soon as they finish, they will start working on the worksheet, where the should match the planet and the correct characteristic. For example: the only planet that supports life.... earth	

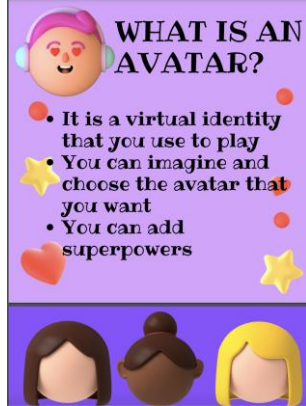
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				<div data-bbox="1113 218 1534 458" data-label="Image"></div> <p>Link: Eight Planets Dance Along Space Song Pinkfong Songs for Children</p> <div data-bbox="1113 547 1568 1128" data-label="Form"><p>Name: _____</p><h3>Solar System Match Up</h3><p>Directions: Read each description below and match it to the correct planet.</p><table><tr><td>1. The largest planet in the solar system.</td><td> Mercury</td></tr><tr><td>2. The sixth planet from the sun in the solar system.</td><td> Venus</td></tr><tr><td>3. The brightest planet in the solar system.</td><td> Earth</td></tr><tr><td>4. The planet with the nickname "Red Planet".</td><td> Mars</td></tr><tr><td>5. The coldest planet in the solar system.</td><td> Jupiter</td></tr><tr><td>6. A dwarf planet in the solar system.</td><td> Saturn</td></tr><tr><td>7. The planet closest to the sun in the solar system.</td><td> Uranus</td></tr><tr><td>8. The planet farthest from the sun in the solar system.</td><td> Neptune</td></tr><tr><td>9. The only known planet to support life.</td><td> Pluto</td></tr></table></div> <p>Production: Reading comprehension (story) and powerpoint activity Teachers will show the next story to the students, and the idea is that once they finish the reading, they can continue with a powerpoint activity. Where they will interact by listening to some audios and selecting the correct answer.</p>	1. The largest planet in the solar system.	 Mercury	2. The sixth planet from the sun in the solar system.	 Venus	3. The brightest planet in the solar system.	 Earth	4. The planet with the nickname "Red Planet".	 Mars	5. The coldest planet in the solar system.	 Jupiter	6. A dwarf planet in the solar system.	 Saturn	7. The planet closest to the sun in the solar system.	 Uranus	8. The planet farthest from the sun in the solar system.	 Neptune	9. The only known planet to support life.	 Pluto	
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				 <p>where-do-the-planets-come-from-.pdf</p> <p>Activity</p>  <p>Solar System .pptx</p> <p>Evaluation: Rubric The students will receive a rubric, which they will self evaluate their learning and feelings about the story of the planets. At the end of the class, the rubric will be collected by the teachers. Rubric.docx</p>	
My space avatar	6	<p>What is an avatar?</p> <p>Create the avatar characteristics.</p>	<p>To understand the meaning of an avatar.</p> <p>To describe the characteristics of the avatars.</p>	<p>Warm up: Name 5 words Teachers will start the class with a dynamic game called “name 5”, this means that each student will have to name 5 words that are composed of 3 letters.</p>	

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		Imagine and create a 3D avatar	<p>To be able to create an avatar with recycled material.</p> <p>For example: 3 letter parts of the body – <i>eye, arm, leg, hip, ear, toe jaw, rib, lip, gum, etc.</i></p> <p>This is in order to motivate and remind them of the vocabulary already learnt in the english class.</p> <p>Presentation: What is an avatar Teachers will give a presentation in Canva, showing what an avatar is and their characteristics. The idea is that each student can identify the main concept and can put in practice what they learnt using the imagination and experience.</p>  <p><u>Canva - Avatar presentation</u></p> <p>Practice: Short story In this section, students must create a draft of their avatars, following the next instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avatar's name • Avatar characteristics • Age • Genre or if it is an animal 	
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Powers <p>Production: Avatar creation As the students already wrote a short story in a draft, it is time to create it in 3D. The teachers will provide to the students all materials they need in order to create the avatar. They will use the next:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small table • Water paintings • Scissors • Glue • Water • Toilet paper • Paintbrush • Colors • Markers • Glitter • Color papers • Newspaper <p>Evaluation: At the end of the class, students must present their creation and explain why they chose the avatar and their characteristics.</p>	
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Appendix 4: Rubric for the unit 2, class #5


Rubric Categories				
Did you understand the story? 	I liked it very much.	I was interesting-	The story was not clear	I didn't understand anything
Attitude 	I actively participate and give my opinion in class	I just pay attention.	I am easily distracted.	I do not show interest in the subject.
Teamwork 	I really like to work with my classmates	Sometime is good to work with my friends	I feel more comfortable working with my best friend	I'd rather prefer to work alone in class
Motivation 	This is my favorite class because I always win	I like the class because I learn playing	Sometimes the class is boring	I do not like the class
Punctuality 	I submit all activities on time.	I submit 4 or 5 activities on time.	I just submit 2 or 3 activities on time.	Does not submit activities on time.

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Grade	100%
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Appendix 5: Survey

Preguntas
Respuestas
Configuración
Puntos totales: 0



EFL

To know the important aspects in the English classes.

What would you like to learn in the English classes? *

Texto de respuesta corta

How would you like to work in the English classes? *






Texto de respuesta corta

When the English teacher do the lesson, what do you prefer? *

☐ Worksheets
☐ Cooperative work
☐ Talk with my friends
☐ Nothing
☐ Otra...

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Appendix 6: Field diaries: Entry 1

Date 	Location 	Description of the event 	Interpretation 	Reflexion 
<p>Friday, March 4th, 2022</p>	<p>Gimnasio Nueva America</p>	<p>When the school year began everything was different, new students were joining a group that had been together since the previous year. Two girls and a boy were the ones who came to complement the group, each with different abilities but one of them had difficulty in English.</p> <p>I knew the group from the previous year and with my virtual classes I was able to identify many difficulties in them with respect to the delivery and disposition of the activities, which was key to determining the course of our research.</p> <p>But today in a literature class the fifth graders came to class motivated and asked "What book are we going to read today?" When I told them it was about the planets they started to give their opinions about what they knew</p>	<p>When I started to notice the behavior and attitudes of the students I remembered when I was in school and I didn't like the English class, then the teacher would come and do her class but nobody paid attention to her, we didn't present any work and the classes became boring.</p> <p>But today I am in the position of teacher. I realize that on many occasions we did not value what they were teaching us and for this reason we took the role of changing that paradigm a little and strengthening the learning of the foreign language through didactic activities.</p> <p>On the other hand, I identified that the students had a reading platform which they did not use autonomously.</p>	<p>The school has a literature platform where students have access to it, but they do not use it autonomously, which makes it difficult to keep track of this instrument.</p>

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		<p>about the topic. When we started to listen and explain each part of the story some of them were paying attention, but Emmanuel and Arturo kept drawing in the notebook. After reading chapter one and two I organized them into groups in which they had to create a newspaper with the information from the two chapters. As evidenced in the video, all the students stayed in their places, but the autonomous work was very low, since no group finished the activity assigned to them. The homework was left for homework.</p>		
Friday, March 11th,2022	Gimnasio Nueva America	<p>Today before class started a 5th grade student came up and told me that there were classmates who didn't do their homework and that they were asking the other students to do it. So, I just listened to who those students were and continued with my other classes until after the break we met for class and when I got to class, I wrote the date, presented the agenda for the day and asked the students to get their homework ready, picked up their notebooks and informed them that if I found equal homework they would get one on the grade, those who had given homework looked at each</p>	<p>In the class it is possible to identify that they are very quiet with respect to the delivery of work, they do not show autonomy in home activities, motivation is very little because at first they did not pay attention, perhaps because the call for attention, The guilt of not fulfilling their responsibilities or the English class because they did not like it, but in the course of the class everything changed and with the help of the book they began to be participative, so it is identified that a survey should be conducted to know the tastes and the way in which they would like to learn EFL.</p>	<p>According to the observations, different strategies should be sought to motivate students and get them involved in the classes so that students understand and begin to strengthen their autonomy and responsibility in English classes.</p>

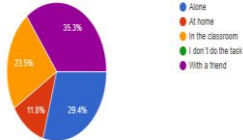
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		<p>other and didn't know what to do, then one of them spoke and said that he only wanted to help his classmates but they thought that nothing happened, then at that moment only one group gave it to me, the other students made all the excuses for the homework and were informed that there was no deadline because it was a very basic activity that had been left the previous week and that they knew that any inconvenience they had to report it, they were told a little about responsibility and autonomy but without leaving aside that the grade they had left was 1. Afterwards, the presentation of the syllabus was resumed and began with the presentation of a short story about the planets, which was created by the teachers present in this research. In the middle of the class the students showed interest in the story, which provided a variety of colors, figures and simple learning content. At the end of the class there was a socialization of what had been presented and 75% of the students understood the main idea and we developed the proposed objective which was to recognize the planets and their characteristics. At the end of the class, the students who had copied</p>		
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		from their classmates apologized and committed themselves to be more autonomous with their homework, thus closing the lesson.		
Monday, March 14th, 2022	Gimnasio Nueva America	<p>Today we started very well, they had the homework and the students were with a positive attitude, in class the children practiced the song "All of me" which was something that was encouraged from the "english team" to strengthen some skills of the students in a dynamic and fun way at the same time this activity was called "singing fest" which consisted in that the students had to learn a song each period and this song was chosen because they liked it and they proposed it. After reviewing the song, a short talk about the term autonomy, how to be autonomous at home, who is responsible for my school activities and according to this, a small survey was conducted which had three open and two closed questions, which consisted of knowing what they thought of the class and how they would learn.</p> <p>These were the questions and some of the students' opinions:</p>	<p>In this class we identified several factors that we as teachers often do not see and that are important for the autonomous development of the students. By means of the meeting we were able to know the interests of the students and to make a self-evaluation to strengthen some important aspects that contribute to the academic development of each one of the students.</p> <p>We also identified that the use of technological tools can help students in their learning process. In addition, it was evident that most of the students performed the exercise autonomously, providing fluency and understanding of the topic in class.</p>	

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		<p>1. What would you like to learn in the English classes?</p> <p>Emmanuel said "something that is not difficult to understand".</p> <p>Luciana said: "more conversational activities".</p> <p>Mariana said: "Las Wh-questions".</p> <p>2. How would you like to work in the English classes?</p> <p>Pablo said: "work in small groups".</p> <p>Angel said: "work in another space".</p> <p>Samuel, Isabella, Angie and Kamila said: "through different games, quizzes and online activities".</p> <p>3. When the English teacher does the lesson, what do you prefer?</p> <p>In this question 64.7% said Worksheets, 29.4% cooperative work and the rest talking with their friends.</p> <p>4. How do you prefer to do English homework?</p> <div>  <table> <tr> <th>Preference</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Alone</td> <td>29.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>At home</td> <td>11.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>In the classroom</td> <td>23.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I don't do the task</td> <td>35.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>With a friend</td> <td>1.0%</td> </tr> </table> </div>	Preference	Percentage	Alone	29.4%	At home	11.8%	In the classroom	23.5%	I don't do the task	35.3%	With a friend	1.0%	
Preference	Percentage														
Alone	29.4%														
At home	11.8%														
In the classroom	23.5%														
I don't do the task	35.3%														
With a friend	1.0%														







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		<p>5. How do you feel when the teacher starts the English class?</p> <p>After conducting the survey, a small socialization of each of the questions was done. After that, the students had to create a series of rules that they had in class and how autonomous and responsible work could help strengthen their academic process. Finally, during the development of the activity the students showed interest and most of them presented their work.</p>		
<p>Wednesday, March 16th, 2022</p>	<p>Gimnasio Nueva America</p>	<p>Today I arrived in the classroom and when I presented the agenda all the students wondered if those words were not the same. We started the class with the game Simon says, adapted to Simon tells. At the beginning everyone was motivated by the game, after the activity was finished I showed them a video that explained in detail the use of the two but after the video the students were a little unmotivated, as the topic was a</p>	<p>In this class it was essential to identify that students get frustrated with things that generate a high degree of difficulty. Additionally, it was a little difficult to have to look for more strategies and examples to further explain the topic. It was evident that the students do not have many writing skills since they show little motivation and commitment to write.</p>	<p>We believe that as teachers we should have at our disposal a variety of material to be able to approach the subject from different perspectives, generating a meaningful learning in which the knowledge imparted is provided in a timely and concrete manner where students have more possibilities of interaction with the proposed topic.</p> <p>Additionally, it is important to think about the</p>

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		<p>little difficult. Online games were played, the topic was explained in detail and the students did the activities but it was a bit confusing for them. For which a group work was assigned where they had to create a dialogue and after performing the role play, it is evident that the attitude of the students changed because when they were made corrections in the script they did not understand and they were explained in every way and in the end a group of 7 students understood the topic, the rest were left for review at home. Finally, a homework of a page of the book was left to reinforce the topic.</p>		<p>context, abilities, rhythms and skills of each of the groups.</p>
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DAY 	ASPECTS OBSERVED DESCRIPTION 	OBSERVER'S REFLECTIONS AND HYPOTHESES FOR ACTION 	EMERGING QUESTIONS 	POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS 	BIBLIOGRAPHY . REVISED 
VIDEO 1	<p>March 4</p> <p>We observe a literature class with 5th grade students.</p> <p>They are sitting in rows. The teacher begins the class by greeting them and calling the attendance.</p> <p>They were reading the first chapter of a book called “out of this world”.</p> <p>Most of the time the teacher spoke to the students in English. However, she switched to Spanish when they didn’t understand.</p> <p>We can observe a good interaction between teacher and students.</p> <p>It is a literature class, after the first 4 minutes the students start to use their native language to communicate because that makes them feel more comfortable</p> <p>After the reading, the students started to build new vocabulary.</p> <p>They were working on a new topic, “the newspaper”. The teacher created groups of 3 and</p>	<p>As it seems to be a regular class, students do not show that much engagement, though the teacher tries to implement some activities in order to motivate them, they do not show any response towards the role they need to develop in class, as for they start to speak in Spanish not attending to use English.</p>	<p>What could motivate them?</p> <p>Are they really interested in the topics? Are they following instructions? Do they feel engaged in the class?</p>	<p>We could propose interactive learning experiences in which we could identify interests that would foster their motivation and autonomy towards the class.</p>	<p>According to Martinez, J. (1999) says intrinsic reasons are generated in the classroom, and teachers have a responsibility to stimulate this motivation through attitudes in close interaction with students. (p.96)</p>

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	<p>allowed each student to assign a role.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student will create the cover 2. Student will create the glossary and draws 3. Students will create a short paragraph . <p>At this point, the stunts were having trouble choosing their role, and said they were not able to work in groups. The teacher gave them 10 minutes to do it, however, it was going to continue the next class.</p>				
VIDEO 2	<p>March 11</p> <p>Teacher began the class with the virtual and presencial students. She took a picture of the students connected.</p> <p>Then, she started the class with the story that we created, which was “where do the planets come from.</p> <p>Each student read a page of the book, even the ones that were from home. After each reading, the teacher corrected the students and they repeated.</p> <p>Also, some questions were asked to verify the reading comprehension.</p>	<p>We can conclude the students were more attentive to the class, due to most of the time they were participating.</p>	<p>Do the students increase their motivation through stories?</p>	<p>Promoting reading skills using gamification elements that engage the students' motivation and autonomy.</p>	<p>According to Lipnevich, A. A., & Smith, J. K. (2016) states that “Motivation has been defined as the process whereby goal-directed activities are initiated and sustained. In expectancy-value theory, motivation is a function of the expectation of success and perceived value”. (p.997)</p>

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	<p>The task assigned was to write 5 words to create a glossary</p> <p>She gave an example on the board. And gave the instructions in English. However, she always switches to Spanish in order to provide a better understanding.</p> <p>Students wrote the 15 words of the example she did, in their notebooks.</p> <p>She also mentioned that for the next 2 weeks they will have the final exam.</p> <p>Finally, they continue with the literature class, listening and reading the chapter 3 of a Lit. Book. The teacher gave feedback on each page.</p> <p>When the class finished the students said goodbye</p>				
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GAMIFICATION AS A STRATEGY TO PROMOTE AUTONOMY IN EFL CLASSES

VIDEO 3	<p>March 15</p> <p>Teacher arrived at the class, and she greeted the student who was connected from home, and the ones who were in the classroom. She started telling them that they will celebrate Saint Patrick's day. And she was asking who was going to bring a sheet of green cardboard. And each student must bring a wish written in English for 2023. Then, the topic for this class was "hydrography of Colombia". Each student was reading a part of the text presented in the video vin.</p> <p>After that, they will create a word search with only 7 rivers seen before in the presentation.</p> <p>The teacher was walking around the classroom, checking that all of them were doing the task.</p> <p>The idea once the student finishes, was to share the word search to another student and each one be able to find the words.</p> <p>Then, the class finished.</p>	<p>Students were active in the reading. All of them participated in class, and they asked the teacher about some meanings. The students were motivated and showed interest in the topic.</p>	<p>Do we think that including topics of general culture is important to motivate the students?</p>	<p>Continue implementing the use of gamification elements to strengthen the students skills.</p>	<p>Zichermann & Cunningham (2011) mentioned that gamers become interested, and they spend much more time on the activity provided when certain gamification elements are used, such as badges, points, levels, progress bars, avatars, etc.</p>
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<p>VIDEO 4</p>	<p>Class: March 16</p> <p>Teacher started the class as usual. As the class was in the pandemic, all of the students must use face-masks.</p> <p>For a while the teacher left the classroom, and most of them were distracted looking for something else.</p> <p>Topic of the class: Tell and say</p> <p>The teacher was playing a song, in which the students must learn the lyrics, however, for system issues, it was not possible to hear most of the part of the song.</p> <p>Then, she started an activity with the students, where they really were motivated because they were winning points. Most of them participated in the class and were very excited.</p> <p>After playing the game, the teacher started to explain the differences between “Tell and Say”. And she used the students to make examples and make significant experiences that help them to remember the topic.</p>	<p>We could observe in class number four that students were not committed to the class.</p> <p>However, when the teacher implemented some gamification activities, the students felt motivated and pay attention.</p>	<p>Is it necessary to implement punishment to the students? What is the best way to teach complex topics?</p>	<p>Investigate more about the student’s interest in order to use them as strategies to teach meaningful learning.</p>	<p>...meaningful choice engenders willingness, and the willingness is the door to increased motivation” (Harper 2007, 25)</p>
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GAMIFICATION AS A STRATEGY TO PROMOTE AUTONOMY IN EFL CLASSES

	<p>However, as the topic is complex and students don't follow instructions and don't pay attention, the teacher had to implement a kind penalty in order to encourage them to be quiet and pay attention.</p> <p>Finally, most of them stand up and show the notebook to the teacher. Also, most of them were interested in learning and asked about the topic.</p>				
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Appendix 8: Initial coding

Diario de campo	" they knew that any inconvenience they had to report it, they were told a little about responsibility and autonomy but without leaving aside that the grade they had left was 1"	Teacher and students communication	Decision making	Anticipation about the task	Each act has its consequence and is reflected in the grades
Diario de campo	" the presentation of the syllabus was resumed and began with the presentation of a short story about the planets, which was created by the teachers present in this research"	suggesting the subject of the class.	class presentation	Learning material	We present a power point about the planets in an interactive way where a reading of a story is done, which generated attraction and the students felt interested
Diario de campo	" In the middle of the class the students showed interest in the story, which provided a variety of colors, figures and simple learning content"	Atractive resources	Variety of colors	Visual Aids	The presentation was a good idea to understand the student's important
Diario de campo	" At the end of the class there was a socialization of what had been presented and 75% of the students understood the main idea and we developed the proposed objective which was to recognize the planets and their characteristics"	Socialization of the class objective	Comprehension of the topic	Specific content	Students paid attention to the development of the class and participated in it
Diario de campo	" At the end of the class, the students who had copied from their classmates apologized and committed themselves to be more autonomous with their homework, thus closing the lesson"	Learning commitment	Lesson closure	Reflect about performance	At the end of the class, the teacher evidences that the objective was met and the students learned
Diario de campo	"In the class it is possible to identify that they are very quiet respecting to the delivery of work"	Identify students behavior	Task-based learning	Students commitment	Students are identified as passive in their academic work and there is no follow-up at home

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Appendix 9: Focused coding

Observation format	"After the reading, the students started to build new vocabulary. They were working on a new topic, "the newspaper". The teacher created groups of 3 and allowed each student to assign a role. Student will create the cover Student will create the glossary and draws Student will create a short paragraph"	How language skills are develop in a EFL enviroment through through interaction
Observation format	"they do not show any response towards the role they need to develop in class, as for they start to speak in Spanish not attending to use English"	
Observation format	"According to Martinez, J. (1999) says intrinsic reasons are generated in the classroom, and teachers have a responsibility to stimulate this motivation through attitudes in close interaction with students. (p.95)"	
Observation format	"However, she always switches to Spanish in order to provide a better understanding"	
Observation format	"The teacher gave feedback on each page. When the class finished the students said goodbye"	
Observation format	"The idea once the student finished, was to share the word search to another student and each one be able to find the words. Then, the class finished"	
Observation format	"We observe a literature class with 5th grade students. They are sitting in rows. The teacher begins the class by greeting them and calling the attendance."	How significant experiences can stimulate the students emotions in learning.
Observation format	"Most of the time the teacher spoke to the students in English. However, she switched to Spanish when they didn't understand. We can observe a good interaction between teacher and students."	
Observation format	"It is a literature class, after the first 4 minutes the students star to use their native language to communicate because that makes them feel more comfortable"	
Observation format	"At this point, the students were having trouble choosing their role, and said they were not able to work in groups. The teacher gave them 10 minutes to do it, however, it was going to continue the next class"	
Observation format	"As it seems to be a regular class, students do not feel that much engage, though the teacher tried to implement some activities in order to motivate them" "What could motivate them?"	

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Appendix 10: Axial coding

Observation	How language skills are developed in a EFL enviroment through interaction	Gamifying the learning experience would make it more engaging and motivating for students. By earning points or rewards for completing tasks, students would be encouraged to keep practicing and improving their skills. This would also change their perspective towards learning a new language, making it a more enjoyable and exciting experience.	Cycle 2 Gamification as a boosting strategy for language learning
Action	How gamifying the larning experiences improved students performance		
Reflection	How adding gamification elements can change students perspective towards Learning a new language		
Planning	How significant experiences can stimulate the students emotions in learning.		
Observation	How providing ineffective and boring strategies decreases students' performance	When students are motivated, they are more likely to persevere through challenges and persist in their efforts. This can lead to the development of new learning skills, including critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity that are explicitly connected with being autonomous and motivated in their learning process	Cycle 1 Meaningful and active learning environments as scenarios that promote students' autonomy and motivation
Action	How applying engaging activities increases student's autonomy in the classroom		
Observation	How students show autonomy only when they are supervised by the teacher		
Reflection	How new learning skills might be developed when students are autonomus and motivated		
	How motivation is shown through performance and improvement of skills		
	How the teacher's role is determinat when applying gamification elements inside the classroom	Motivation drives performance and skills development in students. Where teachers can leverage gamification elements to create an engaging and supportive learning environment that fosters positive performance and reinforces motivation, leading to a cycle of improvement in which students become more autonomous and motivated learners.	Cycle 2 Students' and teachers' performance as indicators of significant learning processes when applying gamification elements
Reflection	How students' active and motivated role positively impacts their learning process and class dynamics		
Reflection			