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**USE OF GAMIFICATION AS A DIDACTIC STRATEGY TO
IMPROVE THE ORAL SKILLS ON NINTH GRADERS AT
COLEGIO TÉCNICO PROFESIONAL DE ACOSTA DURING
THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2024**

Thesis Submitted to Obtain the Bachelor in English with Concentration in Teaching

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Abstract

The following research aimed to improve one of the most difficult problems regarding the acquisition of English, the improvement of speaking skills. Therefore, the researcher was looking for a specific answer to guide this process and state the findings and objectives. This answer starts from the idea of knowing what are the effects of gamification as a teaching strategy to improve oral skills in English as a second language. As a result, in order to achieve this goal, the investigator implemented qualitative research by working with ninth graders of the Colegio Tecnico Profesional de Acosta during the first semester of 2024. Specifically, with the class 9-4 with sixteen students around the age of fourteen to fifteen. Therefore, throughout the process of this investigation, the researcher applied different instruments using gamification as a strategy for the improvement of their oral skills. Besides, by applying these instruments, it was found that the majority of them struggled while speaking the language mostly because of the lack of vocabulary, motivation, and confidence. Nevertheless, the results showed a high range of improvement in their learning and acquisition of speaking skills. In other words, even in a short time, students improved their academic performance in terms of oral expression in English. Therefore, it was found that gamified classes can give the teacher and students incredible benefits.

Resumen

La siguiente investigación tuvo como objetivo mejorar uno de los problemas más difíciles en cuanto a la adquisición del inglés, la mejora de las habilidades orales. Por lo tanto, el investigador buscaba una respuesta específica para guiar este proceso y exponer los hallazgos y objetivos. Esta respuesta parte de la idea de conocer cuáles son los efectos de la gamificación como estrategia de enseñanza para mejorar las habilidades orales en inglés como segunda lengua. Como resultado, para lograr este objetivo, el investigador implementó una investigación cuantitativa trabajando con estudiantes de noveno grado del Colegio Técnico Profesional de Acosta durante el primer semestre de 2024. Específicamente, con la sección 9-4 con dieciséis estudiantes con alrededor de catorce a quince años. Por ello, a lo largo del proceso de esta investigación, se empleó diferentes instrumentos utilizando como estrategia la gamificación para el mejoramiento de sus habilidades orales. Además, mediante la aplicación de estos instrumentos, se encontró que la mayoría de ellos tenía dificultades para hablar el idioma, principalmente debido a la falta de vocabulario, motivación y confianza. Sin embargo, los resultados mostraron un alto rango de mejora en su aprendizaje y adquisición de habilidades orales. Es decir, incluso en poco tiempo, los estudiantes mejoraron su rendimiento académico en términos de expresión oral en inglés. Por lo tanto, se encontró que las clases gamificadas pueden brindarle al docente y a los estudiantes beneficios increíbles.

Table of Contents

Chapter I	13
Introductory Framework	13
1.1 Problem Statement.....	14
1.2 Objectives of the investigation.....	15
1.2.1 General Objective.....	15
1.2.2 Specific Objectives.....	15
1.3 Justification of the Study.....	15
1.4 Antecedents.....	18
1.5 Scope.....	25
Chapter II	26
Theoretical Framework	26
2.1 Literature Review.....	27
2.1.1 The game.....	27
2.1.2 Game-based learning.....	29
2.1.3 Gamification.....	31
2.1.2.1 Definition.....	31
2.1.2.2 Elements related to gamification.....	34
2.1.2.3 Benefits of gamification.....	37
2.1.4 Game-based Learning vs. Gamification.....	41
2.1.5 Speaking Skills.....	42
2.1.4.1 Definition.....	43
2.1.4.2 The importance of speaking skills.....	45
2.1.4.3 Difficulties in teaching speaking skills.....	46
2.1.4.4 Strategies for Improving Speaking Skills.....	48
2.1.6 Didactic strategies.....	49
2.1.5.1 Gamification as a didactic strategy.....	50
2.1.7 Gamification and English as a Second Language.....	52
2.1.6.1 Using gamification to improve oral skills.....	54
2.1.6.2 Gamification apps and platforms for improving speaking skills.....	55
Chapter III	56
Methodological Framework	56
3.1. Research Approach.....	56
3.2 Research Design.....	57
3.3 Information Sources.....	58
3.3.1 Primary Sources.....	59
3.3.2 Secondary Sources.....	59
3.3.3 Tertiary Sources.....	59
3.4 Analysis of Categories.....	59
3.4.1 Speaking skill.....	60

Gamification in Oral Production	11
3.4.2. Gamification	60
3.4.3 Didactic strategies	61
3.5 Data Collection Instruments	61
3.5.1 Observation Checklist	61
3.5.2 Pre-task	62
3.5.3 Activities in between	63
3.5.3.1 PlayFactile: Jeopardy	64
3.5.3.2 Bamboozle: American Football game	65
3.5.3.3 Who am I activity.....	65
3.5.4 Post-task.....	66
3.5.5 Final Observation Checklist.....	67
3.6 Collection data process and data analysis	67
<i>Chapter IV</i>	<i>69</i>
Data Analysis.....	69
4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of the Results	70
4.1.1 Observation Checklist 1	70
4.1.2 Pre-task	81
4.1.3 Activities in Between	85
4.1.3.1 PlayFactile: Jeopardy	85
4.1.3.2 Baamboozle: American Football	89
4.1.3.3 Who Am I	94
4.1.4 Post-task.....	98
4.1.5 Observation Checklist 2	102
<i>Chapter V.....</i>	<i>109</i>
Conclusions and Recommendations	109
5.1 Purpose of the Conclusion	110
5.2 Conclusions.....	111
5.2.1 To identify the main difficulties presented in the group regarding oral skills.....	111
5.2.2 To apply different gamification tools to improve oral skills in the class.....	113
5.2.3 To evaluate the improvement of oral skills by using gamification tools in the students.	116
5.3 Restatement of the Research Question.....	118
5.4 Recommendations.....	119
<i>References.....</i>	<i>120</i>
<i>Annexes.....</i>	<i>131</i>
Annex 1: Lesson Plan	131
Annex 2: Observation Checklist #1.....	141
Annex 3: Observation Checklist #2.....	143

Tables of Figures

Figure 1 Observation Checklist 1. Source: Researcher's Creation	79
Figure 2 Results of the Pre-task. Source: Researcher's Creation	83
Figure 3 Results of the First Gamified Activity "Jeopardy" Source: Researcher's Creation	87
Figure 4 Results of the Second Gamified Activity "American Football Game." Source: Researcher's Creation.....	92
Figure 5 Results of the Third Gamified Activity "Who Am I." Source: Researcher's Creation	95
Figure 6 Comparison between the Gamified Activities. Source: Researcher's Creation	97
Figure 7 Results of the Post-Task in Ninth Grade Students. Source: Researcher's Creation.....	100
Figure 8 Results of the Observation Checklist 2. Source: Researcher's Creation	106
Figure 9 Comparison of the Results between Observation #1 and Observation #2. Source: Researcher's Creation.....	108

Chapter 1

Introductory Framework

As most people know, being a teacher takes work, especially a language teacher. This is because this job implicates dealing with students who do not like or are not interested in the subject since, for some, the classes could be more striking. Therefore, because of the need for more motivation and interest, English teachers have given themselves the task of being able to bring students new, more striking, and interesting methodologies in order to improve both their motivation and taste for the language and their skills in the subject. Therefore, as Mendoza (2017) said, "In education, very varied, motivating, and participatory didactics must be used; for this it is very necessary to use different styles as a means of teaching the English language since it plays an important role in the class process" (p. 592). Due to this, the idea of implementing the use of gamification was born since the students learn in a more relaxed, fun, and natural environment.

For that reason, the following research aims to give educators good knowledge about gamification and how its implementation is essential in our daily teaching. Consequently, for the development of this research, this part is called Chapter 1 of the research process, where the introductory framework is covered. It provides a general idea and the most important parts for the development of this thesis. Therefore, it will cover the problem, the general and specific objectives, the importance, the purpose, and how other investigators have studied it in order to make this investigation possible.

1.1 Problem Statement

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the use of technology has begun to play a leading role in society, so much so that many people have begun to design new platforms, hence what is considered gamification. According to Marzewski (2013), "the application of gaming metaphor to real-life tasks influences behavior, improves motivation, and enhances engagement" (p. 4). In other words, gamification has become a very useful teaching strategy for teachers or people in general. However, today, many of them still do not know about this teaching technique or do not have enough knowledge about it to get the most out of it in their classes, preventing them from showing their students new ways of teaching that could be more beneficial for both of them. Consequently, many teachers are based on traditional teaching, so there needs to be more diversity in the learning of thousands of students who need help with this subject.

Due to this, for many students, the subject of English is something boring or difficult to understand, so the majority of the student population does not have the desired level of knowledge. As Ceciliano et al. (2010) mentioned, "Costa Rica presents a complex and contradictory situation regarding the development of command and management of the English language in its population" (p. 11). This represents the real situation that students have regarding the language and the lack of motivation they feel, and at the same time, it entails a great disadvantage for the country. On the other hand, the lack of motivation is only one problem that students present with the language, since for some of them, this subject is very difficult, which causes them frustration and stress when going to class. In the opinion of Sasson (2013), "Acquiring speaking proficiency is one of the hardest skills for ELL students to achieve" (p. 24). That is to say; oral skills have been one of the most difficult skills to learn since if the student does not feel capable

or safe, they will not be able to use this skill, so this is another reason for the lack of interest and motivation in students. However, through the use of gamification, all these situations can be improved, obtaining a more positive response for all those who are learning or teaching the English language. Therefore, this research project aims to answer the following question: What are the effects of gamification as a teaching strategy to improve oral skills in English as a second language?

1.2 Objectives of the investigation

1.2.1 General Objective

To analyze the effect of gamification to improve the oral skills of ninth-grade students at CTP Acosta during the first quarter of 2024.

1.2.2 Specific Objectives

- To identify the main difficulties presented in the group regarding oral skills.
- To apply different gamification tools to improve oral skills in the class.
- To evaluate the improvement of oral skills through the use of gamification tools in the students.

1.3 Justification of the Study

Since the arrival of COVID-19 and the start of the pandemic, many schools, high schools, and universities have been forced to transform their classes to a virtual mode. Thanks to this, technology has become an essential part of the methodology in every classroom and each subject since school from home was tough, challenging, and boring for students and even for teachers, but with the implementation of different technology resources, they understand better. Therefore, technology as a methodology tool has evolved and created different applications for more

satisfactory development in the classroom. As a result, over the last few years, scientists have developed different interactive platforms and modalities for teaching and learning through the use of game elements; even though the pandemic is over and students come into the classroom again, this continues to be an indispensable resource in lessons as it provides interest, fun, and a relaxed atmosphere for students when learning.

With the evolution of video games, gamification as an educational strategy has become simpler and more creative. As a consequence, many specialists and scientists have been describing gamification as an important tool with numerous benefits in the education and behavior of many students. In fact, according to Kelington Institute (2021), "Adding applications and games to study sessions and homework is a good alternative to carry and reinforce the teaching of a language at home and establish a routine for the little ones . "In this way, they will see learning English as a more dynamic and fun task. For this reason, this research aims to implement the use of gamification as a didactic strategy in order to help students and teachers to put away the traditional teaching of the language and give rise to new, more effective, and beneficial methodologies. In addition, many teachers have been using gamification in the acquisition of a new language. This is because it has been proven that for students, English is the most difficult and boring subject and could sometimes be better taught. Moreover, no one is sure how to get better at it or how to study it. As a consequence, most of them begin not just to dislike the subject but also to be scared of it.

As a consequence, a large percentage of students of the subject of English feel frustrated, stressed, or anxious about the language, mostly with their speaking skills, which makes them feel demotivated since it is not their forte. For example, as López and Salas (2019) said, "Speaking in a foreign language might be one of the hardest things to accomplish; anxiety, self-confidence, and fear to speak, among others, are aspects that contribute to increasing this difficulty" (p.144).

However, the use of gamification can offer contributions such as increased motivation and security with the language since it offers a more relaxed and stress-relieving environment. Therefore, with gamification as a didactic tool in English classes, many teachers can help students love the language and show them they can learn it without the pressure of being good at it.

In addition, this investigation will help all the students who lost their love of the language and feel stressed in each English class to be able to learn in a more dynamic, relaxing, and fun way. In the same way, this investigation pretends to benefit all the teachers who are looking to improve and update their teaching methodologies by providing quality and innovative teaching and need to learn how gamification can be an excellent strategy for that or how to use it. Moreover, many experts have concluded that the most difficult obstacle that many students face in a foreign language class is oral skills. This is because, for them, not feeling comfortable with the language may bring a huge fear of speaking it. Besides, it is not a lie that the majority of people who learn a new language have problems with this skill, and it is the most challenging to obtain. Nevertheless, in order to break this barrier that prevents learners from loving the language, it is important to begin to treat this problem psychologically. That is to say, erase the fear and anxiety they feel when they have to speak.

Many findings have revealed that the use of gamified activities helps to improve the confidence and motivation of students; they feel more secure and relaxed when doing the activities, so they will put away all the fear they present. In addition, Montoya (2022) says that "Students' confidence when speaking increased while doing the gamified activities because of the effective components this approach boosts" (p. 8). In other words, the use of gamification as a didactic activity boosts learners' confidence, motivation, and security because of the strategies

used. Therefore, if teachers use this method, the fluency and oral skills of pupils will be affected positively since they will be exposed to rewards, oral interaction, and game goals, all of this in a comfortable and joyful environment. In conclusion, this research focuses on analyzing the impact of gamification on speaking skills in students who struggle or want to improve their language, including aspects such as fluency. Moreover, it will have a possibility to teach educators who need to gain knowledge about the application of gamification in foreign languages.

1.4 Antecedents

The first historical thesis consulted is called *History of Gamification and Its Role in the Educational Process* by Khaitova (2021), a Teacher at the Department of Methodology of Primary Education, Faculty of Primary Education, Jizzakh State Pedagogical Institute, Uzbekistan. This article includes a complete explanation of the history of gamification up to the present, which includes the introduction of educational games in different countries, the contribution of some researchers and scientists, the result of this didactic strategy in education, as well as some examples of interactive platforms and their benefits.

First, Khaitova described the psychological, didactic, and methodological potential of gamification in teaching primary school learners. Moreover, the literature review talks about how the basic and partial concepts of the creation and development of diverse games have been found in several works. Furthermore, Khaitova (2021) talked about the materials and methods that were used in the research; for example, the study of domestic and foreign literature on the selected topic, subject area, a comparative analysis of the methods of gamification of academic disciplines in the context of the implementation of the primary education program (p. 213). These areas were essential to investigate since they will provide important information in the course of the research.

Secondly, Khaitova described the history of gamification, mentioning some famous pioneers in the area of entertainment, such as Cracker Jack, and the beginning of putting surprise toys in boxes in order to increase sales. Richard Bartle is a game developer and researcher who brought the first multiplayer domain called MUD1, and Tom Malone developed the first educational game and showed that kids can learn through video games. Therefore, with Malone, other authors have appeared in this research as the beginning of what defines today's concept of gamification. After that, the author defined the definition of gamification and the difference between a normal game and some examples of this strategy in education such as World of Warcraft (WoC), Minecraft Edu, Code School, Motion Math Games, Zombie-Based Learning, Mathletics, Foldit, and Radix. Finally, Khaitova concluded that the approaches of foreign authors have been essential in the application of gamification in today's society and its positive effect on learners. Besides, it was concluded that its application is not limited to school and preschool education but is also used in the university environment. Therefore, this thesis is important for this investigation because it has relevant background information for the topic.

The first international thesis consulted is called *The Effectiveness of Gamification Tools to Teach and Learn EFL: A Survey-based Study on 11 Spanish Catalan Secondary School Students* by Navarro (2021) with a master's degree in teacher training and a specialization in English and German of University of the Balearic Islands. In this thesis, Navarro talked about the use of different gamification tools to learn English as a foreign language in secondary students and analyzed if they are effective tools to learn English or to improve specific language skills. Navarro began by defining what active learning methodologies are from different people and their benefits, such as the creation of positive learning environments, encouragement of participation, open-minded ideology, enhancement of communication, and direct interaction

between the teacher and students. Moreover, she defined active methods in the foreign language learning context, the importance of learning styles in active learning approaches, and gamification and game-based learning. In addition, Navarro defined and analyzed the effectiveness of some gamification tools in students, such as Kahoot, EdPuzzle, and Quizlet. On the other hand, she talked about gamification and motivational theory, its types of motivation and games, and their possible barriers.

Besides, from this research, the following objectives can be deduced: To know students' views on the effectiveness of games as EFL tools, to check whether students believe their language skills will be enhanced through the use of gamification, and to examine what other studies have already found regarding Kahoot, EdPuzzle, and Quizlet are fulfilled in a secondary education class. In addition, the participants from this study were 60 fourth-year students of compulsory secondary education (ESO) from a state-run secondary school in Can Pastilla, Majorca, between 15 and 17 years old, with 30 females and the remaining 30 males. The experiment lasted six weeks, in which they used different gamification tools. Moreover, after the due process to verify the hypothesis and give solutions to the problems, Navarro (2021) concludes that gamification positively contributes to improving the teaching and learning processes, increases motivation, and enhances the acquisition of language skills in students (p. 46). For that reason, this research is relevant in this investigation because it demonstrates credibility in its success in the implementation of gamification.

Moreover, the second international thesis consulted is called *Gamification as a Didactic Strategy for the teaching-learning of the English Language in Primary School Students* by Vera (2021) in the academic degree of Master in Innovation in Education of Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador. In this thesis, Vera emphasized designing a gamification proposal as a

didactic strategy to improve English language learning. Furthermore, descriptive research was carried out where the lack of knowledge of the English language in the group under study was evident.

From this research, the following general objective can be deduced: Design a gamification proposal as a didactic strategy to improve English language learning in children in the 7th year of Basic Education of the Fiscal Educational Unit "Ramón Bedoya Navia," and its specific objectives: Deepen the knowledge of gamification in the field of education and its implementation in the classroom, determine the level of English proficiency and motivation towards learning the language, in the 7th grade students of the "Ramón Bedoya Navia" Fiscal Educational Unit, and define the narrative, dynamics, mechanics and necessary tools in the design of a gamification proposal aimed at learning the English language. Besides, Vera started with some important definitions such as meaningful learning, student-centered learning, language learning, the role of the teacher and the student, academic performance, motivation and its impact, and gamification with its elements and benefits.

Besides, the research was of a non-experimental type with a quantitative approach since a diagnostic test was applied as an instrument to determine the level of knowledge and motivation regarding the language. In addition, when collecting the data, a high level of deficiency in English knowledge was obtained in different topics. However, the majority of the respondents showed a good interest in the language. Based on this, Vera carried out different activities through gamification, in which she concluded that she advised applying the proposal and recommended that teachers be trained in the use of gamification as a methodology. Therefore, this research project is important for the creation of this one since it also provides credibility in the success of the results.

The first national thesis is called *The Use of Classroom Games to Improve the English-Speaking Participation of Tenth Graders at Liceo de Ciudad Neily High School* by Kevin Mejias and Yaremi Sánchez (2022) with a bachelor's degree in English teaching from Universidad Latina de Costa Rica. In this thesis, Mejias and Sánchez contributed to the improvement of students' oral participation through the use of games in the classroom. In this research, Mejias and Sánchez supposed that oral skills are a usual issue that the majority of learners present. As a consequence, some of them lose their motivation and interest in learning this subject. Besides, this research gave useful information about how to increase speaking performance by implementing games in the classroom since the traditional methodology is boring.

Furthermore, the research design of this study was qualitative descriptive because it aims to answer the why and how of this phenomenon concerning the implementation of classroom games in speaking activities. The research methods included an interview and a questionnaire to gather data from both teachers' and learners' opinions and experiences. In addition, the following general objective can be deduced: to investigate how the implementation of classroom games influences the learners' participation in speaking; and its specific objectives: to explain the reasons for learners' reluctance to speaking participation, to identify the implementation of classroom games in speaking activities, and to conclude the effects of using classroom games on the learners' speaking skills.

Based on this, Mejia and Sanchez started by describing some important definitions such as communicative games and English learning, the teaching of speaking skills, the reasons for the lack of participation in speaking, the use of games as a tool for teaching English, the use of games to improve the speaking ability and positive aspects of using games. Moreover, the research method chosen is deductive. This is because it allows the researcher to analyze different

theories and obtain an answer about the problem, as well as the qualitative research applied and the type of investigation being descriptive. Besides, the sources and subjects of information involve an interview and a questionnaire, and the variables of this study surround the learners' level, age, personality, and the teachers' methodology. Therefore, the results demonstrated that the majority of students are afraid of making mistakes when speaking in the target language. As a result, the authors concluded that speaking activities and classroom games are an approach to promote students' participation in English classrooms. In addition, it improves students' learning process and diminishes their reluctance to speak interaction. Therefore, this investigation is relevant because it demonstrates the fear that most students have regarding the language and a possible solution to it.

The second national thesis is called *The Implementation of Educational Games to Enhance Students' Speaking Skill in the Knowledge Construction Process* by Ashley Villalobos and Robert Alfaro (2021) with a Bachelor's degree in English teaching from Universidad Latina de Costa Rica. This thesis was based on the implementation of educational games in order to improve students' oral skills using three methodological strategies. Villalobos and Alfaro commented that the reason for this research is that the majority of Costa Rican students need to have an adequate level of English they should. This is worrying for them since Costa Rica is a growing country, and speaking a language like English is becoming increasingly important.

In addition, a proven theory is that most students need more motivation to learn the language. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to be able to improve these skills through striking activities. Because of this, the following General Objective is derived from this investigation: To propose a pedagogical action for enhancing learners' speaking skills through the implementation of educational games, and the following Specific Objectives: To describe the

implementation of educational games for improving learner's English speaking skill, to identify educational games for improving learner's English speaking skill, and to propose English teaching strategies for implementing educational games for improving learner's English speaking skill.

Moreover, Villalobos and Alfaro defined some essential variables for the methodological proposal, such as educational games, which will use natural communication, feedback, and cognitive development; oral skills, which will focus on fluency, appropriacy, and complexity; and the knowledge construction process with the action-oriented approach and didactic sequence. After this, they concluded that the majority of obstacles in the development of oral skills in the English language are due to the need for more commitment. However, the use of educational games can promote the motivation and attention of the students.

Besides, the type of research in this methodological proposal was collaborative action research, and the type of approach was mixed since this led to a more detailed understanding of the subject in question. Therefore, the first strategy implemented corresponds to the use of educational games to promote natural communication in students. The second corresponds to exercising learners' speaking skills to enhance fluency. Finally, the third and last proposal included using learners' speaking skills to exercise complexity.

In conclusion, it was shown that the three methodologies implemented in this investigation can be improved through educational games since students can use them meaningfully. In addition, they can be positively affected since it provides experiences where students use their critical thinking. Therefore, the present investigation is relevant in developing

this research since it contains important information about oral skills and the use of educational games for their improvement.

1.5 Scope

For this research, it is intended to obtain the following results:

- Provide and facilitate the learning of the English language in students through a healthy experience. This is because, for some students, the subject could be more exciting or challenging. Therefore, through gamification in the classroom, students will be able to expand their knowledge of the language in an interesting and fun way. In addition, promoting knowledge through play facilitates learning.
- Provide a relaxing environment while learning the language. This is because the most difficult ability to achieve in students is oral skills since some of them find it uncomfortable or feel anxious when speaking so through gamification, the purpose is to try to reduce those psychological barriers by creating a relaxed and fun atmosphere.
- Propose to teachers the use of different and innovative teaching strategies. The beginning of the digital era is intended to change the traditional methodology of learning the English language for a much newer and more engaging one for students through gamification, promoting the use of games as a good and effective educational resource.

Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

This chapter is the next step in elaborating the effects of gamification as a didactic strategy for improving oral skills. It carries out a literature review with the help of many authors who have studied this subject; this chapter will describe all the theories and investigations already done to support the problem to solve.

Besides, it is essential to remember the importance of this chapter. Hence, according to Efron and Ravid (2018), the meaning of the literature review refers to a methodical analysis of the academic literature on a particular subject. It critically analyzes, appraises, and synthesizes scholarly and research findings, theories, and practices about a certain emphasis area. Because the literature provides all the information that supports the ideas and variables of the problem to be solved, the writer reviewing it should present a thorough, critical, and accurate understanding of the current state of knowledge, compare various research studies and theories, highlight gaps in the literature; and suggest future directions for research. (p. 2). Therefore, through several authors, this investigation will involve all the main keys and concepts under investigation to support or extend this investigation.

2.1 Literature Review

The following pages will contain all the different theories and investigations that have been studied worldwide about gamification and its effect on improving oral skills. Moreover, they will include important and helpful authors who have contributed and demonstrated the process of learning speaking skills more dynamically with the help of gamification.

Consequently, the elaboration of this chapter will be very helpful in solving the problems of this investigation.

2.1.1 The game

The first variable to mention in this chapter is the game. This is because games have been essential to every person's knowledge-construction process. After all, as in their first language acquisition since they were babies, people are familiar with learning a language in a playful environment. People learn by playing. According to Lewis and Bedson (2013), "playing games is a vital and natural part of growing up and learning" (p.5). For this reason, modern teaching worldwide has implemented games through lesson planning since it has been proven that using games has important advantages in the development of students.

Besides, according to Arnseth et al. (2018), encouraging students to reflect during and after games is essential to assist them in deriving meaningful conclusions from it. This makes it possible to evaluate how well pupils relate to the pertinent knowledge they acquire. (p. 135). In other words, by using games, teachers and students can have more activities to learn and teach more effectively by practicing. In addition, games will make the process of learning more relaxing and enjoyable because students will be closer to a more natural learning environment and will increase motivation and participation.

For those reasons, most schools and high schools worldwide try implementing a modern methodology using games. Students need opportunities to use and practice the language in a real situation with a good emotional environment. Therefore, through games, teachers and pupils can feel engaged, motivated, and connected to a real and funny situation without feeling pressured to speak the language well. As Krassmann, et al. (2018) say, it gives students the chance to use resources and different available tools to support an improved and engaging teaching and learning process. (p.2). In addition, games can also be beneficial for students who are fearful of the language. This is because it is an opportunity to start learning in a comfort zone that includes all the skills required in language learning, especially speaking skills. Speaking skills are the most difficult skills for a language learner. Nunan (2015) confirms that "there are people who are fluent readers of a language but who have no facility when it comes to listening or speaking" (p.48). However, this strategy can improve their fluency in their speaking skills.

Moreover, using games while learning a language is an essential option since it can help students playfully understand English. One of the main difficulties of teaching is the student's lack of participation and motivation. In addition, there was a time when educators were worried about their student's lack of interest and motivation because of traditional teaching. Nevertheless, using games in a language class has made learning more stimulating and dynamic for students.

To summarize, this theory is based on the importance of using games as a didactic strategy. This is because students will have many more learning opportunities with joyful activities, improve their speaking skills, and let away their fear and shyness of the language by playing. In the same way, it will let learners practice English in a more natural and real environment since they will be engaged, interested, and inspired while they are playing. As a

result, it will be easier for pupils and teachers to learn and teach the language. Therefore, games are an essential element of language acquisition.

2.1.2 Game-based learning

Due to the pandemic, technology has become a topic of conversation, and many people use it daily as an essential part of their everyday lives. Consequently, using technological resources for working has gained popularity and acceptance, and teaching is no exception. Even though many teachers worldwide use games as a didactic method for their classes, there is still some opposition to using them. This is mainly because of the need for more knowledge about the meaning of concepts such as game-based learning and others. Besides, education is constantly changing, and teachers are responsible for seeking new strategies and methodologies for quality education. In order to do that, educators focus their classes on student-centered learning, which must include creative adaptive programs and methods to increase motivation, engagement, communication, and interest in students.

Therefore, in order to immerse students in successful learning, some of them implement the use of game-based education. According to Farber (2017), "the goal of using games was often to create meaningful experiences for students, followed by teacher facilitation to connect to the curriculum" (p. 10). However, nowadays, games have become an essential tool for educators and learners since it has been proven that with this strategy, they learn easily. This is because, with the help of games, pupils are engaged to participate in a real-world context and feel free to explore the world of games and the language in the same way without any pressure and anxiety.

In addition, learning with game-based implementation is an effective technique for retaining knowledge. This is because students are more relaxed with the language and enjoy the

activity; therefore, as Daniela (2021) argues, games outperform traditional teaching techniques when it comes to learning and memory. Certain similarities between creative and playful activities serve as a reminder of a direct relationship, which is never present when people are nervous and is frequently driven by intrinsic motivation. (p.2). As a result, using game-based learning will improve the student's language skills, motivation, and confidence, becoming an essential tool for learning. Moreover, using games for teaching has been implemented for many years. However, until the beginning of the digital age, this method has gained power in the methodology of many educators.

Game-based learning uses the characteristics and principles of games in learning activities to inspire and improve students' engagement in learning. Nevertheless, game-based learning cannot be successful if teachers focus on the game and put away the meaningfulness of this. Therefore, as Hoe Tan (2018) said "Pupils' motivation to play and their commitment to completing the game, are more likely to be achieved and increased if the activities and feedback provided are meaningful to the pupils" (p. 9). For that reason, it is necessary to link the material and the topic for use, the game, and the purpose of playing it to increase pupils' motivation and the quality of learning experiences. Consequently, if teachers can achieve that, games can encourage critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and increase the use of imagination in which pupils can come up with solutions and their ideas and learn from mistakes in a safe environment while playing.

However, in order to successfully implement this strategy, teachers must understand some relevant concepts when they choose a game for their students, so Plass (2020) suggested that educators need to consider the necessity of understanding the fundamentals, the knowledge that will keep players engaged, comfortable, and able to find more difficult challenges, and the

requirement for high-quality graphics or visual effects (p. 40). Therefore, teachers must study these concepts to give the students a good game in which they will feel motivated and engaged.

2.1.3 Gamification

2.1.2.1 Definition

Education has been an important part of human beings. Without it, society would not be as we know it today. This is why education has become an essential and valued part of living. On the other hand, video games have also been an important part of modern life and are one of the most popular forms of entertainment. In addition, education and play have always gone hand in hand. Although it is irrelevant for some people, the truth is that since a person is born, he or she unconsciously uses play to learn. Therefore, learning by playing has become much easier for people.

However, games have also become vital tools in many fields, such as medicine, business, and education. This is because, as Burke (2016) says, "Gamification creates entirely new engagement models, targeting new communities of people and motivating them to achieve goals they may not even know they have" (p. 3). As mentioned before, games are not only for entertainment; it has been proven that they are helpful for learning. Consequently, thanks to the effectiveness of gamification as a didactic strategy, many educators worldwide have implemented this strategy in their classes. This is because teachers need to implement and figure out how to involve students in effective learning, and games have been proven helpful.

Besides, gamification has existed for many years; nevertheless, until some couple of years, and through the beginning of the digital age, it has become popular in different fields. Due to this, gamification has different definitions and perspectives for authors and researchers.

Therefore, one of these investigators, Kapp (2012), in his book, defined gamification as the application of aesthetics, mechanics, and game theory to games in order to solve problems, encourage action, and engage people. (p. 10) Moreover, Abela (2020) described it as bringing activities that students might strive to avoid to life by utilizing the most captivating aspects of games. (p. 11). In other words, gamification is a strategy involving games and entertainment in non-game concepts to increase students' motivation, engagement, and confidence. For example, they implement game elements such as points, badges, or levels in a simple booklet exercise. Likewise, its principal goal is to give students an attractive learning experience. In addition, this can also be an advantage for the teacher's methodology since their classes can turn more attractive and the subject can become easier for learners.

In addition, this method's principal success and efficiency is that students can learn by doing in an enjoyable and relaxing environment, without feeling frustrated about failing. Besides, it enhances their learning performance and academic achievements. Furthermore, it helps teachers fight against the lack of interest in learners and then make their lessons and the class environment more active, enjoyable, engaging, and motivational. This is why gamification as a strategy in teaching is very important since it will help to put away the fear of students regarding the language. In addition, because of the nature of gamification, it will boost the students' emotions in that they can also feel secure in committing or not making mistakes, as well as in interaction, participation, and collaboration.

Teachers have looked at implementing games and video games as a pedagogical resource. In some of those games, some elements can support the idea of taking them as an educational tool. Healey, in *The Little Book of Gamification* (2020), presents some tips to gamify a class, such as counting up (means everybody should work on achieving points), levels (as more

accurate the student is, as more points she/he will get), and agency (it means to keep on playing until the objective is achieved). These tips will help teachers to start presenting gamification activities.

Moreover, due to some components used in games, this method allows learners to be in a more enjoyable and significant environment and increases active learning. Therefore, Leftwich and Kimmons (2020) says that students can enhance their learning autonomy and personalize their educational experience in ways that support their academic achievement with the support of a gamified pedagogical approach. (p.2.7). As a result, students can learn new content and improve its positive results. Furthermore, because of the challenges of the method, learners become more concentrated and participative with the subject.

Although, it is important to mention that gamification differs from game-based learning. As Blass and Tolnai (2019) said, "Gamification occurs when you apply game elements to traditional instruction. When learners engage in actual gameplay as the learning, they experience game-based learning" (p.17). As mentioned, gamification adds game elements and mechanics to the lessons, such as points, badges, leaderboards, or rewards, to a non-gaming context. Also, it promotes learners' motivation and engagement, which will improve learning. On the contrary, game-based learning is to incorporate gaming into lessons. This will boost students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Some examples of this are Minecraft, game boards, or Mario games. Therefore, for educators or any person who wants to implement this method, it is important to understand these terms correctly since it will keep them linked to their overall learning goals.

2.1.2.2 Elements related to gamification

Teachers have been looking for the best methodologies and strategies to provide an integral learning process in the educational field. Toda et al (2019) affirmed that gamification has been widely used in educational contexts and instructional practices to increase student engagement and motivation using game design aspects outside of a fully-fledged game. Therefore, it is not a lie that this method has been helping many people, especially students and teachers. Moreover, when considering gamification features, it is important to emphasize the elements that allow learning purposes. As mentioned before, gamification and education have a close relationship in that students get relevant input from playing. Besides, using games as a didactic resource brings the opportunity to foster positive traits and hone skills.

In addition, based on the studies of numerous people, it has been concluded that the most important elements in a successful gamification strategy include challenge, motivation, collaboration, digital badges, feedback, points and rewards, and a leaderboard. First, the challenge considered the set of rules of the game. They provide a structured framework for students to apply their skills and knowledge, making the learning experience more interesting and demanding. Students must put their skills to work when performing the assigned activities and activate their competitive instincts. However, it is important to be careful in forming challenges since this technique can become exciting with them. However, if it is challenging, it can cause students to give up and feel frustrated with the subject again.

Besides, motivation is one of the most relevant elements. This is because, as Costello (2020) mentions, using motivational techniques and gamification will help to enhance and empower students' learning and maximize the learning process's results (p. 26). In other words, the proposed activities in gamification should ensure that students enjoy and achieve. If students

identify that they can keep reviewing their peers' scores, they will activate their competitive skills.

Moreover, collaboration is one of the most searched attitudes. Games are now always designed for individual use. Teachers should promote collective games to hone the traits of students. When facing a second language class, students would like to feel safe and accompanied by their peers to perceive a sense of coexistence in the classroom even if teachers join them in activities involving play. Accordingly, it is relevant to mention that "emotions students feel against a foreign language and the reality that changes in the classroom such as the teacher, classmates, and the content" (Olivares, 2019, p. 41). It will be easier to work on attitudes that enhance a positive classroom environment through collaboration.

Besides, by developing these strategies, teachers can make students feel comfortable performing activities. This emotional comfort can significantly improve their language learning experience. Furthermore, Games can keep people engaged for long periods, build meaningful relationships between people, and develop their creative potential (Chou, 2019). Here is another example of how collaboration is represented. While students play, they also gain knowledge.

Another element to consider is digital badges. The most practical definition considers that they may be alternative credentials to document and certify individuals' competency more flexibly, thereby linking the worlds of education, work, and community meaningfully. Digital badges are designed to accurately reflect contemporary learners' achievements and influence educational practices (Muilenbur & Berge, 2016). In this case, this element aims to encourage schools and high schools to adopt more competency-based approaches to learning and

assessment. One advantage of this is that teachers can lead to more personalized and effective pedagogical approaches.

Feedback is also an important element when talking about gamification. In this, the authors rely on the fact that formative feedback should be named. Chu and Fowler (2020, p.3) state that game-based formative feedback systems are powerful because students are willing to self-initiate evaluation, reflection, and use of the feedback provided during a game. As such, the principles behind these digital game feedback systems are useful in an educational environment to help educators provide formative feedback that is used in a meaningful way. This element can provide the opportunity to create a dynamic and engaging learning environment. By this, students will be motivated to self-initiate evaluation and become aware of the knowledge they are getting.

Besides, points and rewards are some elements teachers might consider when applying gamification strategies. This is because rewards can be a useful instrument to induce motivation or engagement since it will become an attractive reason to achieve knowledge, yet due to the nature of not having a game module included many of the rewards in gamification are often consciously valued or accepted simply as an acknowledgment of progress. Using rewards is a great resource for teachers because it stimulates students' motivation. As a result, when it refers to points, it does not mean that teachers should grade students according to their performance in the game, it refers to the incentive of assigning punctuation specifically in the game.

The leaderboard is also another element of gamification. Ortiz (2019) defines a leaderboard as a "visual display that ranks players according to their accomplishment... and relative leaderboards with positive results. In the former, there was an increase in task execution punctuality, while in the latter, there was an increase in task performance" (p.778). It is relevant

to note that the effectiveness can vary from person to person and across different situations. Some individuals may find leaderboards motivating and thrive under competitive conditions, while others may feel stressed or discouraged by them.

Consequently, when implementing leaderboards as part of a gamification strategy, it is essential to consider the preferences of the target class and carefully design the leaderboard system to align with the desired outcomes. All in all, using this strategy in the classroom will motivate the learning experience, making it more engaging, collaborative, and effective while encouraging positive traits and skills in students. Professors should consider the student's needs to adapt gamification accordingly to the class purpose.

2.1.2.3 Benefits of gamification

When gamification is implemented, it should consider the previous elements: challenge, collaboration, digital badges, feedback, points and rewards, and leaderboard. There is a perspective that these elements can trigger intense focus on the development of gamification. Some of the most relevant issues in teaching methods consider student engagement, and this is not the exception. Barghani (2020, p.1671) stated that the most significant benefits of this technique, in addition to student engagement, are motivation, enhanced teamwork, increased knowledge retention, and meeting students' needs. To begin with, it is necessary to state that the engagement of students has represented a big challenge in education.

Some authors consider that people can only talk about engagement if they consider intriguing mechanical, personal, and emotional factors. Therefore, in the mechanical factor, gamified learning can also present new rewards such as stars or score charts with the same sense of achievement. Moreover, the strategy of gamification presents some specific features. Almotairi

et al. (2020, p.53) explained that several gamification principles could generate the desired gamified experience. The decisions made by the designers involved in gamifying non-gaming settings to determine the boundaries, rules, and context of the events and activities, together with the types of interactions, like opponents, are called gamification mechanics. It means that the sense of achievement is closely related to how students connect to the subject studied. As they get gratified, they will look forward to higher expectations.

In addition, this process can ensure that students are responsible for their learning. Supporting this fact, Almotairi et al. (2020) believed that students' engagement is crucial for measuring academic progress. The authors defined this concept as "the amount of time and energy the student dedicated to academic experience." In this context, gamification emerges as an advantageous method to address this need by providing an effective resource to keep students interested and engaged in the pedagogical process. It not only enhances the learning experience but also helps students stay motivated, and it will have an important impact on academic performance.

Secondly, gamification enhances students' motivation. Supported by Barghani (2020, p.1673), "The potential of gamification does not stop with the engagement of learners rather it deepens as students become more and more motivated to excel". Besides, the author affirmed that through gamification, students can get two types of motivation: extrinsic rewards such as levels, points, and badges to improve engagement while striving to raise feelings of achieving mastery, autonomy, and a sense of belonging. Gamification not only helps develop the teaching process but it also plays a relevant role in boosting students' motivation to attend language classes. Combining both stimuli creates a powerful tool for students to participate in their class experiences, allowing them to get involved and have a greater sense of belonging. Moreover, it is

not a lie that gamification can facilitate motivation, which brings engagement and attention to users, in this case, students, which will result in higher performance and alternate behavior. Therefore, this strategy can amplify engagement and gain knowledge in difficult subjects.

In other words, gamification makes students feel more motivated by presenting the subjects dynamically. The students will feel attracted to the pedagogical activities and the contents. If the gamification method is correctly addressed, it will create an atmosphere of intrinsic and extrinsic stimuli, allowing students to learn while having fun. Therefore, the secret to adopting gamification to boost motivation and learning may lie in how well gamification aspects are implemented and how they satisfy the demands of autonomy, efficacy, and relatedness. (Ede, 2022, p.27). Therefore, for an educator, these concepts are very important to the domain since gamification can give all its benefits with a good implementation.

By incorporating gamification in the lessons, the teachers will cater to students' sense of autonomy and belonging. Gamification can stimulate engagement and influence the learners' activities within collaborative learning, including game-like features such as points and badges, in non-game contexts. If the students participate in the proposed activities, teachers should take advantage of it and provide activities to ensure internal and external motivation. Then, gamification enhances collaboration skills. The learning experiences promoted by this strategy also allow learners to enhance other key skills. One of them, for instance, is teamwork and cooperation. This is because gamification activities in the classroom are designed for groups, so students will work together to achieve a common goal. As a result, this will also give learners social responsibility, emotional investment, and values such as respect, tolerance, and communication.

Furthermore, it is necessary to discuss knowledge retention. It has been seen that gamification has numerous benefits, one of which is improving knowledge retention. Holding the students' attention is one of the hardest things to achieve. However, gamification increases engagement by providing incentives for learners to pay attention and complete activities. This is because pupils are more likely to absorb the information presented to them when they are focused.

Moreover, in Costa Rica, we can take the concept of retention and present it as significant learning. When a student learns how to gain knowledge from a game, he/she will be able to keep it and maybe implement it in future contexts. The use of gamification could provide a clear solution to today's students' lack of motivation and engagement.

In addition, caring for students' needs is crucial, so by gamification, students might get the opportunity to progress step by step. Therefore, giving students a choice in their learning increases their sense of autonomy since personalized options are particularly beneficial to students, mostly because of the engagement. The personalized learning environment will allow each student to learn independently. Teachers might ensure students get the appropriate tools to develop their learning process. Not all individuals learn the same way; consequently, each student should explore, know, and play using their abilities to meet their scopes and limitations.

This strategy of learning enriches students' learning experience by offering them the realm with opportunities to take risks and strengthen their understanding without fear of failure. Moreover, the benefits of gamification influence not only students, teachers, and institutions but alsoThe students will get rewards and motivation to use their knowledge, teachers will be able to

allow the auto evaluation, and the institution will offer an innovative and dynamic system to the people who enroll.

2.1.4 Game-based Learning vs. Gamification

Game-based learning and gamification are the same. However, they are completely different techniques. Both of them indeed promote engagement and motivation in learning. However, the big difference lies in how game elements are integrated into the learning experience. Therefore, if a teacher wants to implement one of these methods, it is very important to understand their meaning to implement the best classroom experience. First, Gamification with purpose represents a relevant didactic strategy to look for significant and integral learning. When teachers consider gamification, they must understand what it is about and its main features. That is why, like Wright (n.d.) says gamification is adding mechanics such as point systems, achievement badges, leaderboards, or other elements within the classroom to increase motivation. In other words, it is adding game elements to a learning experience. With gamification, all these elements can easily become the focus rather than the learning. In addition, some basic examples of it in the classroom include separating students into groups, bingo games, using a dice for a worksheet activity, etc. Therefore, gamification can be a powerful pedagogical tool that benefits educators and learners alike.

On the other hand, in game-based learning or GBL, the game is the learning experience instead of the components. It is a type of active learning experience within a game framework, according to Wright (n.d). That is to say, using games to teach certain skills or knowledge. With this method, the game is the educator. Consequently, a good example of this is Jeopardy or Kahoot.

Furthermore, game-based learning uses a component called "serious games". Serious games are educational games; they are specifically designed not just for entertainment but also for education. Furthermore, Healey (2020) says that game-based learning uses a serious game extensively to achieve an educational purpose, it is a central part of the activity rather than an occasional supplement (p. 3), which means that this concept is one of the main elements of GBL.

, gamification includes educational activities and depends on some elements, while game-based learning utilizes actual games as educational tools to deliver specific skills and knowledge. In addition, gamification and game-based learning can offer students strengthening motivation and active participation and reduce stress and anxiety. Besides, both methods can make the classroom environment less intimidating and funnier since it is associated with curiosity and joy instead of fear and boredom, making learners more successful in education. Therefore, it is completely true that implementing a game makes classes much more enjoyable. However, even though gamification and game-based learning promote engagement and motivation in learning if incorporated incorrectly, these methods can bring the opposite in the classroom and the student's education. That is why teachers must have a great knowledge of these techniques and how to correctly implement them to take advantage of all the benefits they can bring to students and educators.

2.1.5 Speaking Skills

Communication is an essential part of learning any language. Speaking plays a vital role in fulfilling any language. As a result, this is the most important skill since it is the foundation for constructing a successful reach of a language. With it, the goal of dominating a language for a student can be easier to obtain. Moreover, Parupalli (2019, p.8) said that it is "the most important skill to acquire foreign or second language learning. Among the four key language skills,

speaking is deemed to be the most important skill in learning a foreign or second language" (p.8). However, speaking is one of the hardest skills to acquire today. Most learners feel uncomfortable or unprepared to speak the target language since they feel anxious or insecure.

Besides, most teachers do not know how the uncomfortable environment in the classroom can negatively affect students in the achievement of this skill since if they feel insecure with the language, they cannot be close to it and enjoy the learning process. As a result, it has been proven that classes focusing on the incorrect teaching of speaking can bring learners many obstacles in their learning. Therefore, it is completely necessary to improve and know this skill since, with it, the acquisition of a new language can be improved satisfactorily.

2.1.4.1 Definition

Speaking skills in acquiring a foreign language is a fundamental part of it that goes beyond the ability to communicate. This skill is a dynamic and expressive form of language proficiency that effectively articulates thoughts, ideas, and information in a language other than one's native tongue. As a result, proficiency in speaking a foreign language is not only about mastering grammar rules and vocabulary but also about fluency, pronunciation, intonation, and cultural nuances. That is why it is so important that a learner can dominate this skill. However, before that, educators must have sufficient knowledge to give a successful education in the lives of any pupil who wants to achieve mastery of this language or another one.

Therefore, it is indispensable that both educators and learners know the importance of this skill in the acquisition it since developing strong speaking skills is crucial for individuals seeking to engage in meaningful conversations and participate in social interactions or professional environments. In addition, based on the studies of Moh et al. (2019), it is defined as the deliberate

use of language to convey meanings in a way that allows others to understand them. Speaking in this situation requires a sophisticated skill set that includes vocabulary, grammar, sound, and cultural subsystems of language. It implies that speaking is a useful ability when it comes to language use. (p.33).

As it is stated, speaking skills represent the production of the language. Through this, students can communicate their ideas without considering the language. In addition, it incorporates elements of vocabulary selection and intonation. Besides, it is important to know the socio-cultural norms to provide an accurate speaking interaction. To ensure a correct process, teachers might be aware of providing the correct guide through language mechanics and provide tasks in which they should face some social situations to experience activities as if they were in an everyday situation.

In addition, in the speaking area, Moh et al. (2019, p.34) explained that there are some types of oral skills:

Imitative, a speaking performance, is the ability to parrot back (imitate) a word, phrase, or sentence.

Intensive speaking is a second type of speaking frequently employed in an assessment context. It is the production of short stretches of oral language designed to demonstrate competence in a narrow band of grammatical, phrasal, lexical, or phonological relationships (such as prosodic elements: intonations, stretch, rhythm, and juncture).

Responsive means interaction and testing comprehension, but at the somewhat limited level of very short conversations, standard greetings, small talk, simple requests and comments, and the like.

Interactive means the length and complexity of the interaction, which sometimes includes multiple exchanges and multiple participants.

Extensive oral production tasks include speeches, oral presentations, and storytelling, during which the opportunity for oral interaction from the listeners is either highly limited (perhaps to nonverbal responses) or ruled out altogether.

Therefore, a well-honed speaking skill is an indispensable component of language acquisition. Therefore, these different perspectives of speaking help teachers design various purposes and levels of linguistic engagement, providing a range of communication needs and contexts.

2.1.4.2 The importance of speaking skills

Speaking skills is certainly one of the main skills that a human being can obtain. However, it is one of the most difficult to get, mostly in a foreign language. When a person is learning a new language, it demands communication skills, and teachers such as English educators must teach their students the necessary skills. Nevertheless, speaking skills are more than just about theory; they include learning or memorizing concepts. Speaking skills are about practice, so implementing this skill with something related to practice, such as a game, can make acquiring it much easier and motivating. As a result, as Peterson (2021) says, we are motivated to acquire the skills necessary to excel in games and sports. When we play a game, we concentrate on the goal of the game. Our abilities grow as we play more, making the game easier. (p. 13) For

this reason, teachers must implement a lot of useful strategies in order to improve the speaking skills of learners better.

As Peterson (2021) already presented, it is necessary to keep practicing and mastering speaking skills. This process will include developing activities that require interaction among classmates in the classroom atmosphere. When students achieve the communication process, they will get the positive influence of those to secure promising career opportunities. In addition, developing speaking skill proficiency involves mastering the linguistic structures and acquiring the confidence to express oneself in diverse contexts such as social or professional environments.

As a result, the importance of speaking skills for foreign language learners cannot be overlooked since it will not only help students master the language but also break down barriers such as demotivation or anxiety. Therefore, pupils and teachers who prioritize the development of this skill will likely be close to the target language and demonstrate an advanced level of it. For that reason, educators must make creative classroom activities to bring students the opportunities to apply their language knowledge in practical and secure scenarios.

2.1.4.3 Difficulties in teaching speaking skills

Speaking improvement is certainly the most difficult skill to dominate in the acquisition of a target language. While proficiency in spoken communication is a key goal for language learners, several obstacles hinder the seamless development of speaking skills. As a result, teaching this skill in foreign language education presents multiple challenges that educators must face to ensure effective language acquisition. One is the need for more confidence in students to use expressions different from their mother tongue.

There is a fact that speaking skills have been seen as the most complex to master, Yahaya et al (2021, p. 179) discovered that the obstacles to speaking English among ESL learners were based on two major factors: anxiety and social-related problems, and learning-related problems. Anxiety and social-related problems were the obstacles that were due to the learner's inner-self, such as confidence, motivation, and self-esteem. These factors are closely related to how students feel when they face speaking activities. As it can vary from student to student, it is relevant to consider that not all students learn and produce similarly. For this reason, the teacher's guidance, attention, and supervision throughout the process are indispensable and worthy. However, it is not just about how students feel when they are about to interact in a target language. Yahaya et al (2021, p. 179) emphasize the importance of learning-related problems, which include grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, teacher teaching method/approach, and learners' expectations. Consequently, by adopting targeted strategies and considering these aspects, teachers will find the most appropriate error correction and clarification techniques.

In addition, overcoming speaking obstacles should be seen as a process. Everyone might feel anxiety or nervousness when facing a new challenge. Teachers must remember that speaking English encompasses emotional and practical aspects to ensure successful language acquisition and interaction in a target language. Moreover, they should be aware of their responsibility in designing activities and implementing strategies to ensure that the process is flowing and students are progressing. Consequently, by prioritizing speaking skills and implementing innovative teaching methods, educators can empower students to overcome these challenges and thrive in their journey toward linguistic proficiency.

2.1.4.4 Strategies for Improving Speaking Skills

Speaking skills are mostly used when there is a willingness to learn or improve a language. As Ooi et al. (2021) stated, learning is the process of gaining information, facts, abilities, and processes to be used when needed. In contrast, strategy is the overarching concept meant to be accomplished over an extended time. These authors present a classification of teaching and learning strategies. This classification can allow teachers and students to identify the most suitable based on their contexts and provide a more attractive environment. The categories are memory strategies, such as remembering and recalling new information; cognitive strategies, like comprehending and producing new language by many different means; compensation strategies, or overcoming knowledge gaps and continuing to communicate authentically; affective strategies, for example, developing self-confidence; metacognitive strategies, such as problem-solving and taking control of their learning, and social strategies like increasing interaction and more empathetic understanding. Ooi et al (2021). These strategies are essential in the process of speaking, and they will help teachers and students to have a setting of activities in which they interact with each other and create their methods to produce the language.

Besides, English teachers must carefully design strategies for improving speaking skills. The main concern for teachers should be that students feel confident to start interacting and producing. Moreover, it is necessary that teachers know and let students know the routine of the class to prepare them for further activities. This is because speaking skills should be taught using natural experience in a real communicative conversation. Therefore, Peterson (2018) suggested in his book that “to improve their speaking, students should not rush since it is better to speak slowly and clearly. Improve vocabulary, play games, listen to English as often as possible, practice in groups, and relax and have fun” (p. 6). As a result, by using well-done strategies,

teachers could achieve the indicators of the materials successfully, and learning with these strategies can be more interesting for the students to learn English, especially in speaking.

2.1.6 Didactic strategies

Learning a foreign language is a difficult and dynamic process that requires effective didactic strategies to engage students and facilitate their acquisition of language skills. In the last few years, didactic strategies have been an important tool for all teachers worldwide. Educators must give their students quality learning. In other words, without a didactic strategy is like going into a class clueless and just teaching without a predefined plan. Therefore, if a person wants to teach, she or he needs to learn to teach. Therefore, didactic learning is the basis of understanding and the foundation of learning. If an educator does not implement it in their classroom, it is possible to not achieve the learning objectives and lose motivation. Besides, these strategies are designed to engage students, enhance comprehension, and promote acquiring knowledge and skills. Consequently, they play a crucial role in fostering linguistic proficiency and communicative competence.

Moreover, didactic strategies can be considered as professors' various methods and approaches to provide an on-purpose teaching and learning process. To better understand what didactic strategies are, Jucan (2020, p.160) defined them as "systems of methods, procedures, means and forms of organizing educational activity integrated into a systemic vision in unitary and coherent operational structures, aimed at building learning experiences, training skills, abilities, competencies, and streamlining the instructive-educational process." As a result, as the landscape of education continues to evolve, educators must adapt and employ innovative didactic strategies to create engaging and effective foreign language learning environments.

2.1.5.1 Gamification as a didactic strategy

Nowadays, the integration of game elements into non-game contexts has been a topic to discuss since it has been proven to be a powerful and innovative didactic strategy in education. Loza (2023) goes under the evidence that Gamification is a method that incorporates mechanics and game-based features to create engaging learning environments where students may engage and actively participate in the teaching and learning process. Besides, the necessity of innovation and the development of modern strategies that allow students to enjoy their learning and practice their skills have motivated teachers to design more creative and interactive activities, as in the case of gamification, which considers the matching of games and communication.

In addition, gamification has proved to be an excellent strategy. This is because it improves students' commitment, performance, and motivation by incorporating gaming and interactive elements in specific tasks. Moreover, gamification includes elements such as health competition, rewards, and challenges, making the teacher's classes more interesting and motivating. Consequently, gamification is a very versatile tool because it reflects the evolving role of play and gaming principles in various aspects of our lives, where the engagement and motivation they provide are recognized as valuable tools for achieving specific goals and outcomes. As a result, by incorporating game elements into lessons, teachers can increase interest and curiosity, creating a positive attitude and environment in language learning for international students.

Besides, this technique is a useful way to increase and help skill development since it encourages students to participate in the learning process and reinforces their language knowledge through real-world situations but in a more confident and relaxed environment. However, gamification should be seen as a process. Loza (2023, p.18) set the importance of

considering the stages of gamification when using it as a didactic resource. The stages need to be considered in order to develop a correct application of the strategy. Therefore, in his work, he mentioned that it is important to know the determination of:

- Learners' characteristics
- The definition of learning objectives
- The creation of educational content and activities
- The addition of game elements and mechanics.

Therefore, based on the stages, it is considered that teachers must go through an accurate design of activities to ensure that the gamification strategy includes all the aspects. The first stage must deal with the background and context of students. This information is only possible to start looking forward to the most suitable activities. After that, defining clear and precise learning objectives is imperative, as these objectives form the core purpose of the educational process. Besides, teachers might ensure that the proposed activities enhance students' ability to produce and go over challenges. The activities planned need to be completely related to the curriculum and have a purpose for learning. These stages collectively contribute to a comprehensive and effective application of gamification in education.

Furthermore, Gamification includes the use of games in the educational process. Villegas and Alvarado (2017, p. 6762) stated that gamification is "the use of game tasks to strengthen motivation, concentration, effort, and other positive values". This strategy allows teachers to implement games as a class tool to enhance content acquisition. When considering gamification, it is important to remember that it leads to technology and digitalization. Therefore,

it is necessary to know that in the classrooms, the use of electronic devices is becoming more relevant.

As was explained before, gamification is derived from the word game and includes a more interactive and enjoyable learning environment. This strategy is considered didactic because it applies the principles of playing (seen as ludic) to the pedagogical structure of the lessons. By learning through games, students might feel more engaged, motivated, and attracted to learn. That is why gamification allows students to interact with problem-solving, decision-making, and team-building situations.

In addition, when gamification is included in the educational area, many opportunities arrive in the teaching and learning process. One of these opportunities, as teachers, is to see how gamification strategies motivate students to learn a language while playing. Furthermore, as technology continues to advance, this strategy can become a valuable and important tool in every classroom since with that it will not only be available to increase the knowledge of miles of students but also to create an interactive, joyful, and creative lesson. That is why gamification is very significant in the educational field.

2.1.7 Gamification and English as a Second Language

Gamification activities are taken to the classroom to stimulate an environment conducive to enjoyable and effective learning. Learning by playing facilitates the internalization of content and enhances the integration of the student body and teamwork. Amaya and Bajaan (2018) state that gamification can offer and help society increase skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, persistence, and collaborative work. This technique provides opportunities for teachers to incorporate active learning into their curriculum and spread the chance of getting its benefits.

Moreover, it is a fact that most technological resources can be used to enhance teaching a second language. Therefore, having students produce English in classes is one of teachers' most important challenges. Jordán (2021, p.1) showed evidence that applying a gamification strategy allows students to broaden their vocabulary for effective communication, so based on her investigation, it is proved that the Gamification Strategy is considered one of the most effective strategies to improve English learning vocabulary.

Furthermore, Jordán (2021) believes that using electronic devices for academic sense will be advantageous. For example, young people constantly use video games, which are programmed in English, to spend their free time without noticing that they are simultaneously learning the language and reducing their stress. For that reason, implementing this technique in the classroom in a more specific way than just entertaining can promote language acquisition because of the improvement of vocabulary. As a result, learning vocabulary in the English language is fundamental for good communication, and it is seen as the most reported positive learning outcome of gamification. Moreover, it should be considered that the learning process becomes funnier and dynamic when games are included as part of the classroom activities.

In addition, games in an educational setting are a great way to motivate students and improve their learning processes. Vyas and Patel (2015) emphasized that language is one of the features that can be more influenced by gamification because it is associated with actions, experience, images, and dialogue. As a result, implementing games in pedagogical activities nowadays is very popular. Thus, students are in touch with the technology daily. Considering the above, strategies that promote speech development in a fun way can be implemented so that students feel motivated to produce. Hence, it is advisable to use technology because it is currently an indispensable resource.

2.1.6.1 Using gamification to improve oral skills

Improving oral skills is such a challenging process. Language learning and development occur over time, with learners moving through developmental stages and gradually growing proficiency. This is not an individual process; it should promote social interaction, says Enríquez et al. (2021). Gamification provides a collaborative atmosphere to contribute to oral production and interaction. Besides, one of the most useful advantages of this technique is the effective ability to catch students' attention and interest in the subject. As a result, it is an excellent approach to enhancing motivation in various fields, including language learning. This is because traditional methods are not too good at keeping students engaged, increasing the lack of motivation and limiting their skills such as in speaking. However, with a gamified lesson, teachers can implement elements like fun and health competitions, making the learning process more significant and enjoyable.

In addition, the implementation of gamification in English classes can improve vocabulary acquisition, grammar, pronunciation, reading comprehension, and writing. This is because students intrinsically learn while playing in a relaxing environment. Besides, in order to support that, Palacios (2023) explained how gamification increases these areas:

- Games can present the grammar contents more dynamic and simple.
- Games can ask students to produce sounds like native speakers.
- Games can be used to promote reading comprehension by creating interactive reading activities that provide learners with immediate feedback on their understanding of the text.
- Games can enhance writing by presenting interactive ways of producing ideas. Students can also get involved in writing competitions.

- Games can also promote cultural learning by creating games and activities that teach learners about the culture of English-speaking countries.

As a result, gamification can be used to promote many different activities in pedagogical planning. The core idea is to allow students to learn by having fun using the technology. Especially in oral skills, gamification can be an excellent tool and help teachers and students through role-play games, conversations, debates, challenges, and more. Therefore, by incorporating gamification strategies into language learning, teachers can create a more engaging and interactive learning environment that promotes speaking skills and encourages learners to use the language in various contexts.

2.1.6.2 Gamification apps and platforms for improving speaking skills

Thanks to technological advances, gamification is also present in many famous apps for different purposes, such as fitness, finance, sales, and education. Besides, with these gamified apps, knowing a new language is no longer associated with boredom and routine but with an easier and more exciting experience. Therefore, Loza (2023, p.19), in his work, has enlisted the following most popular gamified apps for the acquisition of a new language and the improvement of oral skills:

Class Dojo: This application's objective is to provide the teacher with a platform to manage student behavior. The gamification elements mostly include leaderboards.

Edmodo: It is like social networking. Teachers can open discussion forums and post assignments. Students can comment on posts, submit assignments, and track their progress. The gamification elements mostly include collaborative skills.

Genially, it is a platform that offers numerous possibilities for creating resources, presentations, interactive games, etc. The gamification elements mostly include observation, critical thinking, skill improvement, and problem-solving activities in a group and individual context.

Socrative: This platform allows students to use images to question items. It features gamification strategies, including live results, immediate feedback, and data analysis. The gamification elements mostly include immediate feedback.

Gamification apps or platforms have become powerful tools for improving a new language. This is because of their engaging and interactive nature. Implementing new techniques such as gamification will not only enhance the effectiveness of learning but also make the journey enjoyable, relaxing, and motivating for learners who excel in the art of speaking a foreign language.

Chapter III

Methodological Framework

This chapter gives an outline of the research method used to develop this study. It encompasses information about the research subjects and the sample. Besides, it describes the research method and the type of investigation that structures the data to support the hypothesis of this study. The instruments proposed for collecting data and how the researcher will analyze the data are described.

3.1. Research Approach

The following paper will take the qualitative research. In this case, Cropley (2021) defined it as “the one that studies the way people face their real-life situation, when the researcher

asks for information about that it tends to feel familiar, and people answer with naturality.” (p.5). For this reason, this type of research allows the investigator to be in real context with the student's daily situations. Unlike the quantitative approach, this approach allows the chance to interact with people and see how they react to a particular situation. Therefore, it will allow the researcher to develop the study in the normal atmosphere of the students when going through didactic activities that involve gamification and oral production.

The qualitative research gathers participants' experiences, perceptions, and behavior. It answers the how and why instead of how many or how much. Moreover, it could be structured as a stand-alone study, purely relying on qualitative data, or part of mixed-methods research that combines qualitative and quantitative data (Tenny et al., 2022). This type of research provides a holistic view of complex phenomena, and its application can vary based on research goals and objectives. As a result, due to the characteristics of this type of research, it enroots within the purpose of the study as it focuses on a specific group of students, it is developed in a real scholarly context, it considers the student's contributions, it leads to some theoretical concepts, and conveys social issues.

3.2 Research Design

The present investigation takes a descriptive design. According to Nassaji (2015), descriptive research aims to describe a phenomenon and its features. This study focuses more on what happened than how or why it occurred. (p.129). The descriptive design of this investigation is chosen because it provides a comprehensive overview of the current state of ninth graders' oral skills, identifies areas for improvement, and assesses the impact of gamification as a didactic strategy. It intends to aim the researcher to make informed decisions and apply practical solutions to solve common problems when teaching or learning English as a second language.

By using the descriptive method, the researcher will identify, observe, and measure the features of a specific group of students. It may allow the researcher to use different methodologies to compare results and analyze the variables, but they cannot be changed. In addition, the descriptive study pretends to aim for investigators to specify the characteristics of individuals, groups, communities, or any other phenomenon subjected to analysis. It has to deal with the definition of variables and the dimensions or components of each subject of investigation (Hernández Sampieri et al., 2017). Therefore, this method has to be included in the investigation.

Furthermore, there is another approach that will support the investigation process. It is called Action Research. Mertler (2023), quoted by Quayson (2020, p.2), stated that action research offers useful educational frameworks that support professional growth, ethics, communication, evaluation, and implementation while enabling change in the classroom. In other words, action research is focused on problem-solving in which the investigators identify a problem and develop a plan for addressing it. Besides, based on the definition and purposes of action research, some common principles are identified as the core objective of this study. Both encourage the development of methodologies to improve the learning and teaching process and motivate positive changes within the school environment. The application of gamification in the investigation aligns with the principles of Action Research by promoting practical, ethical, and effective educational strategies.

3.3 Information Sources

Sources of information for data collection are fundamental for any research. It is relevant to consider that an information source can be a person, thing, or place from which information can be obtained or gathered.

3.3.1 Primary Sources

The first definition to be explained is the primary sources. The primary sources are the sources or documents closest to the study for investigation. In addition, as the name suggests, these sources are defined as the ones collected for the first time by the researcher (Oluwatosin, 2017, p.2). They represent the document or result that is reported firsthand. As a result, the student's information will be taken as a primary source for this research.

3.3.2 Secondary Sources

On the other hand, secondary sources are documents such as comments, a thesis, reviews, or articles written about primary sources. Therefore, the same Oluwatosin (2017) defines secondary sources as the already existing data collected by the investigator agencies and organizations earlier. (p. 2). The secondary sources are bibliographical references such as academic and official papers, web academic articles, and related websites.

3.3.3 Tertiary Sources

The tertiary sources are the sources that organize or classify other sources. As Engle (2022) defined, they are "the publications that summarize and digest the information in primary and secondary sources to provide background on a topic, idea, or event." Therefore, Encyclopedias and biographical dictionaries are good examples of tertiary sources. In addition, other tertiary sources include textbooks, study guides, or educational websites since they are used for quick access.

3.4 Analysis of Categories

In this part, the researcher will mention the parts that will be supported for the development of it. Before that, it is important to mention the importance of the analysis of

categories since they are the center of research and the focus of this study. As a result, the variables will define the data collection and analysis structure. Moreover, identifying the variables will allow the investigator or researcher to measure and explain variations found during the investigation timeline. The following aspects are considered the variables of this thesis:

3.4.1 Speaking skill

Speaking skills are speaking confidently and fluently in the target language. This skill allows learners to communicate effectively. Therefore, it is one of the four skills that a student needs to master. Moreover, mastering this skill involves the ability to communicate and includes elements such as articulation, pronunciation, tone, and more. As a result, developing this skill is very hard for many students since it is not only theory to learn; it involves practice in a safe and positive environment.

3.4.2. Gamification

Gamification adds game elements, such as points, badges, challenges, etc, to non-game contexts to increase motivation. Besides, with this strategy's popularity, gamification has been part of fields such as business, economy, fitness, and education. In the case of education, it has been proven that gamification can contribute positively to students' learning since, with this method, students will feel more motivated to acquire the language. Moreover, gamification helps educators implement new and innovative methods for the class, develop a more creative and joyful lesson, and make their classes more relaxed and confident. Consequently, with these benefits, acquiring and learning a new language will be easier for students and teachers.

3.4.3 Didactic strategies

Didactic strategies are the series of techniques and methods that a teacher applies for the lesson to achieve a specific objective satisfactorily. It is mandatory to know what didactic strategies include. Based on Jucan's literature review (2020, p.160), in the pedagogical sense, a didactic strategy is any combination of choices intended to promote the optimal growth and development of educational phenomena. It is important to recognize the difference between the didactic strategy and an algorithm, a series of steps that must be followed in a specific order to produce the desired outcome. Besides, these strategies facilitate learning and develop knowledge more efficiently. Therefore, teachers must include creative, innovative, and useful didactic strategies for students to achieve their goals.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

This section will specify the instruments the researcher will use to analyze the students' learning process using the strategy selected during the investigation. The data collection instruments are very important in this investigation since they will help the researcher organize and structure the process and results of the objectives. Therefore, the data collection for this investigation will be structured as follows: an observation checklist, a pretest, the development of class activities by applying gamification, and a post-test. Besides, with the help of these instruments, it is pretended to achieve the investigation goal.

3.5.1 Observation Checklist

For this research, the first instrument to be applied is the observation checklist. This is a document that lists a set of questions and statements for the evaluation of people. Therefore, for this investigation, an observation of the students is needed since it will allow the investigator to see and evaluate specific aspects, issues, and behaviors in the classroom related to the focus of

this research. In addition, it will be a guide for the researcher since it will establish the specific points to be observed and improved to achieve this investigation's goal.

Moreover, using a checklist at the beginning of this investigation can allow the investigator to learn more about the groups working with it and how to work with them in implementing the strategy. Besides, the researcher will observe the class to understand better what is expected of the class, the issues and limitations that the students present regarding their oral skills in English, and how and why they struggle with this.

Therefore, this checklist will contain important aspects to be evaluated in the students, such as language features like pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, intonation, how they can deliver a message, and so on. In addition, it will include aspects related to how they feel regarding the class and the subject, which will evaluate their motivation, engagement, participation, behavior, and confidence. As a result, using a checklist as an instrument is vital for this investigation. In the same way, the observation checklist will be applied at the end of this investigation. This is because, as students are exposed to gamification activities, it will let the researcher know how these activities impact their oral skills and motivation, confidence, and learning.

3.5.2 Pre-task

The second tool to be applied in this investigation is a pre-task. This instrument will allow the investigator to know how students develop their speaking skills while doing it before applying the goal of this research. Furthermore, it will help to identify the aspects they are struggling with and how they react to them. In addition, these instruments will be applied at the beginning of the scholarly year so that the researcher will apply the following activity.

This activity will consist of doing an oral presentation about themselves. The students have to talk about themselves, such as what are their names, ages, favorite subjects, food and places to visit, hobbies, strengths, what they would like to be, etc. Besides, the investigator will give the students a piece of paper that will work as an outline in which they can draw, color, or write important aspects of their speech. In addition, this activity will help the researcher and students familiarize themselves and get to know each other, so it will be helpful to make the classroom more relaxed before applying gamification.

Furthermore, the investigator will score mechanics such as pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and content. Besides, it will measure time management, development, and organization of ideas. Therefore, with the result of the pre-task, the investigator will apply a specific technique to measure elements such as the learners' level, difficulties, and status. Besides, the pre-task results will let the investigator know what kind of English level they have. It is essential to this study since it aims to help students improve their knowledge.

3.5.3 Activities in between

In order to verify the goal of this investigation, which consists of using gamification in different activities to improve oral skills in ninth graders of Colegio Tecnico Profesional de Acosta, the researcher will design three gamified activities regarding the topic of obligations when you own a pet of conversational English. Therefore, they will be applied when the researcher will work directly with the students. Besides, those activities will be a Jeopardy game on the PlayFactile website, an American football game on the Bamboozle website, and a Who am I activity.

3.5.3.1 PlayFactile: Jeopardy

The first activity applied in this investigation is Jeopardy. Before performing this activity, the researcher will teach the students vocabulary about animals and their habitats and how to describe them using adjectives regarding their shape, size, color, etc. After students learn how to describe an animal, with the help of the app Jeopardy, the investigator will give the students the first gamified activity. This activity consists of a trivia game on the PlayFactile website. The investigator will project the board game, which consists of a board with three columns, on the board. Each column has five numbers from the one hundred to the five hundred. Each number will have a question about the topic, so the students will be divided into four groups and choose their counters. Then, each group will select a number and have questions, true or false sentences, and riddles about the description of animals using the adjectives and vocabulary previously learned. Besides, they will have random questions about general knowledge. The students have to answer the question correctly in a complete way to get the point; if a group needs to know the answer, another group can take it. The idea of having not just questions about the topic is to make a more relaxing and fun environment in the class. Therefore, the group that has more points wins.

Moreover, using Jeopardy as a gamified activity can improve children's knowledge while playing. This is because they do not feel stressed about making mistakes or knowing the topic since, because of the nature of the game, everyone can win or lose, so they can also learn through the game because learners have to intrinsically pay attention and observe if the other groups answer or not correctly. Besides, they will see the activity only as a game, not a test. That is why the researcher implements questions about the topic and some random questions and riddles that can relieve some students' tension. As a result, the principal purpose of this activity is to evaluate the students' retention in a more relaxing and joyful way while they are playing and having fun.

In addition, this activity can be effective in an emotional environment because it will increase social interaction, cooperation, and motivation, resulting in improved learning outcomes and speaking skills.

3.5.3.2 Bamboozle: American Football game

The second gamified activity implemented in this investigation is through the website Bamboozle called American Football Game. First, the investigator will explain to the students the negative, positive, and question forms of the simple present on the board. After that, the students will start to play the second activity. Students will also make groups for this game and choose their American football team. Then, each team has to order some words to make a sentence in the negative, positive, or question form in simple present. Then, if the group orders the sentence correctly, they can throw the ball and try to score on the goalpost. For that, the ball will have different launch angles in the game, and a number will represent each angle. Therefore, students must analyze the correct angle to score on the post. If they get it right, they receive a point, but if not, even if they order the sentence correctly, they do not get the point.

As a result, this activity aims to increase and test grammar and vocabulary while enhancing their critical thinking. This is because, in this game, students will not be focused on making the sentences correctly but also on trying to kick the ball at the correct angle to score a point. Therefore, it will also encourage active participation, language development, and motivation, making grammar activities more enjoyable and funnier while they are playing.

3.5.3.3 Who am I activity

The last gamified activity is called Who I Am. Before performing this activity, the researcher will review the animals' vocabulary and the simple present. After that, students will be

divided into groups of four. Then, the investigator will give each group ten images of different animals. Therefore, each student will choose randomly and without seeing a card and hold it on their forehead. Then, each participant had to ask their members questions to figure out his/her animals. For that, they have to use the vocabulary previously learned. Then, when a student is completely sure about her/his animal, he or she has to make a little description of the animal.

In addition, this activity will help me to organize ideas and pay attention to details. Moreover, with this activity, the students will feel that their classmates hear them since everyone will concentrate on the details of their description. Therefore, this activity gives students more confidence when they speak, learn to think, and formulate questions and descriptions in a more relaxing and joyful way. It will increase not only their speaking skill but also their listening skills. Besides, with this activity, the researcher pretends to eliminate the fear of speaking since it will increase the students' motivation while balancing fun and learning.

3.5.4 Post-task

This Post-task will be applied to the students to compare the learners' improvement after and before applying the gamification. Therefore, for this part, the students will have another activity. Before performing it, the researcher will talk about the importance of the laws against animal cruelty and how to care for animals correctly by teaching new vocabulary. Moreover, the investigator will explain conditional zero to them using the vocabulary. After that, the researcher will project on the board the game in Genially called "Complete the sentence" she will divide the class into three groups and place a little bell in front of the students. Then, the students will have to read the incomplete sentence reflected on the board and complete it in a conditional zero sentence. Besides, they will have to complete some of them using the vocabulary previously taught. Therefore, in order to do this, the groups have to reach the bell, so the first one to grab it

can answer, but if they answer incorrectly, the other groups can steal it. The group with the most correct sentences wins.

3.5.5 Final Observation Checklist

Additionally, the investigator will do a final observation at the end of this research. In this case, the same checklist will also be used as in the beginning. Therefore, the implementation of a second observation at the end of the application of the gamified activities will allow the researcher to measure and compare the results to determine if there was a change in the students' behavior and knowledge regarding the improvement of oral skills and the use of gamification as a didactic strategy. As a result, it is essential to use the same format of the checklist. This is because using the same template will allow the researcher to recognize clearly what the students understood and retain with all the gamification strategies developed in classes during the investigation. Besides, it will conclude if it was an improvement or not in the learners and what kind of indicators changed or not.

3.6 Collection data process and data analysis

The location of this investigation will be in the Colegio Técnico Profesional de Acosta. The researcher will be working with ninth graders in the area of conversational English. The first instrument to be applied to this group is an observation checklist. In this step, the researcher will observe the class to identify how the students feel about the language and how they develop in classes. Mechanics include pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, intonation, and how they can deliver a message. Besides, aspects like their strengths and weaknesses, motivation, engagement, participation, confidence, and behavior. All of this will be measured through a rubric.

Moreover, once the observation is done, the investigator will start working with the second instrument, the pre-task. In this instrument, the investigator will start working closer to the students by applying some activities and learning the aspects that they struggled with or did not struggle with regarding speaking. Therefore, the first activity will be an oral presentation about themselves in which they will learn how to outline their thoughts and speak about their likes and dislikes.

The pre-task will allow the investigator to know how students develop their speaking skills while doing it before applying the goal of this research. Furthermore, it will help to identify specifically the aspects that they are struggling with and how they react to them. In addition, these instruments will be applied at the beginning of the scholarly year, so they will be an excellent tool for getting to know each other.

After the pre-task, the researcher will start to implement gamification through a series of activities. The first activity to be applied is a Jeopardy game through the PlayFactile website. For this game, students have to answer questions and riddle about animals, such as their habitats, colors, shapes, etc. Besides, random questions about general knowledge will make the topic and the activity more fun and relaxing. Therefore, this gamified activity intends to reinforce motivation, confidence, retention, and cooperation. This is because the nature of this game allows students to feel more relaxed in committing mistakes or not since everyone can win.

Furthermore, the second gamified instrument will be through the app Bamboozle with its game American Football Game. With this activity, the researcher's purpose is to practice grammar tenses in the simple present while playing so because of the nature of the game, students will learn intrinsically since the real purpose of the game is to try to throw the ball and score on

the goalposts. As a result, the purpose of this is to increase and test grammar and vocabulary while enhancing their critical thinking.

Finally, the last gamified activity will be the game Who I Am with animal pictures. With this, students will increase their ability to organize ideas and pay attention to details. Therefore, it will also help the listening abilities. In addition, it will be useful to enhance their confidence in speaking and giving their ideas to the public. Furthermore, the investigator will apply the post-task to compare if there was an improvement in speaking skills with gamification as a didactic strategy. In the post-task, the students will have another gamified activity by the app Genially, for this, they will learn about animal cruelty and animal rights such as vocabulary and the conditional zero. Then, throughout this app and in groups, the students will do this activity in which they change sentences into conditional zero ones. Besides, they will complete sentences using the vocabulary previously learned. Finally, the researcher will do a final observation checklist using the same rubric of the first observation to recognize what criteria have been changed or not by the use of gamification.

Chapter IV

Data Analysis

The following chapter will consist of the data analysis of this investigation project, which will include all the analysis and collection of the data obtained by applying the previously designed instruments. Therefore, this chapter is important in developing this research since, as the University Van Pretoria (2023) mentioned, "Data analysis is the most crucial part of any research. Data analysis summarizes collected data. It involves interpreting data gathered through analytical and logical reasoning to determine patterns, relationships, or trends" (p. 1). In other

words, it will obtain all the results of the instruments to answer the objectives of this investigation and thus verify if gamification can be an excellent tool to improve students' oral skills. As a result, this chapter will present all the conclusions obtained for the instruments applied to group 9-4 ninth-grade students from the Colegio Tecnico Profesional de Acosta in the first semester of 2024.

4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of the Results

This part will develop the analysis and interpretation of the results. The data and interpretation of the results is reviewing all the data collected in the instruments to obtain relevant deductions and answer the question problems and objectives. Therefore, this part is essential in developing this research since it will help make better decisions, draw conclusions, and give recommendations. In other words, this part will let the investigator know if the instruments and strategies applied had a solution or improvement in the problem presented. Therefore, the data from each instrument for improving oral skills through gamification as a didactic strategy will be analyzed, consisting of the observation checklist 1, the pre-task, the gamified activities, the post-task, and the observation checklist 2.

4.1.1 Observation Checklist 1

The first instrument applied for this research was an observation checklist. This instrument was used to allow the investigator to see and evaluate specific aspects, issues, and behaviors in the classroom before applying the other instruments. Besides, using a checklist was a useful tool since it allowed the researcher to know the group specifically and how they worked regarding their social and academic aspects, as well as the struggles and limitations regarding the subject and oral skills. Therefore, the elaboration of this checklist included aspects and principles of gamification and the improvement of oral skills, for example, language features like

pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, intonation, message delivery, motivation, engagement, participation, class behavior, and confidence.

As a result, the group the investigator worked with was an English class of ninth grade, specifically 9-4, from the Colegio Tecnico Profesional de Acosta. This class was from seven to eleven-twenty a.m. every Friday. The students were sixteen in total, in which nine were boys and seven were girls. Besides, they were between fourteen to fifteen years old. In addition, two students in this group required curricular adequacy. Moreover, the unit seen during the instrument implementation process was Animal Welfare, National and International Standards, in which they had to learn about animal rights and animal cruelty. Furthermore, it is important to mention that the application of the instruments started at the beginning of the scholarly year, as well as the unit.

In addition, seventeen items were included in the checklist for the observation of the ninth graders. These items were designed by considering the most important principles of gamification and the improvement of speaking skills, which are the focus of this investigation. Moreover, the items were assessed with three columns labeled as always, sometimes, and never, so the observation results were easily obtained. Consequently, the results collected by applying the first observation regarding each aspect are as follows:

The first aspect evaluated in the observation checklist is the expression of ideas in a logical order showing an understanding of the topic. This aspect was assessed as "never" because the researcher observed that the students were doing activities that involved speaking skills, such as presentations or dialogues. For example, since it was the first class with the teacher, the first activity in the lesson was about introducing themselves. However, most students needed help to

make a presentation since they struggled to remember what the teacher asked, so she had to repeat what they had to do. Besides, they needed help understanding the meaning of basic questions such as Where do you live? or how old are you?

Furthermore, how to answer them correctly; hence, for this activity, most of them could not deliver their presentation with a good organization of the ideas. In addition, another example that was evident this situation is when they had another oral activity about their favorite animal. For this activity, the teacher asked the students to elaborate a short dialogue in which they had to speak about their favorite animal, they had to work in groups of two or three and make about ten to thirteen lines, as well as answer some questions provided by the teacher, such as what is the name of the animal, its shape, color, habitat, and why you like it. Moreover, the teacher taught how to make a good design conversation and the parts to include in the conversation, such as a greeting or an end. However, most students could have followed the instructions better; one student preferred to do the activity alone, and others did something very different from the teacher's instructions, like not answering the questions and following the conversation format.

Moreover, since the investigation project is focused on improving speaking skills, the investigator evaluated aspects such as appropriate communication with few pauses and hesitation and speaking with minimal pronunciation errors that interfere with the communication. In these two aspects, the students had a "sometimes ." This is because, even though the English levels could be better for most students, it was observed that an effort to speak and pronounce in the target language without many mistakes interferes with communicating and delivering the message. For example, when the teacher asked questions through the lessons, some answered with good intonation and tone. Also, some students corrected themselves while they were speaking. Besides, in activities such as the making of a dialogue, was observed that the

pronunciation of simple words and basic vocabulary were fine for them. They tried to speak without pauses even though they made mistakes or did not know how to pronounce a word. Therefore, only some students made errors with basic words for the level they should have in the language.

Furthermore, aspects such as diverse vocabulary that conveys appropriate meaning and is appropriate for the level were ranting with a "never." This is because, at the beginning of the unit, students have to "review" vocabulary about animals, a subject that elementary students also learn, so ninth-grade students should have at least basic vocabulary regarding this topic already dominated. However, it was not. To be precise, around the lesson, it was many struggles regarding vocabulary, for example, at the beginning of the class, when the teacher asked them about their favorite animals, the most of students did not know how to say the names of their favorite one, also some of them did not know basic words for describe them such as live, grey, forest, fight, etc. Therefore, regarding the target language level they should have in ninth grade, it was found a huge need for more diverse vocabulary among the students.

Another item was the appropriate communication with minimum grammatical errors. In the case of grammar, the observant noticed common mistakes in the learners for the grammar tense they were learning that day. It was seen that they understood the teacher's explanation very well. For example, on the observation day, the teacher taught them how to describe animals regarding their shape, color, size, and characteristics using simple present and the pronoun "it". Therefore, in practice, just a few of the students made mistakes like the wrong use of apostrophes and the structure of the sentences. Besides, when they had to speak throughout the class, some grammatical errors were noticed, such as the use of the s or es and conjugation of verbs. In other

words, these kinds of mistakes presented can be fixed with practice. As a consequence, the rate for the items is "sometimes".

In addition, in the observation checklist, the investigator included aspects regarding the student's behavior with English and the class. First, the aspects of interest and enthusiasm during class and proposed activities, the active work and participation in the activities proposed during class, and the cooperation and the following of the class routine obtained a "sometimes." The reason for this result was that, throughout the whole class, most of the students worked immediately on the activities proposed by the teacher. They like to talk to each other and use their cellphones to play and listen to music. Besides, some of them liked to go outside the classroom with the excuse of going to the restroom or drinking water. They looked lazy and bored all the class while doing the activities, so they avoided making what corresponded in a classroom.

Moreover, two students fell asleep at the beginning of the class and did not pay attention to the teacher. In addition, for some activities, the teacher had to give them extra time to do them since most learners needed more time to finish them or started them at the last minute. Consequently, students could only stay on task sometimes with the assigned activities and the teacher's explanations because she had to call their attention often. However, at the end of the class, they all finished the assigned work. Therefore, this aspect had a "sometimes" since even though it was hard to keep their attention, they still responsibly did the activities proposed by the teacher even at the last minute.

On the other hand, even though students seemed to behave lazily throughout the lesson, it does not mean they were disrespectful. On the contrary, they showed a positive attitude with their

classmates and the teacher during the class. As a result, this item was rated as an “always”. Besides, it was observed that the students have a good relationship with each other, it was not noted that there were arguments or mistreatment between them, nor was a tense atmosphere noted. Although they have not been classmates long, they get along quite well. Therefore, no offenses or bad behaviors were observed, rather, most of them like to work in groups and be very friendly. Likewise, although they are difficult to control and manage, they seemed to respect the teacher, they had a good relationship with her, they paid attention to her, and they never disrespected her; for example, if the teacher said they had to write, they did it without complains. As a result, the classroom had a confident and polite atmosphere.

In the same way, it was noticed that while the teacher was explaining or giving instructions, some students were paying attention to her. They liked to figure out what the teacher was saying and try to converse with her, telling their opinions. Also, they thought it was a game to try to know what the teacher was saying. Moreover, if a student did not understand the teacher's words, others explained it. In addition, due to the topic, they were learning that day, students were attentive to the subject and participated a little, so this aspect had an "always."

In addition, another aspect observed and related to what was mentioned before is the understanding of what the teacher says in the target language. The rating of this aspect was “sometimes”. This is because it was noticed that students understand what their teacher says most of the time. They were attentive to what she was talking about. For example, when she was teaching how to describe an animal, the explanation was all the time in the target language, so it was noticed that students understood her because they did not make any expressions of confusion.

Moreover, when the teacher asked questions about animals, such as what an example of a pet is, Alternatively, tell me an animal with wings. Most students answered it immediately; some confirmed to the teacher if their interpretation of the question was correct, and just a few needed help understanding.

However, when students had to do more difficult activities, such as making a presentation or deeply talking about something, most students did not demonstrate security and confidence when carrying out the activities proposed by the teacher. It was observed that they had more problems when they had to do speaking activities, such as having conversations with classmates and the teacher, than in activities focused on another skill, such as reading or listening. Furthermore, they seemed to feel shy and insecure, so it was evident that they did not feel comfortable speaking in another language because of their lack of vocabulary or knowledge of the target language.

Consequently, almost all of them implement regular Google Translation. For example, the teacher did an activity where they had to write and read descriptions of an animal; then they had to figure it out and answer what animal it was talking about. However, instead of searching in their books for the vocabulary and what they learned about the topic, they preferred to translate all the descriptions. Only three of four students were noticed to have good taste and level of the language, and they were the only ones who demonstrated security and confidence when carrying out the activities easily. For those reasons, the conclusion for this aspect is “sometimes”.

In addition, regarding language features, the investigator made a couple of aspects to evaluate in the observation. First, it was observed how frequently the students used the target language with their classmates and teacher and avoided using their mother language throughout

the class. The answer for both is “never”. The observant noticed that students, on the contrary, frequently used their mother language all the class. It was seen that classmates only spoke in the language if they had some activity involving a conversation, for example, the dialogue activity. However, they did not speak this language at their pleasure and without the teacher demanding it. Even basic questions like Can I go to the bathroom? Can I go to drink water? or can I fill my bottle? or greetings, they did not or could not say them in English.

Besides, only if they were required to speak the target language it was not seen to be motivated to try. Therefore, every time they said something in Spanish, the teacher had to correct them and make them ask again but in the correct language. Furthermore, when the teacher encouraged them to speak with her, some of the students felt slightly shy and uncomfortable, constantly saying that they did not know the language. Just three students had the motivation to speak with the teacher and the observant in English without asking.

As a result, asking questions in the target language when they had doubts was also rare in this group. Indeed, throughout the class, students had many doubts while doing the activities or understanding new grammar content and vocabulary. That is to say, for example, when they did not know the meaning of a word or the name of an animal in English or they did not understand something, all these kinds of doubts were asked to be clear. However, none of those situations gave way to a question in English but in their mother tongue. Therefore, the result for this aspect was a “never” since it did not reflect the motivation of the students to practice and try to make questions in the target language on their own.

On the other hand, the final aspect to be evaluated in the observation is to answer questions in English when the teacher asks. This final aspect was rated with a "sometimes". As

mentioned before, students were not used to practicing the target language around the class. Consequently, they prefer to speak in English rather than like or do not find it necessary to speak in English. However, as the aspect declared, it was observed that most students answered questions in the target language just when the teacher asked and commanded. Besides, if the students knew how to answer those questions correctly in English, they did that, but if not, they answered in Spanish. Therefore, the teacher repeatedly had to help them to say their answers correctly and completely. For example, when the teacher asked them what their favorite animal was, most of them answered it properly. However, some students needed help and asked the teacher how to say a word using their mother tongue, not the target language.

To sum up, the observation checklist was the starting point for developing the rest of the instruments. Therefore, after the observation, the researcher collected all the data in order to notice more specifically the overall scores regarding the aspects for evaluation. The data collected during the observation checklist was transformed into a graph to facilitate its analysis. Therefore, the conclusions are the following:

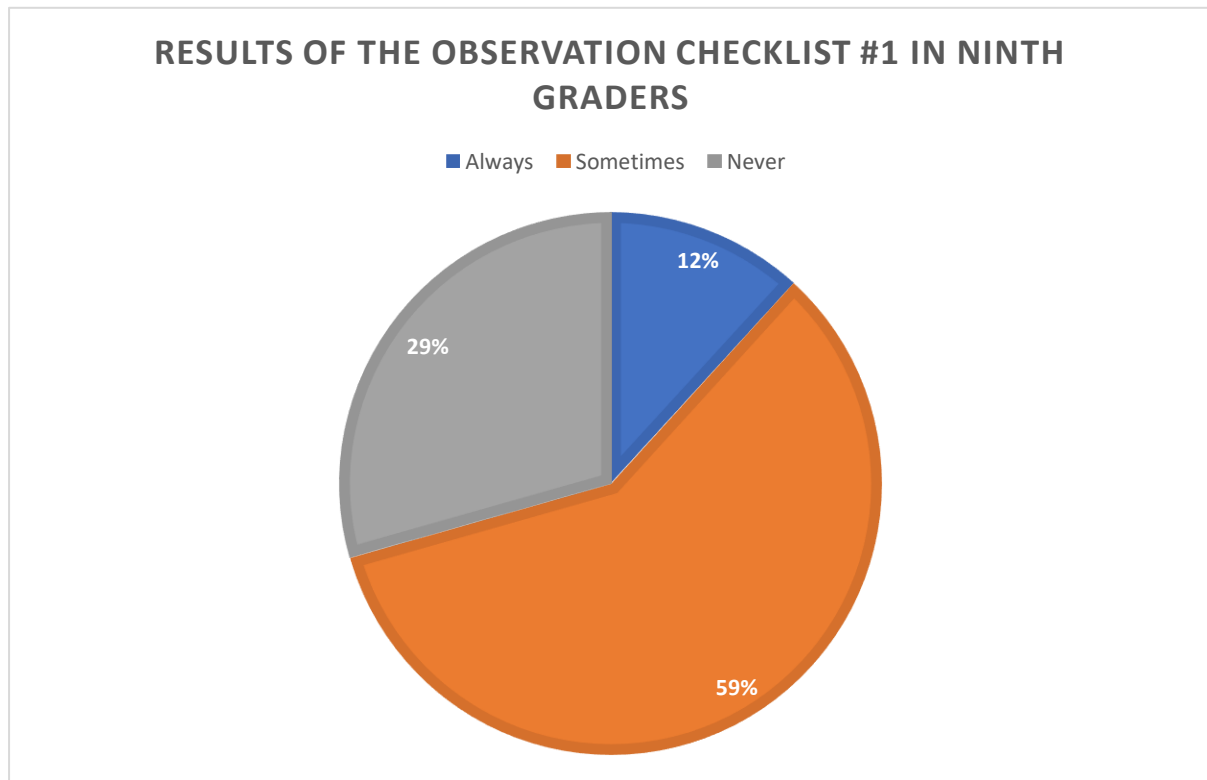
Figure 1

Figure 1 Observation Checklist 1. Source: Researcher's Creation

As stated, figure 1 reflects the observation checklist results for observation checklist #1 in group 9-4. In this group, the students were, in total, sixteen. In addition, the aspects observed in the checklist were seventeen items. These items were designed following the principles of gamification and improving speaking skills. Moreover, the items were assessed using three columns: always, sometimes, and never. Therefore, the column rating by a “sometimes” and represented with the color orange in the figure obtained 59 percent of the space, meaning that ten items out of seventeen were labeled with these criteria. In addition, the aspects that obtained the highest percentage in the figure included speaking principles such as appropriate communicating with few pauses and hesitation, speaking with minimal pronunciation errors that interfere with communication, and appropriate communicating with minimum grammatical errors. Besides, it

included class behavior and gamification and speaking skills principles items such as the expression of interest and enthusiasm during class and the activities proposed, actively working and participation in the activities proposed, demonstration of security and confidence when carrying out the activities, staying on task and work on the activities assigned, cooperate and follow the class routine, understand what their teacher says in the target language, and asking questions in the target language when they have a doubt. As a result, this data collected shows that the students can achieve these aspects but with some difficulties.

Furthermore, the second percentage with the biggest space in Figure 1 is the column labeled “never”, which is identified by the color gray. This column obtained a twenty-nine percent, meaning five out of seventeen items were rated with this. Therefore, the aspects that obtained that rate were regarding principles of speaking skills. These are the expressions of ideas in a logical order, showing an understanding of the topic, the use of diverse vocabulary that conveys appropriate meaning, appropriate for the level, the frequent use of the target language with their classmates and teacher, trying not to use their mother language throughout the class, and the asking questions in the target language when they have a doubt. Therefore, the conclusion of these items showed that students need more practice with their speaking skills in English since it is observed that only some people could achieve these items.

Finally, the last column and the lowest percentage, with just twelve percent in Figure 1, was the "always" criteria represented by the color blue in the figure. This percentage means that only two items out of seventeen were rated with these criteria and the students could achieve them. The following aspects are regarding class behavior: showing a positive attitude with their classmates and the teacher during class and paying attention to the teacher's instructions. These results mean that all the students have a good relationship with their classmates and teachers and

are attentive in some aspects. Therefore, sadly, only those items were rated with an “always”, meaning the class had many problems with their speaking skills since many of them were placed in the other columns. As a result, the data recollected through observation checklist 1 leads the researcher to get to the conclusion about the aspects, issues, and behaviors of the class. Moreover, it will be helpful to establish the specific points to analyze through the implementation of the other instruments. In addition, it allowed the investigator to know the group, their strengths and weaknesses of speaking skills, and how gamification can improve them.

4.1.2 Pre-task

The second instrument applied in this investigation is the pre-task. This instrument was the first activity in which the investigator worked with the students and the first one of the day. Due to this was the students' first class, the teacher, the learners, and the investigator did not know each other. Therefore, it was concluded that they should do an activity where they had to present themselves, which can also work as an ice breaker activity. This activity was also planned to create a more relaxed environment on their first school day. Therefore, this activity consisted of doing an oral presentation about themselves. The students had to make a little presentation talking about what are their names, where they live, how old are they, their fears and strengths, their favorite food, subject, and places to visit, also they had to talk about what they like to do in their free time, and what they would like to study or work. Besides, the investigator gave them a sheet of paper to outline their speeches. In this, they could draw or write words or important ideas, not write all their speeches. In addition, the investigator did the activity as well in order to let the students know her and exemplify what they had to do. However, after the instructions, the researcher gave the students around five to eight minutes to prepare and practice their speeches. Besides, it was used a roulette with their names provided by the teacher to choose their turns.

Therefore, this pre-task was around twenty-five minutes, so after the investigator and teacher introduced themselves in front of the class, the students started to create their speeches. Besides, most of them seemed to understand the instructions and what the investigator and the teacher said. In addition, while the students had to organize their ideas, it was noticed that some did not need to make an outline or use their paper sheets. They preferred to talk. Some just used their phones to translate what they said, and others just waited until the last minute to prepare their speeches. However, it was not a good idea for some of them since they needed to remember the instructions and constantly asked the investigator what else they had to discuss. Besides, they struggled to find the correct words and express their ideas. Then, when they had to deliver their speeches, the investigator used a roulette provided by the teacher with the names of each student in order to call the order of the participants.

Furthermore, while the students were delivering their speeches, it was noticed little mistakes in their pronunciation; the majority of them mispronounced many times the words "live, my, favorite, years, and strengths." Even though the researcher corrected the pronunciation of these words, they still said them wrong. However, they did a good job in their intonation and fluency. They tried to speak naturally. Moreover, regarding grammar features, most of the students committed mistakes in certain parts; for example, they did not remember how to say how many years they had, so instead of saying, "I am fifteen years old," they said, "I have fifteen years old.", also instead of saying "I would like to visit...", they said, "I like to visit...". Besides, it was noticed that they did not remember basic vocabulary such as rice and chicken, reading, football, or swimming. In addition, it was seen that mostly the students who struggled with the vocabulary and grammar, or in other words, the students who had a very basic knowledge of the language, were the students who did not feel comfortable speaking. Those students felt shy while

speaking; they did not feel safe with what they were saying, and they constantly interrupted their speeches to make sure a word was pronounced correctly or if it was right. On the other hand, the students who gave an excellent speech and felt comfortable were the students who did not have trouble with the language. As a result, the data obtained in the pre-task were the following.

Figure 2

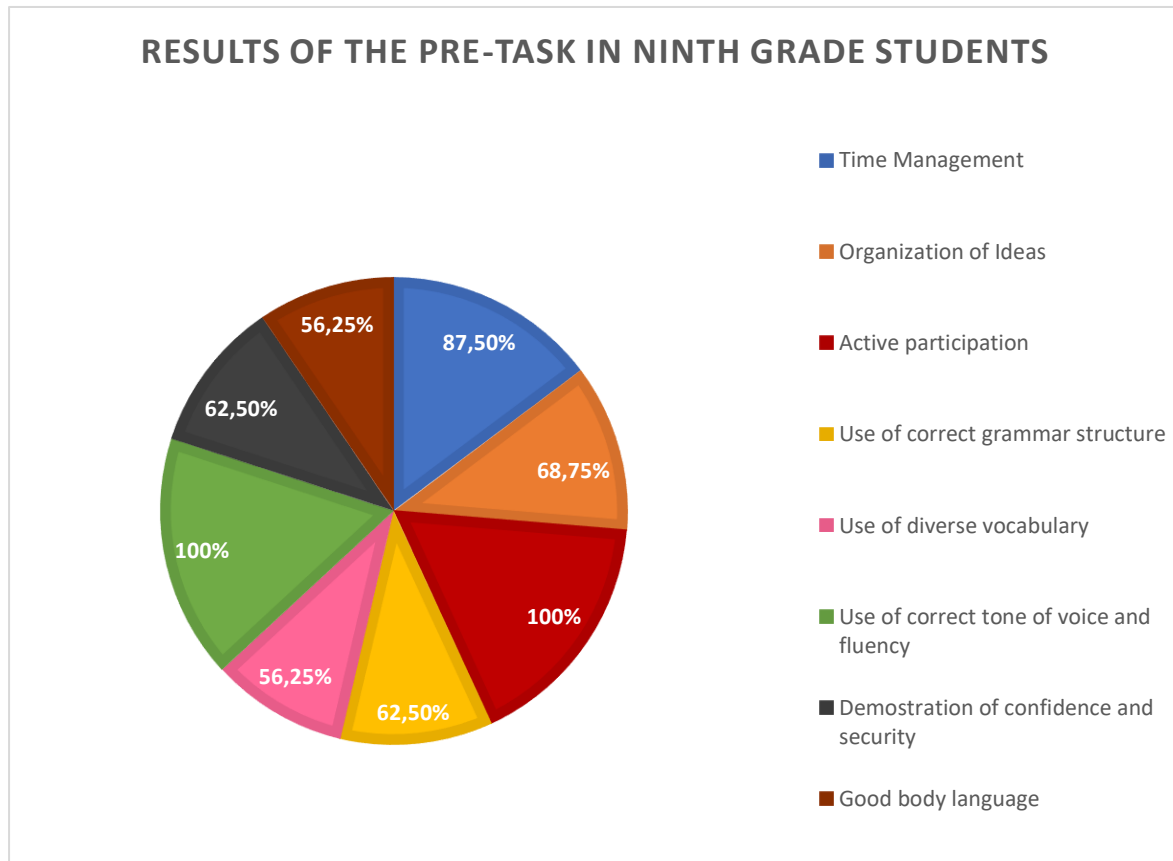


Figure 2 Results of the Pre-task. Source: Researcher's Creation

The previous figure, number two, shows the pre-task results in groups 9-4. All the students were present on the day of this application and recollection of data. It was applied to sixteen students. Therefore, the following results can be found by a deep analysis of the students' speeches' content, grammar, pronunciation, and delivery. As a result, Figure two shows that the aspect of time management, represented by the color blue, concluded that eighty-seven percent of

students applied it correctly. In other words, fourteen students used the time given to prepare for the presentation, and the other two preferred using their phones and talking, doing the activity at the last minute. Besides, the second content, organization of ideas, represented by the color orange, obtained sixty-eight percent, meaning eleven students out of sixteen made an excellent organization of ideas, following the investigator's instructions and resources. On the contrary, four students did not use their papers to outline their ideas, forgot about the topics they had to discuss, and struggled to express their ideas. Moreover, the data characterized by the color red means that all the sixteen students actively participated in the activity; even though some did it at the last minute, all the students delivered their speeches with emotion and respect.

In addition, using a correct grammar structure and conjugation of words, represented by the color yellow in the figure, obtained sixty-two percent, meaning that ten students did not commit grammar mistakes. However, they needed to have used diverse vocabulary while they were speaking, appropriately for their level. Most students needed to remember basic words such as swimming, reading, or football. Therefore, only nine students did it well. Furthermore, in the case of pronunciation features, represented by the color green, all the students did a good job in their intonation, tone, and articulation of words. It was found that just little things needed to be corrected regarding pronunciation. Besides, in the case of speech delivery, it was observed that most of the students demonstrated good confidence and security, specifically ten students. However, six students were comfortable and shy about speaking in public. Their body language also seemed tense. Therefore, even though it was seen that students need more practice in speaking, their performance was good.

4.1.3 Activities in Between

For this investigation project, the goal consisted of using gamification as a didactic strategy to improve oral skills in ninth graders. Therefore, the researcher designed three gamified activities to work directly with the students to achieve this goal. These activities were created regarding using the topic they were learning with the teacher: Obligations when you own a pet: Animal Rights and Animal Cruelty of Conversational English. As a result, those activities were a Jeopardy game on the PlayFactile website, an American football game on the Bamboozle website, and a Who am I activity. Hence, the data recollected in these three gamified activities were the following.

4.1.3.1 PlayFactile: Jeopardy

The first gamified activity applied is the Jeopardy game by the app PlayFactile. For this game, first, the students learned vocabulary about animals and their habitats, and how to describe them using adjectives regarding their shape, size, color, etc. After that, the investigator divided the class into three groups and projected the game on the board. This activity consisted of a trivial game in which the students had to answer some questions and riddles about the topic and general knowledge. In addition, this activity aimed to improve the learners' knowledge while playing by reviewing all the vocabulary they saw about animals and the vocabulary about animal descriptions. Besides, the idea was not to create a tense and stressful environment, such as in a test. As a result, the intention is to evaluate students' vocabulary and grammar in a more relaxing and joyful way without any pressure.

Before doing the activity, the investigator taught the students a PowerPoint presentation about animals, their habitats, and their characteristics, and how to make sentences describing them using adjectives about shape, color, size, etc. Then, some examples were provided for the

students to clarify the topic. After the explanation, the researcher clarified the instructions in English and ensured that all understood. Furthermore, the activity began making three groups, then they had to choose a character for their team provided by the game. After that, they played rock, scissors, and paper to choose the order of the groups.

The students did not know what Jeopardy was, so in the beginning, they did not understand what was going on, but while they started to play, the class mood seemed to change. Besides, when they started to interact with the activity, their motivation to win increased, which also helped in the class participation. Therefore, it was observed that most of them made a huge effort to answer the questions correctly; they tried to remember the correct animal or adjectives learned. It was a lot of class interaction. Moreover, as mentioned before, the investigator implemented random questions about general knowledge, such as what the first planet was or who wrote Romeo and Juliet, so when they started to appear, the students were surprised while laughing.

Furthermore, they understood the topic very well since explaining the questions or riddles was optional and they could work independently. As a result, the investigator also observed important aspects while the students were developing the gamified activities. These include active participation, acquisition of knowledge and vocabulary of the topic, understanding of the topic, increasing motivation and security in speaking and answering questions, achieving the task's goal, and understanding the instructions and concept of the activity. The results from the first gamified activity are the following.

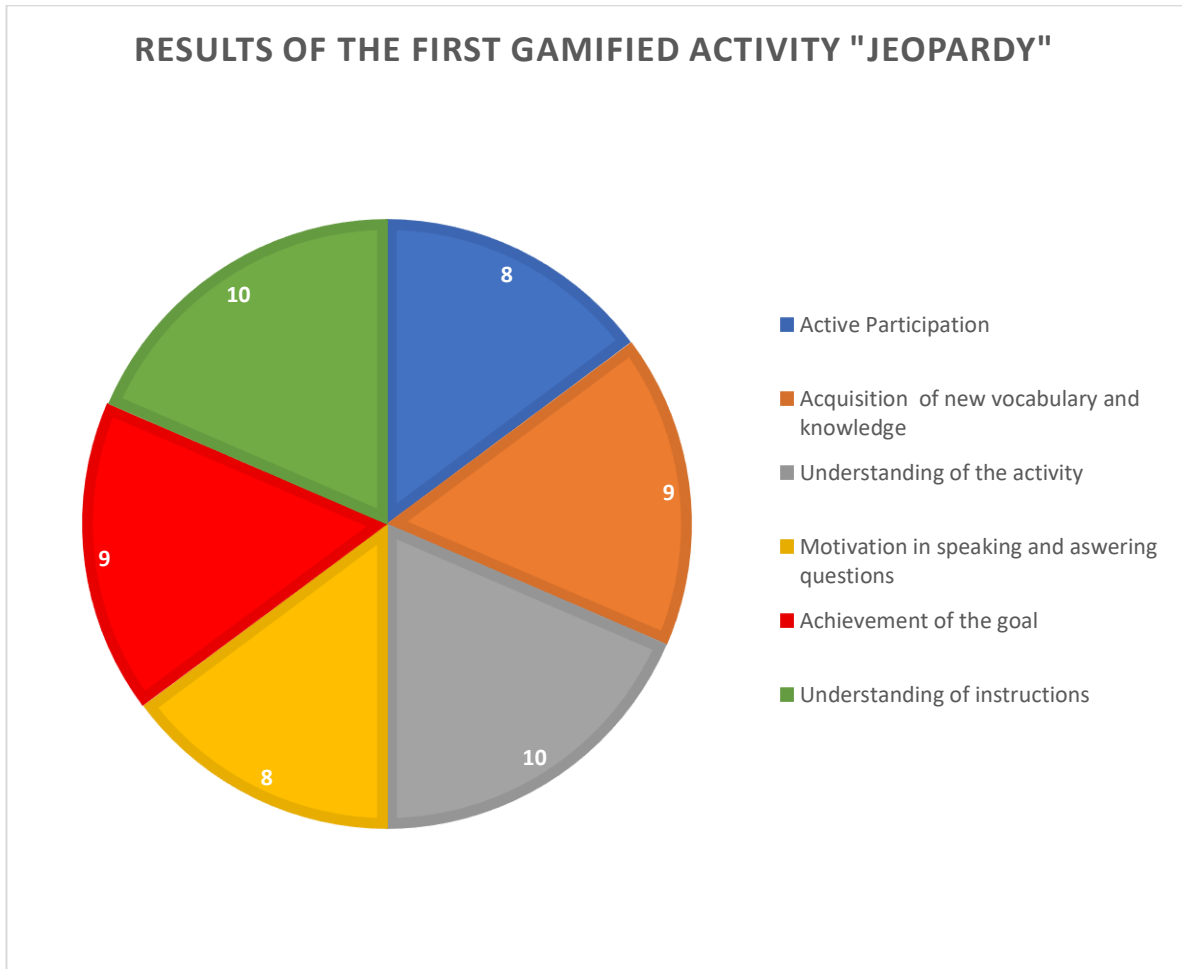
Figure 3

Figure 3 Results of the First Gamified Activity "Jeopardy" Source: Researcher's Creation

In order to obtain complete and deep results from the recollection of the data from the first gamified activity, "Jeopardy,." The investigator rated the previous aspects on a scale of one to ten. Which one refers to "not achieved" and ten refers to "successfully achieved" ? Besides, it is important to mention that on the day of the development of this activity, only two students were absent. Therefore, it was applied to fourteen students. In addition, regarding the results of this activity, the following conclusions were drawn.

First, regarding the development of the activity, the first aspect analyzed was the active participation of the students. The same is represented in Figure three with the color blue. The results obtained in this aspect was an eight out of ten. This is because the students were very excited about this activity; they enjoyed it and even wanted to repeat the game. Besides, they always pay attention to the game and their classmates' answers. It was seen that they enjoyed the environment and had fun doing this activity. However, it was observed that around two or three students per group still needed to answer the questions and riddles. Indeed, they helped me choose the number and pay attention. However, it was noticed that mostly in all the activities, those students were listening and watching the others participating, so the students who actively participated were the same members.

In addition, the second aspect evaluated is the acquisition of new vocabulary and knowledge; the color orange in Figure 3 represents this. Knowing if the student could achieve new vocabulary and understand the topic previously learned. This is because it lets the investigator know if the students understood and could apply the knowledge they learned. For that reason, the righting of this aspect was a nine out of ten. The researcher observed a huge domination of the topic throughout the activity. The majority of students understand every single question and riddle about animals. They use the adjectives very well and can describe and identify animals. Besides, they did not use their phones for translating or books for searching words' meanings.

Nevertheless, as was mentioned before, only some of the students answered the questions and riddles, so it was impossible to see if they all dominated the topic. Moreover, it was noticed that the learners understood the activity's idea and the instructions the investigator explained. However, they were not required to reexplain or translate the instructions to complete the activity

successfully. That is why these two aspects, characterized by grey and green respectively, obtained a ten.

On the other hand, the investigator observed their motivation to speak and answer questions in English without insecurity and shyness. The answer to this aspect was an eight, noticed by the color yellow. Certainly, their motivation and security when the students had to answer the questions hugely increased, and it was observed that they felt confident and confident to answer. Instead, their tone, fluency, and confidence were excellent. Contrary to the pre-task, this is because they were more concentrated and interested in answering and obtaining the points they should have focused on if they were speaking well.

Nevertheless, the score for this item was an eight because this result was seen in the members who were more talkative and participative in the activity, only some of the students. Besides, the students only cared to answer the questions partially, even though the investigator said repeatedly to use complete sentences. Finally, the last aspect observed was achieving the goal proposed for this activity. The result of this was a nine out of ten. This is because, even though they committed some mistakes and not all of them participated, it was observed that the students enjoyed using Jeopardy as a gamified activity. They felt comfortable, relaxed, and entertained while doing the activity. They also were interested in winning the game and answering correctly. In addition, it was noticed that they improved their learning and review and retain vocabulary. Therefore, the data collected in this first activity was great.

4.1.3.2 Baamboozle: American Football

The second gamified activity implemented in this investigation is through the website Bamboozle called American Football Game. For this activity, first, the investigator explained to

the students the negative, positive, and question forms of the simple present, as well as the -s and -es rules. Then, after this explanation, the learners were divided into three groups and chose a name for their teams, and then the researcher projected the activity on the board. Each team had to order words to create a sentence in simple present for this gamified activity. Besides, all the sentences were about animals, such as "The tigers live in the jungle" or "Giraffes do not eat meat". However, the students also had to conjugate the words according to their specific requirements. For example, in a negative sentence, the students had to figure out if they had to put do not or does not, or if it was asked to make a question, they had to order the words in the correct structure. In other words, they had to analyze the kind of sentence the game asks for by seeing the unscrambled words and the signs "+, -,?".

Furthermore, if the group orders the sentence or question correctly, they can throw the ball and try to score on the goalpost. In order to do that, the ball had different launch angles, and a number represented each of them. Therefore, students not only had to analyze the words and make the sentences but also analyze which is the correct angle to score on the post. As a result, this activity aimed to increase and practice grammar while enhancing their critical thinking, motivation, and language development, making the grammar practices more enjoyable and significant.

Therefore, after the researcher's explanation, the teacher gave the students a little practice, and they had to make sentences in this tense to clarify these rules and doubts. Then, after applying and revising this practice, the researcher gave away the gamified activity. First, the investigator explained the instructions in English. Initially, students needed help understanding the instruction but realized how the game was when they started to play.

Moreover, the activity began by creating three groups. The students had to choose their characters, which were the helmets of some American football teams, and choose a name for them. After that, they played rock, scissors, and paper to choose the order of the groups. Then they started to play. While performing the activity, it was noticed that most students still needed help understanding how to make sentences and questions in simple present.

Consequently, they took a long time to answer them, so this game's application lasted. Besides, it was noticed that some of the students did not participate. However, they enjoyed the concept of the activity and the idea of analyzing which number chose to score the ball in the posts. The only negative aspect was that they could not be able to order the sentences in simple present, not because it was boring but because they still needed to understand it. As a result, they could not work independently, and the researchers had to explain again the structure of this tense.

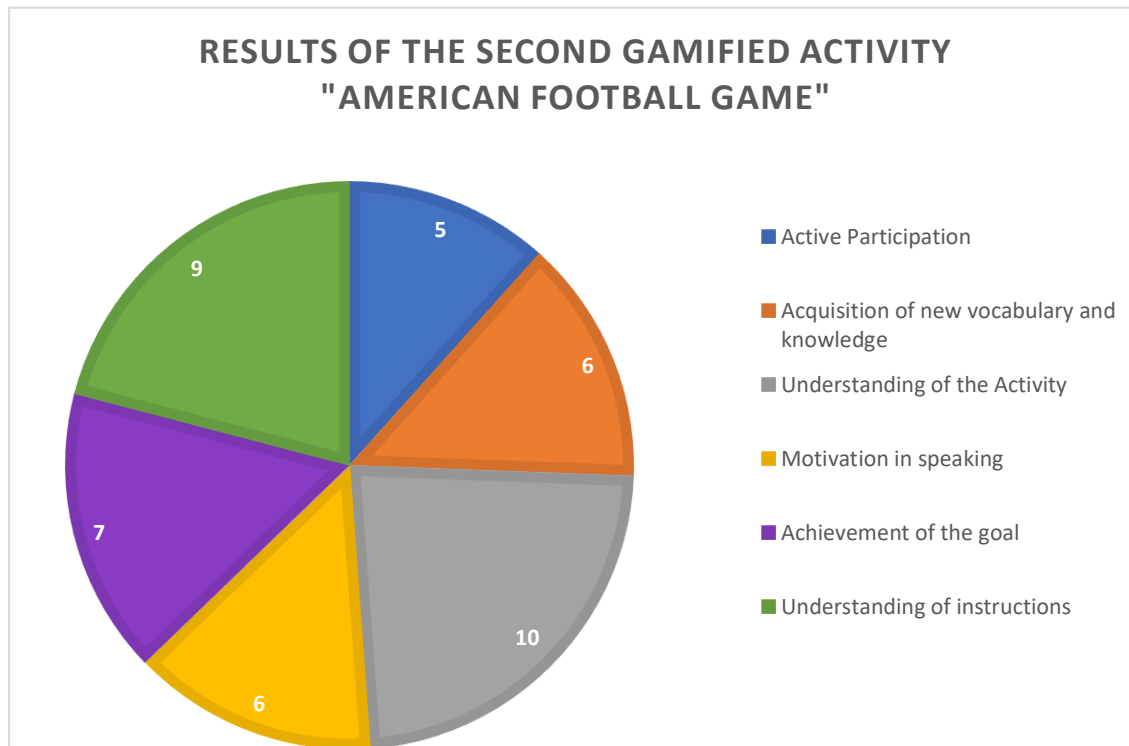
Figure 4

Figure 4 Results of the Second Gamified Activity "American Football Game." Source: Researcher's Creation

The data obtained for the second gamified activity, "American Football" by the website Baamboozle, was recollected using the same aspects as the previous instrument. Besides, it was decided to rate similarly, using a scale of one to ten. Which one refers to "not achieved" and ten refers to "successfully achieved" ?Moreover, on the day of the development of this activity, only two students were absent. Therefore, it was applied to fourteen students. With this clear, the previous aspects were rated like in Figure four because of the following. The first aspect considered in this instrument was the active participation represented in figure 4 with the color blue. The result of this aspect is a five out of ten. This score was because the students needed help understanding the simple present, so the elaboration of sentences was difficult for them, and they

spent a lot of time completing them. Therefore, the activity development could have been more productive and energetic. Besides, five or six students were the only ones who demonstrated active participation. In addition, the application of this activity was at the end of the class, so it was seen that the students needed to be more energized and interested in doing their best.

Moreover, because of these reasons, the acquisition of new vocabulary and knowledge also was not the best, since it was observed that it would be more advantageous for the students to practice much more in the creation of sentences in the simple present in order to practice more about the different rules of this tense and then starting this activity in which they had to order them and analyzed them since it was observed that the concepts of this activity were a lot for them. However, it was observed that by performing this activity, some students started to understand the structure of the simple present, so they also began to participate. Therefore, orange's rating for this feature was a six out of ten. In addition, the students understood the concept and purpose of this activity very well, which is why the score for the color grey aspect is a ten since they were focused on the game. Nevertheless, they started to understand the instructions while they were learning. Besides, the investigator had to reexplain the instructions repeatedly. However, this result was a nine, representing it in the figure with the color green.

On the other hand, students did not feel so motivated and excited to speak and participate in the activity, not because they did not like it but because they needed to understand how to make sentences and questions correctly. Therefore, the interaction with the teacher and the game was low. Only it was seen that all the students spoke when they had to select the number and throw the ball, but when they had to say the answers, it was just some of them. As a result, this activity only partially achieved the goal proposed. Indeed, the students enjoyed this activity's development and concept and enhanced their critical thinking. However, language development

and improving grammar could have been better since they struggled a lot. Therefore, the result for this aspect was a seven out of ten.

4.1.3.3 Who Am I

The last gamified activity for this investigator project is called Who Am I. This activity was intended to review the topics the students saw about animal and their habitats, descriptions of animals and adjectives, and the simple present. Besides, for this game, the internet or a website was optional. In this activity, the students also had to improve their speaking skills. As a result, with the game Who I Am, students were divided into groups of four members. Then, the investigator gave each group some images of different animals. Then, each student randomly chose a card without seeing it and held it on their forehead. While doing that, the learners, in turns, had to ask questions, and the others had to explain how the animal was, so the students had to guess their animals. If students figured out their ones, they had to explain why they thought. Besides, they had to take another card, and if the group finished them all, they could exchange them with another group. Therefore, the principal goal of this activity is to give students more confidence when they try to speak, eliminate fear and anxiety by playing, and learn to organize ideas and formulate questions and descriptions.

It was observed that they enjoyed this activity, laughed, and had a good time. Besides, they did a great job describing their animals to their classmates using strategies like mimics and sounds and figuring out what the students were saying. Besides, they remembered most of the vocabulary, like animal names and adjectives, in the target language, so they demonstrated dominion in this topic, even if they made some grammatical mistakes. In addition, some students had to ask the teacher or investigator how they say a word in English, but it was rare. Therefore, it was noticed that they tried their best to speak, listen, understand, and play, making an enjoyable

environment. However, some of them still tried to use their mother language, so the investigator had to tell them not to use it several times. Furthermore, others needed to focus more on the activity; they still used their phones or talked. As a result, the activity development was assessed regarding the concept and goals, so the recollection and conclusions of this data are as follows.

Figure 5

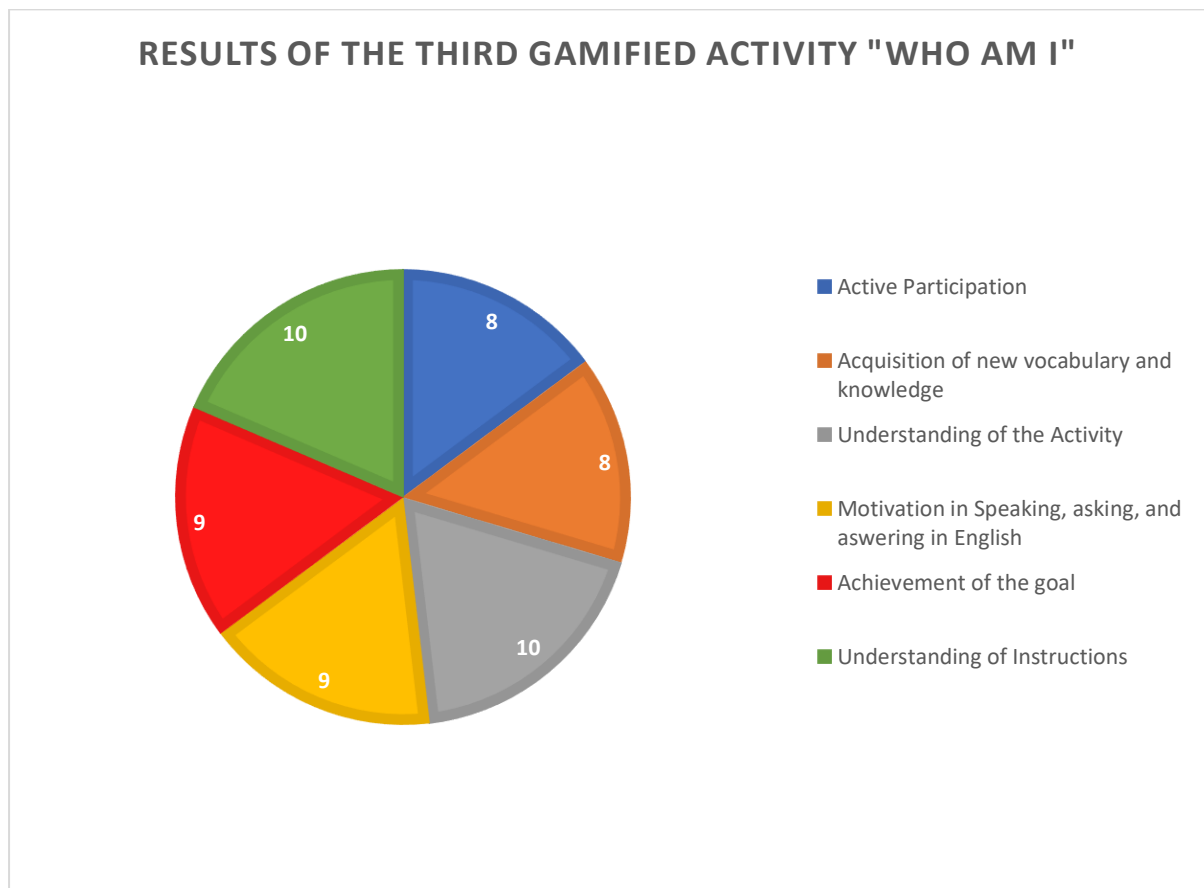


Figure 5 Results of the Third Gamified Activity "Who Am I." Source: Researcher's Creation

In the previous figure, the data collected for the development of the last gamified activity is observed. The aspects were analyzed using a scale of one to ten regarding the achievement.

The same strategy was used for the other two activities. Moreover, no students were absent in this

activity, so it was applied to sixteen students. With this clear, the data collected and the reasons why for their scores will be detailed. First, in the development of this activity, the students were noticed to be very participative; most of the time, they followed the instructions, used the target language, and interacted with their classmates. They felt engaged with the activity and cooperated with the concept of it. However, only some students had this behavior since others stayed on their phones, spent much time outside the classroom, and did not care about the activity. Therefore, the result of this aspect was an eight out of ten. However, the result was also an eight regarding the acquisition of new vocabulary and knowledge, represented by the color orange. This is because, although most students had an excellent domain of the topic and did a really good job in the activity, many still used their phones to translate what they had to say. Moreover, some others needed help organizing their ideas and remembering the vocabulary that they were working with. Nevertheless, instead of asking the teacher or the investigator their doubts, they preferred to speak in Spanish.

Furthermore, students understood the activity and instructions very well. Most of them followed the concept and stayed on task; there was no doubt regarding what they had to do or not. Besides, they understood the purpose of this activity, which was to practice their speaking skills and have fun. That is why these two aspects obtained a ten. Although some were not interested in the activity or did not want to practice the target language, many felt motivated to speak, asking creative questions to guess their animals or answer them quietly. There were not any of them who felt shy or nervous to speak.

As a consequence, this aspect obtained a nine out of ten. In addition, the achievement of the goal got the same score. This is why almost all the students achieved the goal of this activity, as the

majority of them felt comfortable speaking and implementing the vocabulary and structures previously learned.

Figure 6

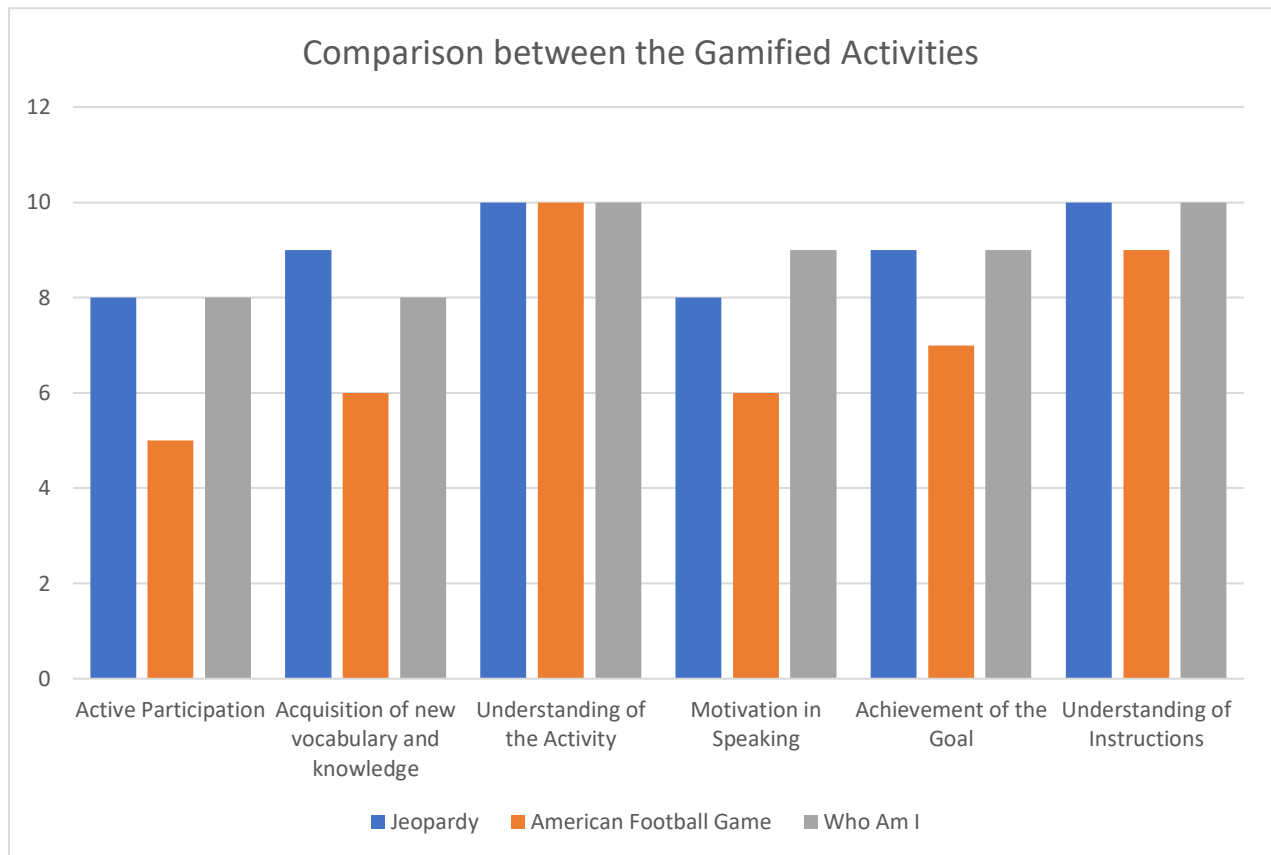


Figure 6 Comparison between the Gamified Activities. Source: Researcher's Creation

In the previous figure, the investigator implemented a comparison between the three gamified activities and the aspects evaluated for the collection of the data and the development of the students through each instrument. Therefore, it is observed that the students participated more actively in the first and last activity than in the second one. The Jeopardy game was much more helpful for acquiring vocabulary and knowledge. Besides, it was observed that the students understood the concept of these activities very well. However, their motivation and confidence to

speak increases with the Who am I game more than the American football game. In addition, the students had the same percentage of achievement of the goal in the first and last game, but sadly, in the case of the second activity, the score went down, as well as the understanding of the instructions. In summary, the students needed help achieving these aspects in the football activity. However, it was analyzed that they struggled with that because of the topic they were learning.

4.1.4 Post-task

After the application of the three gamified activities, it was necessary to make a post-task. This is because, with a post-task, the investigator could compare the improvement the learners had before and after the application of gamification. As a result, the students had another gamified activity for this part. After this explanation, the investigator used the website Genially to perform the post-task. In this activity, the students played the "Complete the sentences" game. Therefore, the class was divided into three groups, and the researcher projected the game on the board and placed a little bell in front of the students. For this game, the students had to read some incomplete sentences and will have to complete them in a conditional zero sentence. Besides, they will have to complete other ones with the vocabulary previously learned. In addition, it is important to mention that the investigator designed fifteen sentences in total, eight regarding conditional zero and seven about vocabulary. Therefore, each group had to reach the bell, so the first one who grabbed it could answer.

Before performing this activity, the researcher explained how to make sentences in the conditional zero, using vocabulary related to the topic, for example, "If I mistreat an animal, I have legal consequences" or "If I don't feed my cat every day, it gets sick". After the explanation, the students practiced with their teacher to clarify and review it. With this clear,

while performing this activity, the students made their groups, and when the investigator gave the instructions, they understood the idea of this activity. It was observed that most students liked and got excited about the idea of competition in which they had to “fight” for the bell. Besides, many students felt very enthusiastic and motivated to participate, showing attention to the investigator's instructions, the game, and their classmates' answers, everyone wanted to win. Therefore, it was seen that the dynamic of the game was very engaging for them. Moreover, the students did a good job developing the activity, making it smooth, and answering the sentences quickly, showing control and comprehension of the topic, grammar structure, and vocabulary.

However, regarding the learning part of this activity, it was observed that some of the students did not participate in completing the sentences, instead, they just contributed to reaching the bell, so it was a time in which some of them were distracted, starting to talk to each other, using their phones, or just watching the others participate. Furthermore, some of them did not implement their speaking skills in the target language most of the time, they just answered the sentences in English, and then they spoke in Spanish. On the other hand, regarding their speaking skills, it was observed that they did a good job with their pronunciation, intonation, and tone. Even though they committed some grammar and pronunciation mistakes, they still felt confident and secure in saying their answers. As a result, the data obtained in the pre-task were the following.

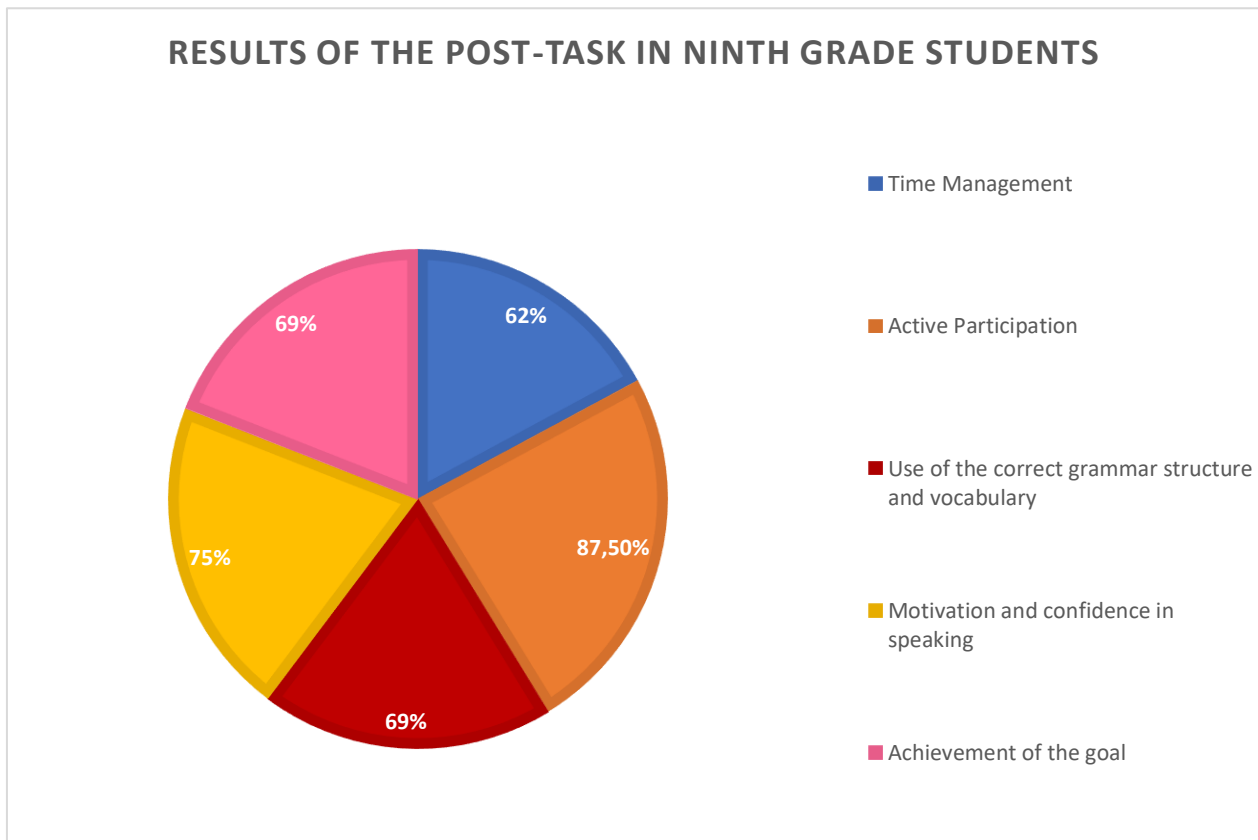
Figure 7

Figure 7 Results of the Post-Task in Ninth Grade Students. Source: Researcher's Creation

In the previous figure seven, the recollection and analysis of the data for the post-task are observed. Therefore, the results are the following. The first aspect evaluated was time management, represented by the color blue; this consisted of assessing the response time and analysis of the sentences. In this case, the result for this aspect was that sixty-two percent of the students achieved this goal, which means that ten out of sixteen were more quickly in completing the sentences showing excellent topic dominance than the rest. Besides, the active participation was eighty-seven percent, meaning that fourteen students participated well throughout the activity. By answering questions or supporting their classmates, almost all students demonstrated

attention and engagement to the dynamic and the researcher. They followed and comprehended the instructions and the concept of the activity.

On the other hand, regarding the learning content of this activity, first, the correct grammar structure and vocabulary, in other words, the correct use of the conditional zero, and the animal cruelty and animal right vocabulary was achieved in almost all the students. As Figure seven shows, sixty-nine percent of the learners achieved this goal satisfactorily, which means that eleven out of sixteen correctly completed the game's sentences. In other words, this result was obtained by the number of students who completed the sentences and the amount of correct and incorrect ones. Therefore, it was observed that these students correctly elaborated five sentences in conditional zero form out of eight, and six sentences with vocabulary out of seven.

Furthermore, represented by the color orange, it was seen that seventy-five percent or twelve students felt motivated to speak in the target language. This was mostly when they had to answer. As a result, it was observed that they did not feel shy in trying to speak. Instead, they spoke with confidence, energy, and a good tone; even though they committed some pronunciation or grammar mistakes, they did their best to speak. However, only four students did not try to use the target language throughout the activity, they preferred to speak in Spanish. As a result, seventy-nine percent, which means eleven out of sixteen of the students achieved the goal of the task. This is because it was observed that five students truly had problems understanding the instructions, completing the sentences with a correct structure, the meaning of the vocabulary, and understanding what the investigator said. Besides, those students were not deeply engaged with the activity; most of the time, they were using their phones, talking with others, and just watching the other classmates participate, so they also did not demonstrate interest and emotion.

4.1.5 Observation Checklist 2

The last instrument applied in this investigator project is a final observation checklist at the end of the applications of the instruments. This is because implementing a second observation allowed the researcher to measure and compare the results to determine if there was a change in the students' behavior and knowledge. In addition, to compare the results and to know easily how the improvement was, it was necessary to use the same checklist template. Moreover, no one was absent in the observation, so it was applied to the sixteen learners. Thereby, the seventeen aspects in the checklist template had the following results.

The observation started with the teacher introducing the topic of animal welfare and national and international standards. Therefore, for the first aspect evaluated, through the class, the students could express their ideas logically, showing an understanding of the topic, so the rating for this is "sometimes." This is because, for this class, the students were exposed to try to give their opinion; for example, the teacher told the students about animal cruelty around the country and asked them if they knew another case and what they would do to prevent it. As a result, some students did an excellent job explaining their thoughts, using complete sentences most of the time, and always maintaining eye contact. However, some struggle more since they forget vocabulary or need to learn to express their ideas in English. Besides, their communication did not have a lot of pauses and hesitation; the most of them tried to speak smoothly, so this aspect had the same rate. In addition, pronunciation errors did not seem to be something that hindered them since in the observation, like the rest of the previous classes, they never had a high error response, that is why in the activities proposed that day by the teacher, the students only had some minimal errors that did not intervene with their communication, therefore, the score for this item is "always". Besides, the investigator observed a huge increase in their vocabulary regarding

their learning topic. Through the class, students had to use all the vocabulary seen in the previous classes such as animal names, characteristics, and adjectives. As a result, almost all of them remembered them; just a few had problems implementing this vocabulary, so the conclusion for this is an "always."

Furthermore, regarding their class behavior, students could understand the teacher easily. They did not pay attention to her, so they had an "always" for this criterion since they were always interested in paying attention to the instructions. Nevertheless, the real problem here is that they mostly like to talk to each other, use their phones, and listen to music, so they were so distracted in the development of activities or writing on the board. In other words, for instructions and explanations, they paid attention, but for the achievements of activities or writing for the board, they were too slow. That is why, the students did not express much interest and enthusiasm during the class and did not work actively in their practices and activities since they were easily distracted. Therefore, the aspects of interest and enthusiasm during class and the proposed activities, the active work and participation in the activities proposed during class, and the cooperation and follow to the class routine had a "sometimes" since that reasons made difficult to cover all the topics proposed for the day. Moreover, these behaviors also affected the fact that they stayed on task and worked on the assigned activities, so this item had the same score.

On the other hand, this behavior did not mean that they were disrespectful. On the contrary, as mentioned in observation one, the investigator noticed that they are very respectful, cooperative, and collaborative. They like to work as a team and help each other. Besides, they did not seem to disrespect the teacher or their classmate.

Consequently, they always showed a positive attitude with their classmates and the teacher during class. In addition, throughout the lesson, the students were exposed to many speaking activities such as discussions or presentations. However, while doing these kinds of activities, a huge increase in security and confidence was noticed. For example, the teacher gave an activity in which they had to talk about the responsibilities of owning a pet and why these responsibilities are so important in our country, also the teacher asked for opinions when she explained the cases of animal abuse, so even though they struggled with not knowing how to say certain words in English, they still tried to say their opinion and explain their ideas, the majority of them did not feel shy or nervous to speak in front of the public and realized their mistakes. Due to this, this item was rated with an “always”.

However, it was observed that the students still did not try to use the target language, at least the teacher's commands; they still used their mother language a lot except for the development of their activities. Besides, just three students tried to say to the teacher using English without asking. Consequently, the frequent use of the target language with their classmates and teacher without using their mother tongue throughout the class was rated with a "never". Furthermore, the majority of the students understood very well what their teacher said, it was not necessary to reexplain or translate something. Besides, they like to listen to the teacher and try to interpret their words. However, this class still has students who need help with the language and have very basic knowledge, so it is difficult to understand the teacher, and some other students had to explain them. In addition, in the same way, there was an increase in the aspects of asking questions in the target language. This is because it was noticed that on this day, more students tried to ask the teacher questions when they had doubts and asked to go to the

restroom or drink water. They were also interested in asking the teacher how to say it correctly. Therefore, those aspects obtained a “sometimes”.

Moreover, answering questions in English when the teacher asks got an "always". This is because there was increased participation among the students, so every time the teacher asked something, they always tried to answer it in the target language. For example, at the beginning of the class and as a warm-up and review, the teachers asked the students if they had pets, how many, what their favorite animal would be, and how they care for them. Therefore, most students were motivated to answer her in the target language. Just a few simple and short answers like "yes" or "not ." However, as the aspect mentioned, most students only answer questions when the teacher asks. As a result, the following graphic will describe the results of the aspects for the second and final observation.

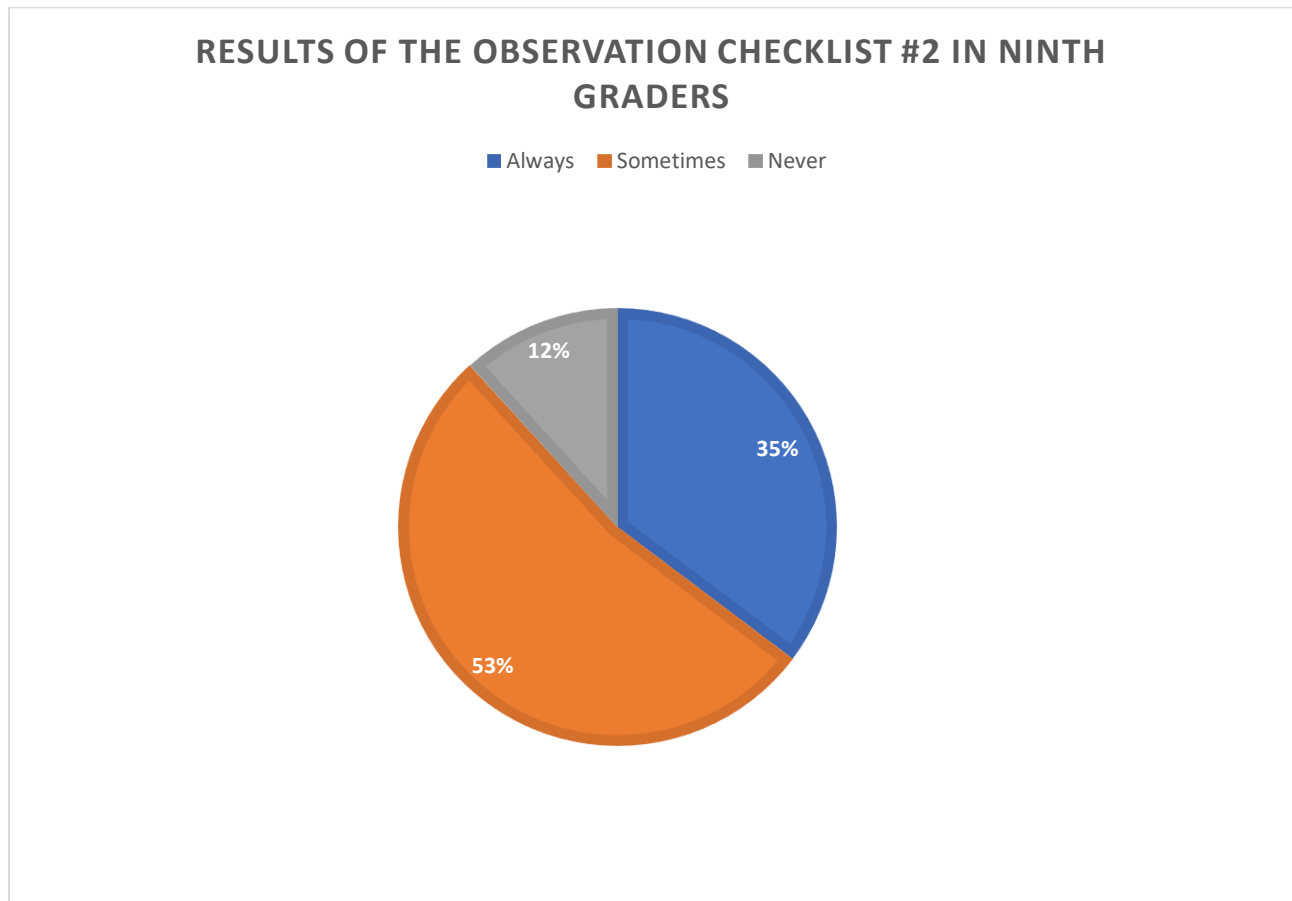
Figure 8

Figure 8 Results of the Observation Checklist 2. Source: Researcher's Creation

In the previous figure, number eight, the recollection and analysis of the data obtained in the final observation of this investigation project is observed. For that day, the students were, in total, sixteen. In addition, this observation used the same checklist template, which consisted of seventeen items. Moreover, in order to evaluate the results of these items, they were assessed with three columns: always, sometimes, and never. Therefore, it is concluded the following. First, the criterion that involves the most space and is represented with the color orange in Figure number eight is "sometimes". This result obtained fifty-three percent in the graphic, meaning that

nine items out of seventeen were evaluated with this criterion. Those aspects include speaking skills and gamification characteristics such as content, grammar, students' development, and behavior. Therefore, this evaluation was for the expression of ideas in a logical order showing an understanding of the topic, appropriate communicating with few pauses and hesitation and with no grammatical errors, expressing interest and enthusiasm during class and the proposed activities, actively working and participating in the activities proposed during class, stay on task and work on the activities assigned, cooperation and follow of the class routine, understand what their teacher says in the target language, and ask questions in the target language when they have a doubt. In addition, the conclusion for rating them as "sometimes" was that some students achieved this goal, but many were still in the process of accomplishing it.

Furthermore, the second criterion with the most space in the figure was "always". This is because thirty-five percent of the aspects were evaluated with this standard. The students obtained an always in six aspects. Those were related to speaking, behavior, and motivation. For example, speaking with minimum pronunciation errors that interfere with communication, using diverse vocabulary that conveys appropriate meaning; appropriate for the level, showing a positive attitude with their classmates and the teacher during class, demonstrating security and confidence when carrying out the activities proposed, paying attention to the teacher's instructions, and answering questions in English when the teacher asks. As a result, it is seen that most students increase in many features and achieve these aspects. In addition, the last criterion noted in this observation that only obtained twelve percent in the graphic was the "never". The recollection and analysis of the data have demonstrated that only two aspects had this conclusion. That means that the students truly improve their abilities. Therefore, the only aspects in which they had to practice much more consisted of frequently using the target language with their

classmates and teacher and not using their mother language throughout the class. This is because all the students still need to achieve them.

Figure 9

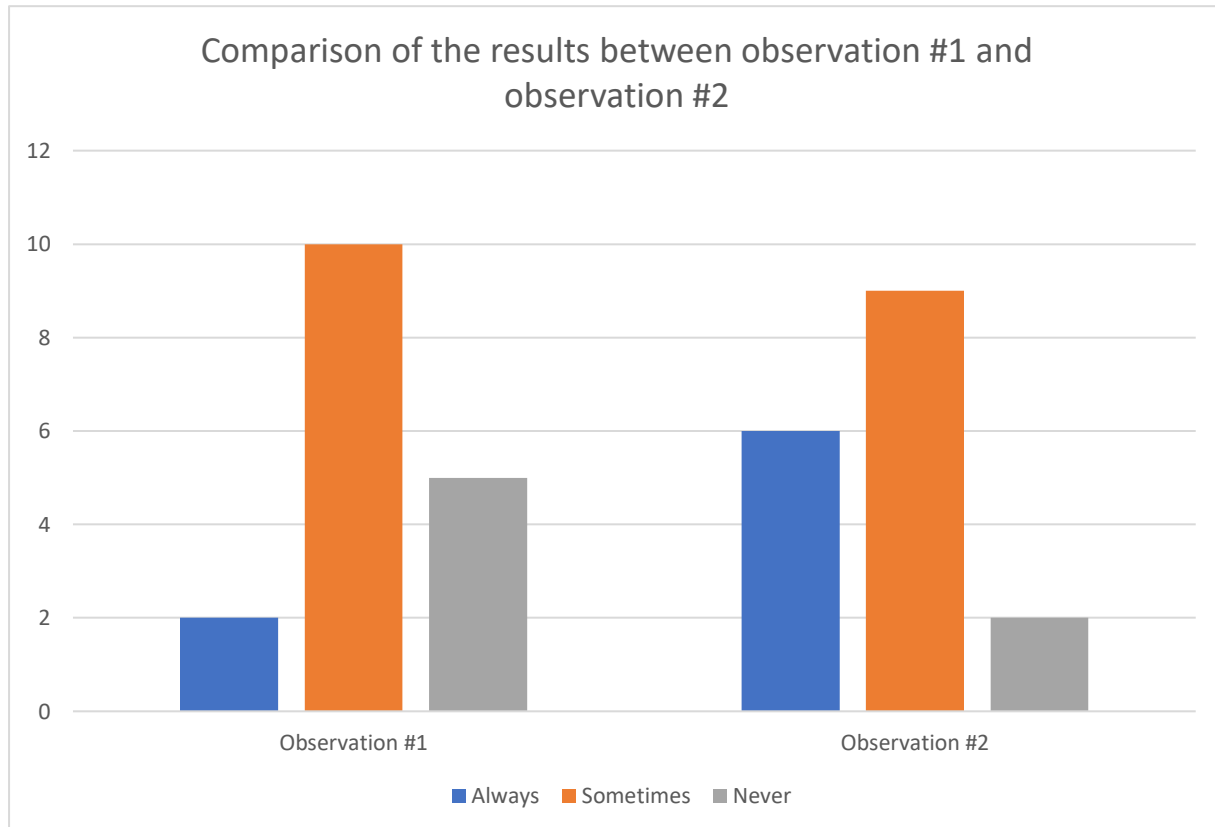


Figure 9 Comparison of the Results between Observation #1 and Observation #2. Source: Researcher's Creation

In the previous figure, number nine, the investigator compared the results of the checklist of the first observation with the second one to observe, more specifically, the changes that students had through the application of the instruments. In the graphic, it is analyzed that the first criterion “always” hugely increases after applying the activities. Therefore, in other terms, a huge percentage of students improved aspects regarding speaking, content, behavior, and motivation. Besides, for the second criterion, “sometimes,” the data is almost the same; the difference is with

only one aspect. However, students must improve many aspects since the majority still needs to achieve them. Finally, the last criterion is the “never”. In the case of never, the percentage of tagged aspects decreased. In other words, in the beginning, the results showed five aspects in the category; however, at the end of the investigation, there were just two aspects the students still needed to achieve.

In summary, this chapter of the investigator project showed the data and analysis obtained for applying the instruments. Therefore, the investigator concluded that even though the results were not too notorious, it is essential to mention that the time to apply them could have been better. For that reason, taking into account that aspect, the students improved a lot in a short time, they felt more comfortable, relaxed, and engaged in performing speaking skills. Consequently, gamification can bring many benefits to students, making their learning much more interesting, entertaining, and significant, making the acquisition of knowledge easier.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations

The teaching and learning of English is of great importance for education; however, although it is an essential subject in the educational process, many students do not like it and find it difficult to understand it, which is why it is the duty of a teacher to use more motivating and attractive didactics strategies that awaken interest in learning the foreign language. Therefore, gamification has been an innovative and effective strategy in recent years. As a result, the development of this research is focused on this strategy to treat one of the most difficult skills to acquire: speaking. As a result, in this final section, the researcher will mention the conclusions obtained in the applications of the instruments designed by the use of gamification and focused

on the improvement of oral skills, which were an initial observation, a pre-task, three gamified activities, a post-task, and a final observation. In addition, those instruments were applied to ninth-grade students of the group 9-4 from the Colegio Tecnico Profesional de Acosta in the first semester of 2024. This group was a conversational English class with sixteen students, including boys and seven

; before it starts, it is essential to mention the importance of this chapter for this investigation project. Therefore, according to Herrity (2023), "A conclusion, addresses the "so what" by clarifying the point of the essay and offering the reader a solution, question or insight into the subject matter that reiterates why they should care." As a result, this final part is vital since it tends to analyze all the elements obtained to evaluate the overall significance of this research and give this investigation an end. Moreover, the researcher will include recommendations and comments for future investigators or people who want to implement this strategy in their classrooms.

5.1 Purpose of the Conclusion

As mentioned before, conclusions are essential to ending a research project. This allows the reader to understand why the investigation is important. Besides, it will discuss and analyze the results of the data obtained by applying the instruments and help solve problems. In addition, as the University of Southern California (2023) mentions, "The conclusion is intended to help the reader understand why your research should matter to them after they have finished reading the paper.". Therefore, the implementation of a conclusion is a very important and required part because it declares the final answers to achieve the principal goal of the investigation and the final opportunity to demonstrate the importance of developing it. Besides, it leaves the reader with a clear understanding of what was tested and discovered throughout the investigation, so it

will also be helpful to provide a basis for future research. As a result, a conclusion is not merely a summary of points or a restatement of the research problem but an analysis of key points.

5.2 Conclusions

The following part will explain the conclusions for each specific objective. Those are based on the analysis and interpretation of the results of each instrument applied in this investigation, implemented in ninth graders of Colegio Tecnico Profesional de Acosta. Besides, those objectives were designed to improve and strengthen speaking skills using gamification as a didactic strategy. Therefore, the conclusions for each objective are the following.

5.2.1 To identify the main difficulties presented in the group regarding oral skills

Around the world, difficulties in learning a foreign language are something a teacher cannot eliminate; however, they can be improved. In the case of this investigation, the principal intention is to help all the students overcome their fear and insecurity of speaking, which is one of the most difficult skills to dominate and one of the reasons why it cannot be obtained. Therefore, this research aimed to strengthen oral skills in the English language through the implementation of gamification. Various instruments were developed to achieve this goal. However, the first and most important step is to identify the main difficulties that the group presents regarding this skill. This is because this is the base and pillar to carry out the other factors in order to reach the expected results. As a result, the strategies or instruments designed to achieve this objective were developing and implementing an observation checklist and a pre-task.

The first instrument applied to this conclusion's result was an observation checklist. With the implementation of an observation checklist, it was useful for the investigator to see and evaluate specific aspects, issues, and behavior in the classroom regarding oral skills and then

learn more about the group. Besides, while observing, the researcher used a checklist that detailed important aspects regarding the principles of improving speaking skills and gamification to identify the possible problems the students had. As a result, it was designed with seventeen items, including features such as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, intonation, message delivery, and the target language's use. Moreover, it included aspects of their feelings regarding the class and the subject, which will evaluate their motivation, engagement, participation, behavior, and confidence. In addition, the items were assessed in three columns: always, sometimes, and never.

Furthermore, the second instrument applied in this investigation, which noticed and collected some other issues in the students' speaking skills, was the pre-task through an activity. For this activity, the learners were provided with an oral exercise. In other words, they had to do an oral presentation about themselves using only an outline as a guide. The students had to talk about their likes and dislikes, for example, favorite subjects, food, places to visit, hobbies, strengths, what they would like to be, etc. Therefore, aspects regarding their speaking delivery were observed, such as time management, organization of ideas, participation, grammar structure, vocabulary, tone, pronunciation, and behavior. Moreover, these two instruments were applied to sixteen students at the beginning of the scholarly year.

Therefore, through the observation and the pre-task, it was possible to conclude that even though a few students struggled with pronunciation, tone, and intonation of words, the biggest problem presented was the need for more vocabulary and knowledge about the language. It was found that most of them needed to remember simple words they were supposed to know, such as how to say their ages and what they liked or did not like to do. Moreover, they also needed help with the grammatical structures of sentences, such as the verb to rule. Consequently, when the

students had to speak, they needed help organizing ideas. They could only express their opinions and ideas by asking the teacher if what they said was right. Also, they felt shy and insecure about expressing themselves; they needed to feel sure if a sentence was well-structured, if their words were correct, or if their message was understandable.

Besides, because of those reasons, the students' emotions were also affected; it was seen that through the activities proposed by the teacher, the learners felt very anxious, stressed, and pressed to be exposed to speaking in a language that they did not feel comfortable with. Therefore, these insecurities also bring issues such as the lack of active participation and motivation. This is because it was seen that the majority of students felt bored about doing some oral activities and participating in using the target language frequently around the class. Furthermore, their motivation, excitement, and concentration in practicing were slow. Most of the time, students were bored with doing their activities, but in the case of speaking, it was seen that most of them did not like to do them. Besides, even though the teacher always spoke to them in the target language, the students did not feel the necessity to do the same; they did not have the emotion to practice this language, and most of the time, they preferred speaking in Spanish. As a result, they forgot basic words or expressions because of the lack of practice. On the other hand, it was not observed that they had the same behavior in developing other activities focused on other skills; in fact, they demonstrated being relaxed in doing those activities instead of speaking. Therefore, it was clear that the didactic activities regarding oral skills need to be improved.

5.2.2 To apply different gamification tools to improve oral skills in the class

Education has been an essential and valued part of living. Therefore, throughout the years, many strategies have been implemented for transforming education into something more meaningful. This is why the creation of gamification. Many experts worldwide have noticed that

learning by playing has psychological and educational advantages. In other words, teachers who implement this strategy have noticed that their students learn more easily and satisfactorily since they find the class most motivating, attractive, and significant. Besides, while playing, they put away the tension, stress, and anxiety that must be felt in a regular classroom with basic practices. Therefore, this strategy puts their classes in a more relaxing and enjoyable environment without making them feel frustrated about failing. In addition, because of the nature of gamification, it will boost the students' emotions in that they can also feel secure in committing or not making mistakes, as well as in interaction, participation, and collaboration.

Consequently, this investigation aimed to break the barrier that students have when they have to speak another language. Therefore, this work proposed strengthening that the oral skills in English of ninth-grade students of Colegio Tecnico Profesional de Acosta be strengthened through gamification. For this, the researcher developed a gamified teaching material from the difficulties detected in the previous instruments and the unit they were learning, which was Animal Welfare National and International Standards, so they had to learn all about animal rights and animal cruelty. In addition, this group had sixteen students.

Furthermore, the researcher designed three gamified activities to work directly with the students to check if this strategy can improve their speaking problems. Therefore, those activities were a Jeopardy game on the PlayFactile website. In this game, the students had to answer questions and riddles about the vocabulary learned about animals, adjectives to describe them, and some riddles and questions about general knowledge. The idea of this activity was not to create a tense and stressful environment but a more relaxing and joyful practice while practicing vocabulary. The second activity was an American football game on the Bamboozle website. The purpose was to practice the structure of simple present tense while enhancing their critical

thinking, motivation, and language development, making the grammar practices more enjoyable and significant.

Moreover, the last activity was a Who am I? In the game, the students chose a card about an animal without seeing it and guessed what the animal was by asking questions and describing it. Besides, the purpose was to review the topics seen with the students about animal and their habitats, descriptions of animals and adjectives, and the simple present while practicing their speaking skills.

Consequently, the conclusion about the application of those gamified activities contributed to the improvement of many aspects and mechanics of learning a foreign language since it was noticed that through their development, the motivation of students and their commitment to what they learned deeply increased. This is because, throughout the three activities, the students began to chase their mood; they started to feel more focused, participative, and engaged in the games. Therefore, the acquisition of new vocabulary and knowledge also started to increase. It was observed that for them, learning vocabulary was easier, faster, and more fun than in the traditional ways. As a result, the students could understand and complete the tasks satisfactorily, and their participation was more active than in regular activities.

On the other hand, students started to feel more secure and confident in answering and speaking English questions. Besides, they did not care to commit mistakes or mispronounce words because they were having fun and enjoyed doing the activity. Therefore, this also made their motivation rise, being more focused on explaining and understanding the topics. This is because the investigator did not observe the same tension and anxiety they felt before the application of gamification since they just saw those activities as games and not as an evaluation

of their abilities in the target language so they were not focused on not committing mistakes but just on winning. However, it was not seen that these activities helped all the students since some did not participate like others. However, the percentage of those students was very low; only three or four students per activity did not obtain these results. As a result, for most students, gamification helped them acquire vocabulary and knowledge, and improved their oral skills. They gained more confidence in their capabilities by enjoying the subject and breaking their fear of speaking.

5.2.3 To evaluate the improvement of oral skills by using gamification tools in the students.

After the application of the previous instruments, it was essential to evaluate the improvement of oral skills through the use of gamification. Therefore, the researcher developed two last activities: the post-task and the final observation. The idea of the application of these two instruments was to compare the improvement the learners had after and before applying the gamification. Besides, they allowed the researcher to measure and compare the results to determine the changes in the students' behavior and knowledge regarding speaking skills and the impact of using gamification as a didactic strategy. Therefore, after applying the gamified activities, the investigator developed the post-task. For this, the students did a final gamified activity, which consisted of a board game, through the Genially website. In this activity, they practiced the conditional zero by completing some sentences using this form. Moreover, the researcher evaluated some aspects regarding the principles of gamification and improving speaking skills to make the students' changes clearer. For example, the learners' time management, active participation, the correct use of the content, in this case, the zero conditional and vocabulary, behavior, and the achievement of the goal.

In addition, after applying the post-task, the investigator made a final observation checklist. It is important to mention that it used the same checklist template with seventeen aspects. This is because using the same template allowed the researcher to recognize clearly what the students understood and retain with all the gamification strategies developed in classes during the investigation. Besides, it was essential to conclude if it was an improvement or not in the learners and what kind of indicators changed or not to give this investigation project an end.

As a result, after applying all the instruments, it was noticed that the students truly improved their academic performance regarding oral expression in the target language, reference to grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary. It was noticed that was easy for them to remember the vocabulary and the grammar learned in a gamified way. Besides, the students were more focused and interested in the teacher's explanation since they had to understand the topic very well so they could play and win. Moreover, it was observed that some students started to understand the topic while playing. In the same way, through the game, learners improved their time management; this aspect was important because it meant that they showed dominance of the topic. Furthermore, there was a huge increase in participation than at the beginning of the application of the instruments, the students started to show interest in the classes and cooperate with other classmates. Only a few percent of learners did not show active participation.

In addition, the implementation of gamified activities contributed to improving the learning of a foreign language since it was observed that students increased their motivation and commitment to what they had learned. Therefore, it was possible to see that the group was involved in the different challenges and activities. As a result, their confidence and security in speaking activities demonstrated a highly positive change. It was easier also to involve the students in doing this kind of activities than the traditional ones. Besides, through the observation, it was noticed that the students felt more relaxed while doing the activities provided

by the teacher. They felt more engaged and tried to use the language more frequently. In other words, the students' speaking skills were benefited in emotional and learning aspects and the improvement in teamwork. Besides, they improved their abilities to accept and manage errors and frustration. Because of this, it was seen much more enjoyment in the class and activities. Additionally, through gamification, students were able to acquire their perspective of the language, making the environment more pleasant. Therefore, the percentage of students who had problems with the language or who did not like it decreased.

5.3 Restatement of the Research Question

At the beginning of the elaboration of this investigation, the researcher was looking for a specific answer to guide this process and state the findings and objectives. This answer starts from the idea of knowing what are the effects of gamification as a teaching strategy to improve oral skills in English as a second language. Therefore, this investigation had the principal intention of answering this question, so thanks to the careful design of the instruments, it was possible to obtain the correct results. As a result, it is okay to make a change in this question.

The reason why this decision is that throughout the application of the instruments and the implementation of gamification as a didactic strategy, the interest in learning awoke since comparing the performance of the students before and after its development, it is established that the students were motivated to acquire new knowledge of English and for the majority, it was easier to acquire knowledge by learning in an affective and meaningful way. In addition, there was a positive effect on the student's confidence and security when exposed to speaking activities. Although the researcher had a short time to complete the instruments, the students' improvement was notable. Therefore, the above indicates that through gamified teaching material, oral skills in English can be strengthened and have positive effects on students.

5.4 Recommendations

In order to give a conclusion to this project, it is essential to write some recommendations for teachers who want to implement this technique in their classes, for future researchers who want to experiment more on this topic, or for anyone who wants to learn about gamification. With that clear, first, it is important to consider that the positive effects that this strategy gives will depend on how the teacher develops the activities, therefore the teacher must be trained in all aspects and components of this technique as well as in the use of the digital tools they plan to use. In addition, it is important to know that one of the principles of gamification is that this method cannot be used frequently in class since students may lose interest and motivation in doing it and become bored. Therefore, it is advisable to choose some units or topics to carry out the gamified activity instead of using it in all of them.

Furthermore, the students must clarify their doubts and understand well the topic that is going to be gamified, as well as the teacher has to be completely sure that the learners can complete the activity. This is because if the majority has problems carrying out the activities or need help understanding well how to perform them, the application of this will not have very good results. Finally, the evidence obtained in the development of this research shows that this strategy is not exclusively used in the context of learning English nor for improving oral skills, but that any teacher can implement it in any subject and focus it on other skills such as reading, listening, or writing.

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Annexes

Annex 1: Lesson Plan

Conversational English Curriculum		
Level: Ninth		
CEFR Band: A2.2	Scenario 1: Animal Welfare; National and International Standards	Time: 16 hours
Essential Question: How do animals around us contribute to our social, economic and personal development?	Theme 1.1: Obligations When You Own A Pet/ animal cruelty	
Essential Competences: 17. Responsibility	New Citizenship Axis: Strengthening of Planetary Citizenship with Identity	
Goals	Performance Indicator	Pedagogical Task
Learner can...	The student...	The teacher will...
Take decisions and act considering their own and others' well-being understanding the deep connection between those elements.	Identifies assertively with his/her surroundings.	Provide students with tools and situations in which they can adjust his/her conduct and beliefs to the individual, social and environmental conditions around him/her in order to accomplish an integral development of his/her health and well-being
Assume an active, reflexive and constructive role in the local, national and global community engaging in activities that respect the human rights and the universal ethical values.	Exercises his/her rights and duties responsibly in a local, national and global level.	Recognize the rights and duties of a planetary citizenship in order to develop as a person inside the society and use them in the development of his/her classes.

Goals

Indicators of Learning

Task Building Process

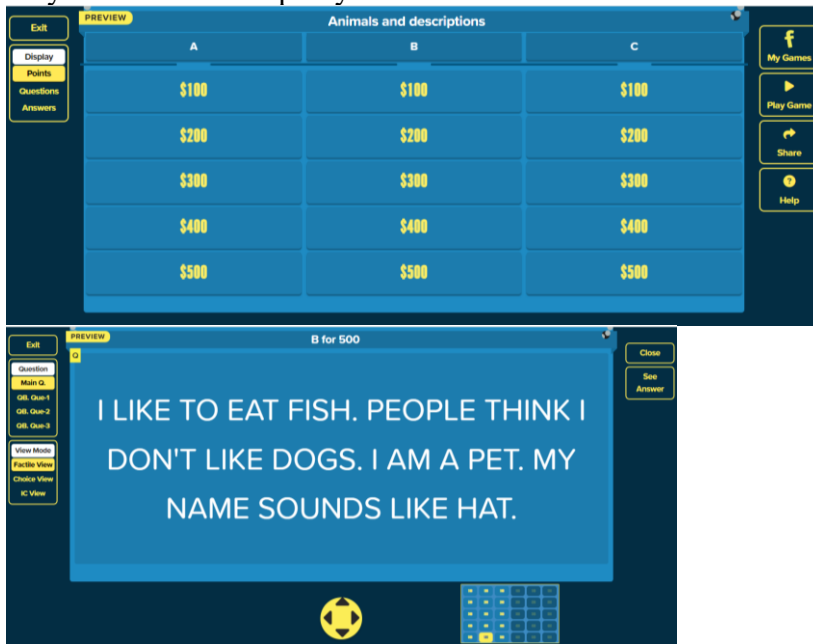
<p>Listening and speaking:</p> <p>Identify simple information about animals.</p>	<p>Recognizes information about animals' habitats and characteristics and answers questions about it.</p> <p>Identifies different animals regarding their characteristics.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Week #1 March First</p> <p>Pre Task:</p> <p>T explains to Ss vocabulary about animals and their habitats, such as sea animals, wild animals, farm animals, etc. through a PPP. Besides, she will make questions to the students about which animals live in Costa Rica. Also, she will emphasize some stories of animal cruelty. Then, the T will explain to students how to describe an animal using some adjectives regarding their color, size, shape, etc.</p> <p>Task Rehearsal:</p> <p>After the explanation of the teacher, students will be divided into groups to play a trivial game called Jeopardy, through the website PlayFactile, to practice the vocabulary. The T will project on the board the board game, which consists of a board with three columns. Each column has five numbers from the one hundred to the five hundred. So, in groups, the students will choose a number and each of them will have a question about animals, true or false sentences, and riddles. The students have to</p>
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<p>Identify key information (e.g. places, times,).</p>		<p>answer them correctly in a complete way to get a point. The group that has the most correct questions wins.</p>
		<p>After that, the T will introduce to the class the simple present. She will explain to them how to make positive and negative sentences and questions. Therefore, the teacher will write on the board the explanation, important rules, and examples.</p> <p>Then, students will play a game called American Football by Baamboozle Website. The teacher will project on the board the game and students will make groups and choose a football team. Then, each team has to order some words in order to make a sentence in the negative, positive, or question form in simple present. Then, if the group orders the sentence correctly, they will have the opportunity to throw the ball and try to score on the goalpost. For that, in the game, the ball will have different launch angles and each angle will be represented</p>

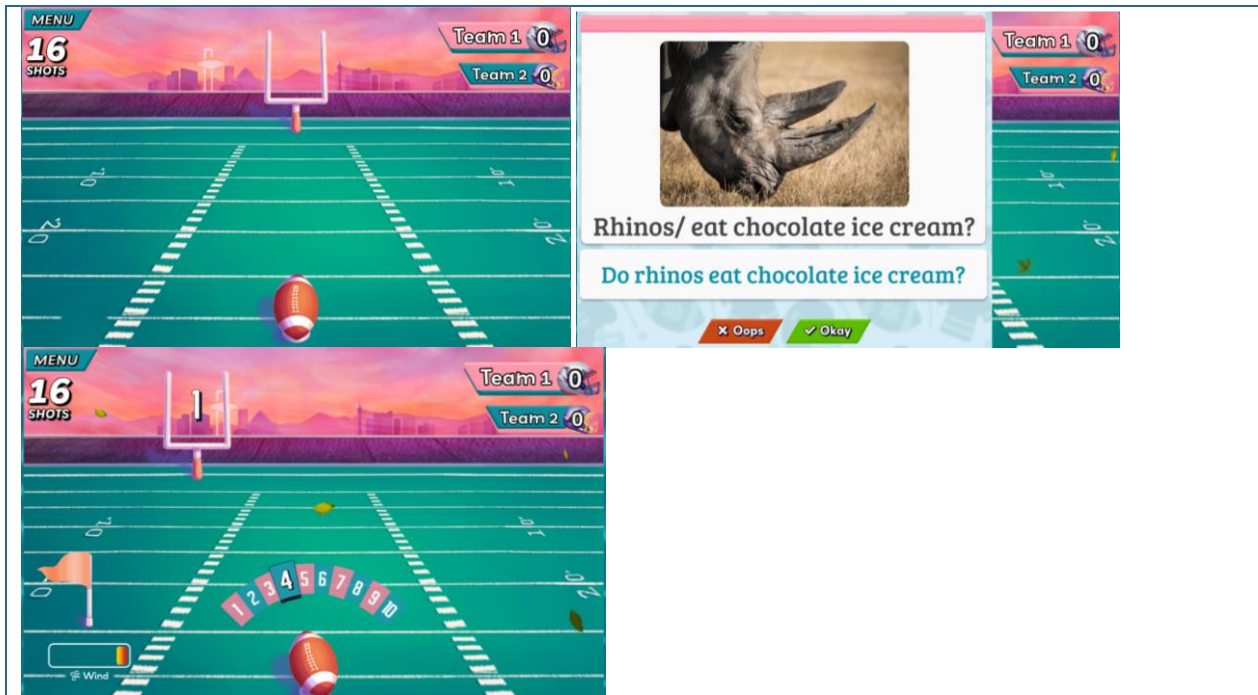
<p>Reading and Speaking:</p> <p>Get the gist of short, simple narratives, with visual support.</p> <p>Identify key information in short, simple factual texts from the headings and pictures.</p>	<p>Writes correctly sentences about animals in simple present.</p> <p>Identifies the structure of positive, and negative sentences and questions in simple present.</p>	<p>by a number. Therefore, students will have to analyze which is the correct angle to score on the post. If they get it right, they receive a point.</p> <p>Post Task:</p> <p>The T remains students to practice the vocabulary about animals and the simple present tense.</p>
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Resources:

- PlayFactile.com “Jeopardy Game”

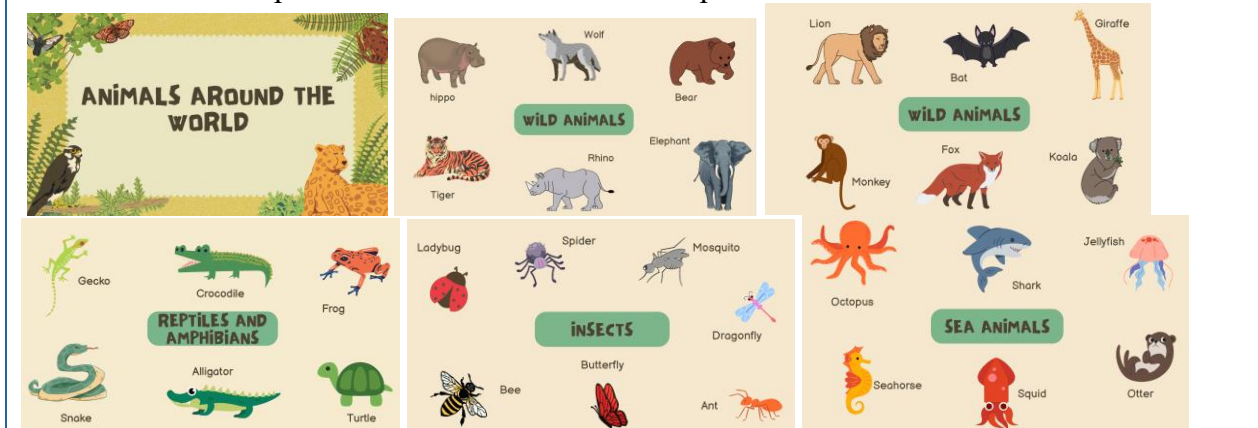


- Baamboozle.com “American Football”



Materials:

- PowerPoint presentation: Animals and Descriptions





Goals	Indicators of Learning	Task Building Process
<p>Listening and speaking: Identify simple information about animals.</p>	<p>Recognizes information about animals' habitats and characteristics and answers questions about it.</p> <p>Identifies different animals regarding their characteristics.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Week #2 March 8th</p> <p>Pre Task: The T will start the class by making a review of animals and habitats, how to describe an animal, and the simple present tense.</p> <p>Task Rehearsal: Ss will make an activity called Who Am I in order to practice the vocabulary about animals and the simple present. For this, students will be divided into groups of four. Then, the investigator will give each group ten images of different animals. Therefore, each student will choose randomly and without</p>

<p>Identify key information (e.g. places, times,).</p>	<p>Uses correctly the structure about zero conditional.</p> <p>Identifies vocabulary about animal rights and cruelty.</p> <p>Talks about animals' rights and how to avoid animal cruelty.</p>	<p>seeing it a card, and hold it in their forehead. Then, each participant has to ask questions to their members to figure out his/her animals. For that, they have to use the vocabulary previously learned. Then, when a student is completely sure about what is her/his animal, he or she has to make a little description of the animal. They will have three or four rounds.</p> <p>Post Task:</p> <p>The T will introduce the topic of animal rights and animal cruelty. For that, she will talk a little bit about the importance of the laws against animal cruelty and how to care for animals correctly by teaching new vocabulary. After that, the teacher will explain to them the conditional zero using the vocabulary.</p> <p>Then, the students will practice this topic by playing a board game in Genially called "Complete the sentence". The class will be</p>
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Identifies the structure of the zero conditional.

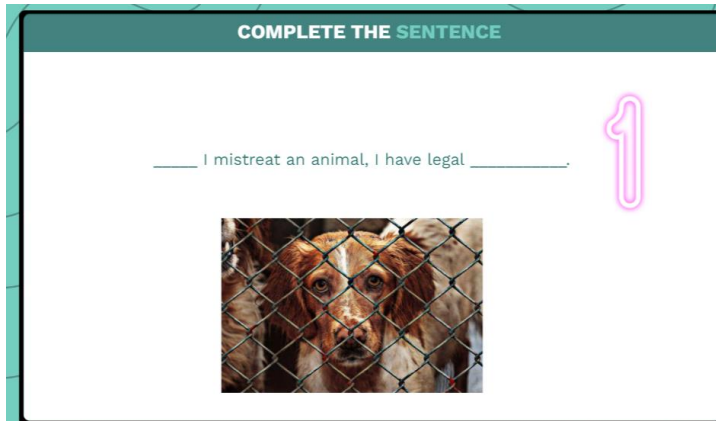
Express opinions using simple language with the given vocabulary.

Talk about animals' rights
Obligations When You Own A Pet and avoid animal cruelty in Costa Rica.

divided into three groups, the teacher will place a little bell in front of the students. Then, the students will have to read the incomplete sentence reflected on the board and will have to complete it in a conditional zero sentence. Besides, they will have to complete some of them just with the vocabulary previously taught. Therefore, in order to do this, the groups have to reach the bell, so, the first one to grab it can answer, but if they answer incorrectly the other groups can steal it. The group with the most correct sentences wins.

Resources:

- Genially: app.genial.ly.com




COMPLETAR LA FRASE JUEGO

The tiger is an _____ specie due to hunting and deforestation.

Endangered Conservation Adaptation


2

Clue: a living thing in danger of disappearing forever



COMPLETE THE SENTENCE

If I don't feed my cat every day, _____.



8


COMPLETE THE SENTENCE

The forest is the _____ of many different species, including elephants and zebras.

Ecosystem Biodiversity Habitat

15

clue: where an animal or plant lives



Materials:

- Who I Am Flashcards



- PowerPoint Presentation: Animal Rights and Animal Cruelty Vocabulary

ANIMAL RIGHTS AND ANIMAL CRUELTY

Animals may not be used for **food**.

Animals may not be **hunted**.

The habitats of animals must be **protected** to allow them to live according to their choosing.

Animals may not be **bred**.

ANIMAL RIGHTS AND ANIMAL CRUELTY

No **experiments** on animals

·No use of animals for **hard labor**

·No selective **breeding** for any reason other than the benefit of the animal

·No zoos or use of animals in **entertainment**

Annex 2: Observation Checklist #1

Evaluation Chart			
Aspects to Observe	Always	Sometimes	Never
Students are able to...			
Express their ideas in a logical order showing an understanding of the topic.	()	()	(x)
Communicate appropriately with few pauses and hesitation.	()	(x)	()
Speak with minimum pronunciation errors that interfere with communication.	()	(x)	()

Use diverse vocabulary that conveys appropriate meaning; appropriate for the level.	()	()	(x)
Communicate appropriately, with minimum grammatical errors.	()	(x)	()
Express interest and enthusiasm during class and the proposed activities.	()	(x)	()
Actively work and participate in the activities proposed during class.	()	(x)	()
Show a positive attitude with their classmates and the teacher during class.	(x)	()	()
Demonstrate security and confidence when carrying out the activities proposed.	()	(x)	()
Stay on task and work on the activities assigned.	()	(x)	()
Pay attention to the teacher's instructions.	(x)	()	()
Cooperate and follow the class routine.	()	(x)	()
Frequently use the target language with their classmates and teacher.	()	()	(x)
Try to not use their mother language throughout the class.	()	()	(x)
Understand what their teacher says in the target language.	()	(x)	()
Ask questions in the target language when they have a doubt.	()	()	(x)
Answer questions in English when the teacher asks.	()	(x)	()

Annex 3: Observation Checklist #2

Evaluation Chart			
Aspects to Observe Students are able to...	Always	Sometimes	Never
Express their ideas in a logical order showing an understanding of the topic.	()	(x)	()
Communicate appropriately with few pauses and hesitation.	()	(x)	()
Speak with minimum pronunciation errors that interfere with communication.	(x)	()	()
Use diverse vocabulary that conveys appropriate meaning; appropriate for the level.	(x)	()	()
Communicate appropriately, with minimum grammatical errors.	()	(x)	()
Express interest and enthusiasm during class and the proposed activities.	()	(x)	()
Actively work and participate in the activities proposed during class.	()	(x)	()
Show a positive attitude with their classmates and the teacher during class.	(x)	()	()
Demonstrate security and confidence when carrying out the activities proposed.	(x)	()	()
Stay on task and work on the activities assigned.	()	(x)	()
Pay attention to the teacher's instructions.	(x)	()	()
Cooperate and follow the class routine.	()	(x)	()

Frequently use the target language with their classmates and teacher.	()	()	(x)
Try to not use their mother language throughout the class.	()	()	(x)
Understand what their teacher says in the target language.	()	(x)	()
Ask questions in the target language when they have a doubt.	()	(x)	()
Answer questions in English when the teacher asks.	(x)	()	()