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MASTER'S DISSERTATION

The Use of Gamification and
TikTok to Teach Vocabulary to
Secondary Students

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RESUM

L'objectiu d'aquesta investigació és analitzar si la incorporació de TikTok i la gamificació com a eines educatives és efectiva per millorar l'adquisició i la retenció del vocabulari en anglès, així com per augmentar la motivació i implicació dins de l'aula. La investigació s'ha dut a terme en un grup de 4t d'ESO amb un nivell baix d'anglès i un vocabulari molt limitat. Per determinar l'eficàcia de la proposta, els alumnes han participat en una situació d'aprenentatge basada en la superació de reptes gamificats per a la pràctica del vocabulari i en la creació de vídeos a TikTok com a eina per afavorir la retenció de les paraules en contextos reals i significatius. Les dades s'han recollit mitjançant l'observació directa a l'aula, entrevistes i reflexions finals (*exit tickets*). Els resultats indiquen que ambdues eines contribueixen positivament a la motivació de l'alumnat i a la retenció del vocabulari. No obstant això, s'ha observat que la gamificació afavoreix només retenció a curt termini. Per contrarestar aquest efecte, es van programar activitats amb TikTok després dels reptes gamificats, amb l'objectiu de consolidar l'aprenentatge en contextos realístics i lúdics.

Paraules clau: Gamificació, Educació Secundària, TikTok, Adquisició de vocabulari, Motivació

ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to analyze whether the incorporation of TikTok and gamification as educational tools is effective in improving the acquisition and retention of vocabulary, as well as enhancing students' motivation and engagement in the classroom. The study was carried out with a group of 4th-year secondary education students (ESO) who had a low level of English and a very limited vocabulary. To assess the effectiveness of the proposal, students participated in a learning scenario based on overcoming gamified challenges to practice vocabulary and creating TikTok videos as a tool to support word retention in real and meaningful contexts. Data were collected through direct classroom observation, interviews, and exit tickets. The results indicate that both tools contribute positively to student motivation and vocabulary retention. However, it was observed that gamification promotes only short-term retention. To counteract this effect, TikTok activities were scheduled after gamified challenges, with the aim of consolidating learning in realistic and playful contexts.

Keywords: Gamification, Secondary Education, TikTok, Vocabulary acquisition, Motivation

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Detection of the needs or issues to be resolved

One of the most persistent challenges in the English language at the secondary level is the development of oral communication skills among students with low proficiency. Limited vocabulary often prevents them from expressing themselves, reducing motivation and participation. Therefore, this study aims to explore and implement an innovative approach to enhance students' vocabulary acquisition and improve their oral communication skills.

The innovation proposal was implemented in a group of 4th ESO from Tarragona. This high school is very large and has a vast number of students per grade. For this reason, they implement splits in every two groups (e.g., 4th ESO A and 4th ESO B) for all language subjects in order to reduce the number of students per class and better address their needs. As a result, each pair of classes is divided into three subgroups, with one teacher assigned to each subgroup.

A similar approach is used in the English subject; all students are required to pass an exam at the beginning of the course. Their results determine whether they are assigned to the high-level group, intermediate group, or low-level group. The group in which the innovation was implemented belongs to the low-level group, comprising students from 4th ESO C and 4th ESO D.

During the first two weeks of observation, students showed deficits in several skills, most notably a severely limited vocabulary, which greatly hindered their oral production.

1.2 Justification of the innovation proposal

In order to address this language deficit, the sessions within the didactic sequence were implemented by changing the class dynamics. Students demonstrated extremely low interest in the subject, which directly affected their involvement, motivation, and commitment in the classroom. For this reason, the methodology employed did not

rely on traditional teaching methods and instead focused on boosting students' motivation. The innovation proposal involved using gamification and TikTok to teach vocabulary to secondary students. Both gamification and TikTok can create a significantly positive impact on students among this age group (15-16), as they are more likely to engage with a class that is interactive and dynamic, placing them at the center of the learning process. Furthermore, teenagers are highly involved in social media activities (Fitria, 2023).

This study was conducted following the characteristics of an educational innovation, as a planned and organized process. The first step involved analyzing students and the context in order to detect an educational need during the two first weeks of observation. Secondly, this study was entirely research-based. After identifying the educational need, extensive research was conducted, leading to the conclusion that gamification and TikTok were highly effective tools for vocabulary acquisition.

According to Díaz et al. (2022) and Abdeen & Albiladi (2021) gamification is a useful strategy for language learning, as it involves dynamics, structures and game mechanics that enhance positive emotions in an environment where they are forced to be. TikTok, a highly engaging and widely used platform among young people, offers authentic content and varied vocabulary that supports language acquisition (Fitria, 2023; Bernard, 2021). Alshreef & Khadawardi (2023) found that students at King Abdulaziz University viewed TikTok as a fun and appealing tool for improving vocabulary.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Learning a Foreign Language (FL), particularly English, has become a pressing global concern in today's interconnected world. Our societies are undergoing rapid and constant evolution in social, technological and cultural aspects, leading to the need for effective international communication (Zhou, 2024). Speaking English, a lingua franca widely spoken across borders, is now a necessity rather than an advantage. According to Seidlhofer et al. (2006), English is very present in Europeans' lives; they attend English classes, they encounter commercial slogans such as "I'm loving it", they listen to English songs, and a very long list of other activities.

Teenagers also encounter many situations in which English is used as the primary medium of communication. Considering their extensive use of technology, teenagers use many global platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, and gaming communities, which expose them to an endless stream of English content (Tran & Miralpeix, 2024). This constant exposure highlights not only the relevance of English in their daily lives but also how interconnected the world has become.

2.1. *TikTok as an educational platform*

Younger generations have grown up immersed in technology, and today, both adults and young people remain constantly connected to the internet through their smartphones, tablets or laptops. This connectivity allows them to engage with the entire globe while sharing and creating diverse forms of content through distinct platforms and social media. (Rovira-Collado, et al., 2022). Through this content, new concepts such as "Internet of Images" (*Internet de la imagen*) have emerged (Rovira-Collado, 2019, as cited in Rovira-Collado, et al., 2022). Moving beyond simply posting photos, users now generate and edit videos, posting them in new formats and

spaces such as reels, on Instagram; stories, on Instagram and TikTok; and FYP (For You Page) on TikTok.

Among these platforms, TikTok is a Chinese social network launched in September 2016 by Zhang Yiming and allows users create, edit and share short videos using music, filters and various editing features (Ardiana & Ananada, 2022). This application, which gained significant popularity during the pandemic in 2020, has proven to be a very powerful and innovative pedagogical tool. Its integration into education is not a mere trend but a strategic answer to the constantly changing educational landscape (Silva-Gutiérrez & Guzmán-Ramos, 2024).

According to Afidah et al. (2021) there are many advantages in using TikTok as an educational platform. Considering teenager's attachment to social media, this networking site can be interesting, interactive and innovative for young people. In addition, this application's features allow the accommodation of all four skills.

Quantitative research conducted by Ardriana & Ananada (2020), which utilized TikTok as a learning medium to test student engagement and learning outcomes among high school social science students in Indonesia, revealed that the experimental class (using TikTok) was more active and achieved learning outcomes more effectively than the control class. Similarly, a study by Silva-Gutiérrez & Guamán-Ramos (2024) evaluated the impact of TikTok as a didactic resource in mathematics education for teenagers. Their findings demonstrated that this tool not only helped students improve their grades (an average increase of 1 ,75 points) but also simplified the understanding of complex concepts. Furthermore, Rivas Jimeno (2022) explored the usefulness of TikTok in teaching English to secondary school students. The results of this case study "put forward an optimistic view in regards the inclusion of social media into the classroom" (p. 50). These findings collectively highlight TikTok's

potential as an effective educational tool for secondary students, enhancing the learning experience of these subjects.

2.2. Gamification vs Game-Based Learning

Games combine “pleasure” and “fun”, elements that are increasingly being incorporated into educational studies to enhance student motivation within the learning environment. These educational games are specifically designed and used to facilitate teaching and learning, offering an engaging alternative to traditional lecture-based instruction (Al-Azawi et al., 2016). They capture adolescents’ attention by providing stimulation, which helps maintain student’s attention for a longer period of time. Moreover, they provide joy and satisfaction for players, particularly when achievements are recognized through prizes and rewards.

Gamification and Game-Based Learning (GBL) are often mistaken for one another; however, while both incorporate game-like elements into learning, their methodologies differ significantly (Dahalan et al., 2023). On the one hand, GBL implies the use of actual games within the educational context. On the other hand, Gamification doesn’t use games themselves but applies certain game design elements and techniques in non-game activities—such as points, badges, or leaderboards—to engage students and enhance their motivation (Azzouz Boudadi & Gutiérrez-Colón, 2020).

This study will entirely focus on Gamification because as Abdeen & Albiladi (2021) assert, this methodology provides opportunities to combine literacy, classroom instruction and 21st-century skills development due to its highly engaging learning environment, while significantly enhancing student motivation and engagement. Moreover, Gamification “creates dynamic environments in which students can feel the sense of progress by achieving levels” (p.59). Additionally, a key reason for employing Gamification in vocabulary learning is that its techniques “tap into and influence

people's natural desires for competition, achievement, recognition and self-expression" (Al-Azawi, et al., 2016, p. 133).

This methodology has positive effects according to Azzouz Boudadi & Gutierrez-Colón (2020). According to their analysis outcomes, teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) using Gamification, makes students have a positive experience. Nevertheless, they argue that more research should be done on the topic to have more solid and diverse perspectives.

Similarly, Jiménez Garrido (2023) implemented Gamification to improve vocabulary learning in secondary school students. The results were positive; however, there are concerns about the need for more in-depth investigations.

2.3. Vocabulary learning

This study focuses on using Gamification and TikTok to improve the vocabulary of 4th of ESO secondary school students. Vocabulary acquisition is essential, as learners need a large vocabulary size to interact in the foreign language and to read and comprehend texts (Alonso, 2013). According to Alonso (2013), the earlier students learn and master the most frequent words, the better their speech and overall language performance will be.

Similarly, Botirova & Ahmedova (2023) emphasize that vocabulary acquisition is essential in EFL contexts where learners need to build a solid vocabulary base to effectively communicate. Nevertheless, they assert that traditional methods focus on memorization learning and are monotonous and ineffective in the long term. To address these issues, this study aims to incorporate more engaging and attractive tools.

3. RESEARCH PROPOSAL

3.1 Defining the problem

The goal of learning a language is to communicate effectively, which involves becoming skilled in speaking. Notwithstanding the undeniable importance and essentiality of this skill, it remains the most challenging to master. While students may perform well in practicing and producing grammar, listening, reading, and writing skills, speaking English proves to be a herculean task (Amoah & Yeboah, 2021). This issue is especially pronounced among students with a limited vocabulary, as vocabulary serves as the foundation for building meaningful spoken communication. Without an adequate range of vocabulary, students struggle to express themselves fluently and accurately, leading to incomplete or hesitant speech. (Alqahtani, 2015). Furthermore, this lack of vocabulary not only limits their ability to form complete spoken texts but also affects their confidence in participating (Boitrova & Ahmedova). Addressing this gap is crucial to fostering an environment where students can effectively and actively use the target language, thereby improving their overall speaking skills. For these reasons, this investigation focused on testing the effectiveness of gamification and TikTok to bridge the vocabulary gap and encourage students to actively participate in English.

3.2 Research questions

1. How does the integration of gamification and TikTok influence vocabulary acquisition among secondary school students with low English proficiency?
2. How significant is the impact of TikTok on secondary school students' motivation and engagement in English learning?
3. In what ways does gamification impact students' involvement and participation in English language learning?

3.3 Hypothesis:

The integration of gamification and TikTok as educational tools will improve the vocabulary repertoire, fluency, engagement, motivation, and overall learning satisfaction of 4th ESO students with limited English proficiency.

3.4 Aims

- *General aims:* To assess the effectiveness of an intervention based on gamification and TikTok in enhancing the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) vocabulary learning experience, for fourth-year ESO students.
- *Specific aims:*
 - To determine whether the use of gamification and TikTok can improve students retain more vocabulary items and improve their fluency.
 - To examine whether gamification techniques can boost student's motivation and increase their engagement through competition.
 - To explore the potential of TikTok in fostering greater interest and involvement in learning English.
 - To analyze how TikTok and gamification may enhance student's satisfaction with the EFL learning process.

3.5 Research design

Following the objectives outlined above, and the necessity to solve the problem detected in the 4th of ESO class in the English subject—namely, a speaking deficit caused by a significant lack of vocabulary—a qualitative research study was conducted to explore and address the issue. This research took the form of a Case Study. By focusing on the specific classroom context, this study aimed to analyze how targeted interventions, specifically, gamification and TikTok as educational tools, could enhance vocabulary acquisition and improve students' speaking skills.

The qualitative study design was chosen because the focus was on one specific single group and the research was centered around discovering how they would respond to specific strategies. (Oranga & Matere, 2023). This approach provided in-depth insights into individual experiences through interviews and focus groups which enhanced the validity of the findings (Dunwoodie et al., 2022). Additionally, the findings extracted from this study can provide context and be helpful for future quantitative research (Tenny et al., 2022). Finally, this study relied on real-world observations and inductive reasoning, drawing conclusions from fieldwork data such as interviews and recordings, with detailed documentation of research processes (Gómez, 2012).

Following this path, students were introduced to specific activities, based on TikTok and gamification techniques, aiming to improve their vocabulary over the course of 12 sessions. During the first stage, the researcher observed how students interacted with the activities and how they engaged with the content. Preliminary data was collected through observations, student participation levels and informal interactions, focusing on identifying any signs of improvements or satisfaction (during the three first sessions).

In the next stage, interviews were conducted after some of the activities. To avoid student fatigue, a focus group interview took place during the 6th session, serving as a midterm reflection phase. During that stage, the researcher conducted interviews with students to explore how they felt about the activities, whether they noticed improvements, and any challenges they encountered. Responses were recorded in a notebook for further analysis.

Finally, in the 12th session, a final round of interviews was conducted to assess any changes since the previous interviews and to gauge overall impact of the activities.

4. EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION

This educational intervention is structured in twelve sessions of fifty-five minutes each aimed to reinforce student vocabulary acquisition and improve and enhance its retention in a fifteen students group of fourth-year ESO students (*See Appendix 1*). This group presents a low English proficiency level with students from diverse backgrounds, origins and necessities. To address this issue, this learning scenario (LS) incorporates a combination of gamified challenges and the creation of creative TikTok videos to ensure a good retention. There are a total of three TikTok videos (two individual and one in groups) where students need to improve vocabulary usage and retention in a gradual way, practicing first with gamified activities that motivate and encourage them to master words and achieve certain scores or positive marks. The aim of the final collaborative TikTok is to encompass all the knowledge and.

Regarding the curricular aspects, this LS is based on Specific Competencies 3 and 6 because students are expected to create oral texts using diverse platforms such as TikTok, CapCut and VideoStar to edit their videos, as well as searching information from different sources. This also aligns with the Digital and Civic Competencies as students treat some social issues during the implementation.

5. METHOD

5.1 Background and Participants

The participants in this study are a group of fifteen fourth-year ESO students with the lowest English in their grade. This is due to the high school's organization structure, where students take an initial placement exam at the beginning of the course. Based on their results, they are placed into high, intermediate or low-level groups for English, regardless of their original class. As a result, students from two different classes (for example, 4th ESO A and 4th ESO B) are reorganized into three proficiency-based groups.

This group consists of students who struggle to reach the required competencies, as well as those who need additional support due to having a customized strategy tailored to meet specific educational needs of an individual, or Individualized Plan (IP). To better address their needs, this group has fewer students compared to other levels. Among them, four students follow an IP. If students show significant progress throughout the course, they could move up to the intermediate group.

The students in this group are between fifteen and sixteen years old and come from diverse backgrounds and cultures. The majority are Catalan or Spanish students that live in Tarragona. Additionally, there are also three students from Latin America, one student originally from China, and one Moroccan student, meaning not all of them share the same first language.

5.2 Variables

This study examines the impact of gamification and TikTok as educational tools, with their implementation serving as the independent variable. These approaches integrate game-based techniques and short-form videos to enhance vocabulary learning and encourage speaking practice.

The study focuses on three dependent variables: vocabulary retention, student engagement and motivation, and fluency development. Vocabulary acquisition assesses students' ability to learn and recall new words over time. Motivation and engagement measure their interest, participation, and emotional investment in learning. Fluency development evaluates their progress in speaking English more confidently and naturally in classroom activities.

By analyzing these variables, this research explores whether the combination of gamification and TikTok can enhance language learning in secondary education.

5.3 Data Collection

To assess the effectiveness of TikTok and gamification as educational tools, qualitative data was gathered through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews & exit tickets.

Observations provided real-time insights into student participation, vocabulary use, and interaction. To minimize potential observer bias, a structured observation protocol was used, focusing on specific behaviors such as the frequency of English vocabulary use, willingness to participate, and peer collaboration. The researcher also attended classes beforehand without taking notes to help students feel at ease, and notes were written post-session and cross-checked with tutor insights and student feedback to avoid subjective assumptions.

Finally, semi-structured interviews captured students' personal experiences and perceptions, while exit tickets offered immediate, written reflections on specific activities. Triangulating these data ensured the credibility and reliability of the findings. Themes from interviews were compared with classroom behaviors and exit tickets, enabling identification of consistent patterns.

5.4 Procedure

The group was initially observed for two weeks to identify areas for improvement. Students exhibited a significant deficit in speech production, frequently relying on their L1. Analysis of their English contributions indicated that this stemmed from a very limited vocabulary repertoire, which hindered effective communication.

After discussing these findings with both high school and university tutors, and receiving their approval, the researcher explored existing studies on addressing vocabulary deficits. Gamification emerged as a strategy that boosts engagement through competitive elements. Additionally, studies highlighted the educational potential of social media, particularly TikTok, due its popularity and engaging format among teenagers.

With tutor approval, the researcher proceeded to design the structured lesson plan or Learning Scenario (LS) and determine the data collection instruments for two months, while still observing the group, to adjust the activities and materials to their specific profiles. Once the LS was finalized, in the third month, it was submitted for approval along with the required ethical documentation. Two weeks before the implementation, the researcher made adjustments based on tutor feedback before officially launching the study.

5.5 Methodology used for data analysis

During the implementation, the researcher collected qualitative data through classroom observation, informal interviews and exit tickets. Field notes were taken to document student engagement, participation levels, and challenges, while exit tickets provided insights into student's perceptions of the learning experience, particularly after vocabulary-focused sessions involving gamification and TikTok.

The researcher closely monitored students' use of vocabulary and speech production throughout the intervention. A midterm focus

group was conducted in session six with ten students, ensuring a broad participation by directly engaging quiet students. The same procedure was repeated in the final session to evaluate changes in engagement and language use.

After the implementation, all qualitative data were transcribed into Word documents and subsequently imported into ATLAS.ti using a mixed-method coding approach. Deductive codes—such as *engaging and enjoyable*, *encourages effort*, *high vocabulary retention levels* and *boosts speaking skills*—were predefined based on the research goals and literature. Additional inductive codes emerged during analysis, capturing unexpected patterns. To ensure consistency, detailed notes were kept on coding decisions, and selected excerpts were reviewed by a peer to minimize potential bias.

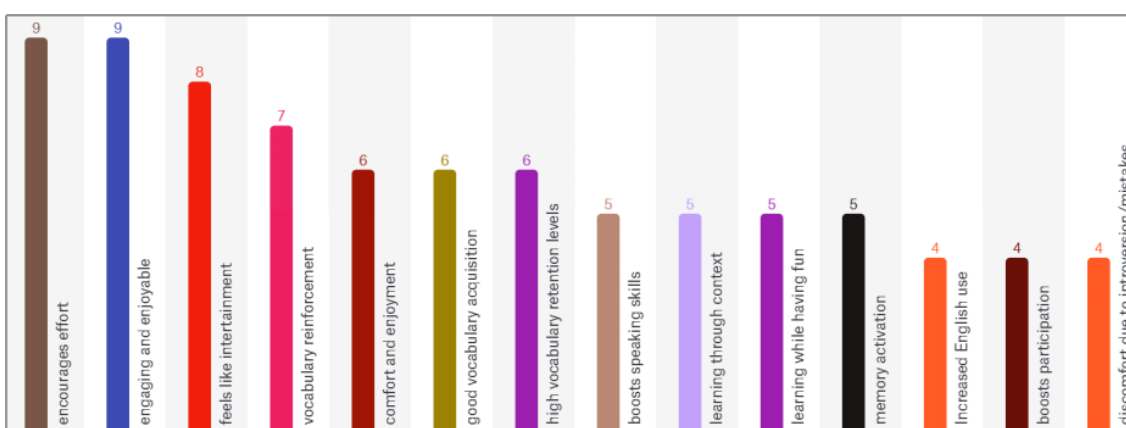
Finally, several limitations were acknowledged. The small sample size restricts generalizability, as findings reflect a specific group and context. Despite efforts to enhance reliability—through cross-referencing, peer review, and transparent coding—subjectivity remains a factor in qualitative analysis. Additionally, student responses may reflect social desirability potentially affecting the authenticity of feedback.

6. RESULTS

This section presents the findings of the study based on data obtained from semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and exit ticket responses. The analysis explores the impact of integrating gamification and TikTok on vocabulary acquisition, as well as their influence on student motivation and classroom participation among secondary school students with low English proficiency. Findings are categorized into three main sources of data: interviews, observations, and exit tickets.

Firstly, interviews revealed highly positive experiences and significant benefits in vocabulary acquisition through TikTok and gamification. Students exhibited high levels of motivation and engagement, particularly driven by gamification's competitive appeal, which contributed to greater levels of participation (See Figure 1).

Figure 1. Codes from Midterm and Final Focus Group Interviews



Most participants found these tools beneficial for learning and retaining vocabulary (See interviews in Appendices B & C). On the one hand, they emphasized that gamification helped them practice new words and TikTok enhanced their vocabulary retention by providing contextual exposure, where repeated interactions through video creation and peer engagement reinforced their learning. Moreover, these videos proved invaluable in improving their ability to communicate in English, allowing them to practice pronunciation and gain confidence in speaking.

Vocabulary acquisition and English use:

These activities represent the only context in which I speak English, as Catalan is what I predominantly use during regular class time.
(Participant 2)

It facilitates pronunciation of unfamiliar words—often through independent research—and aids in retaining vocabulary introduced in class, thereby enhancing expressive ability. (Participant 4)

On the other hand, participants noted that gamified activities helped them stay more focused and approach the tasks with greater seriousness, as the competitive element motivated them to earn positive marks or win against their classmates. However, while gamification proved effective for short-term learning and memory, some students expressed that their retention was limited to the duration of the competitive activities. Once they transitioned to using the vocabulary in other tasks, they found it more challenging to recall the words. To address this challenge, TikTok tasks were scheduled after gamified activities to help consolidate vocabulary in the long term, allowing students to use the words in context and reinforce their retention.

Challenges:

Blooket and Kahoot can support vocabulary learning, though additional independent study remains necessary for full acquisition.
(Participant 6)

Additionally, some challenges also arose with TikTok activities, as some students expressed shyness and did not like being recorded or feared to make mistakes that others could see. Others indicated that they were more worried about speaking rather than explicitly learning new words, which sometimes limited their attention to word acquisition.

Challenges:

The act of recording oneself induces discomfort. (Participant 6)

Therefore, the most noticeable results extracted from these interviews are related to student engagement and motivation, as the most frequently employed codes are linked to enjoyment and entertainment (see *Figure 1*). Participants highlighted TikTok and gamification as key motivators for increasing engagement and participation in English learning. They valued these interactive and creative activities, which transformed learning into a more dynamic and enjoyable experience, allowing them to acquire vocabulary effortlessly. On the one hand, TikTok boosted their confidence in speaking compared to traditional classroom activities and made them enjoy role-playing as influencers.

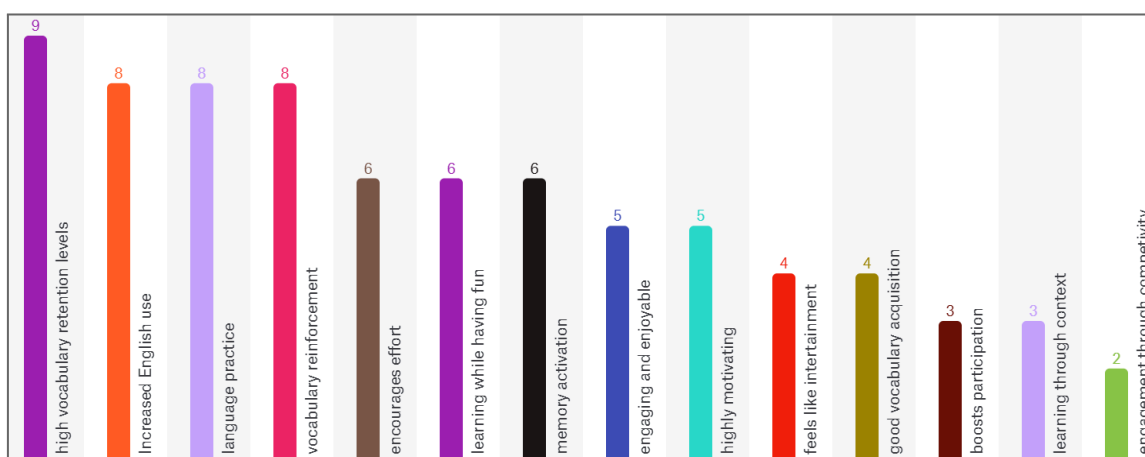
Motivation and engagement:

Competition provides motivation by fostering a sense of challenge among peers. (Participant 2)

The presence of competition encourages greater commitment to the task. (Participant 7)

Students tend to remember moments of enjoyment more vividly, which may explain why interviews reported higher levels of motivation and participation. This tendency suggests that students are more likely to highlight positive and engaging experiences when reflecting on their learning process. However, findings extracted from observations reflect slightly different perspectives, indicating more significant improvements in vocabulary acquisition (see *Figure 2*).

Figure 2. Codes from Teacher's Observations



The combination of TikTok and gamification showed significantly positive outcomes on vocabulary acquisition and retention. Students' videos gradually improved throughout the implementation, employing more vocabulary items correctly in the right context (*See observation notes in Appendix D*). Moreover, their retention was notable because their answers during gamified quizzes (Kahoot and Blooket) were mostly correct.

Vocabulary acquisition and retention:

Vocabulary test results were positive, indicating that gamification and TikTok supported learning and retention. (Session 8)

In their second TikTok, students used vocabulary more effectively and noticed clear improvement. (Session 9)

Findings regarding motivation, engagement, and participation levels were also highly promising. Most students enjoyed creating TikTok videos, because it mirrors their typical free-time activities. As a result, it felt less like a formal educational task, allowing them to feel more energized and involved in the subject. Additionally, the gamified activities that students found most enjoyable were Kahoot and, especially, Blooket, a platform that integrates real video games and allows students to earn points for both completing game tasks and answering questions correctly. This platform sparked a great deal of enthusiasm, with students becoming highly energetic and competitive, eager to win and answer the most questions correctly.

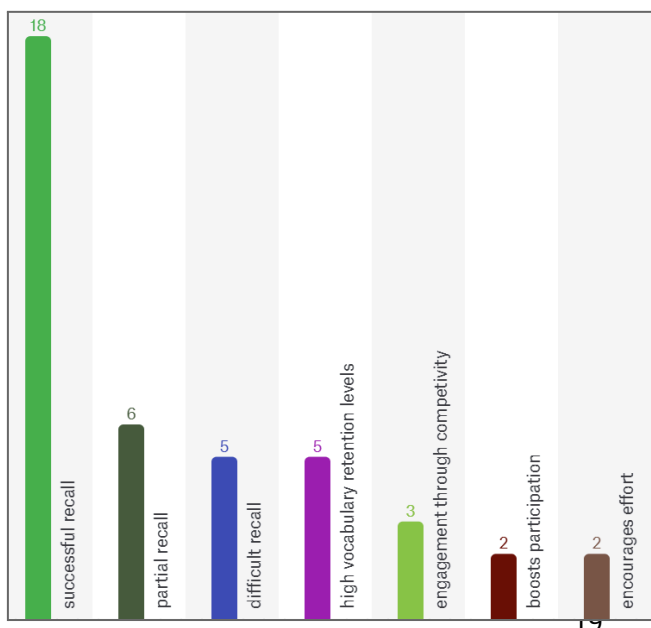
Motivation and engagement:

This quiz increased student engagement; they were eager to earn points and even requested to play twice. (Session 6)

Finally, exit tickets were done after some gamified activities and TikTok tasks to assess students' vocabulary acquisition (See Appendices E & F). Students were asked to translate specific vocabulary items into their L1 to determine whether the proposed activities (either gamification or TikTok) effectively supported vocabulary learning and retention. Given the qualitative nature of this research, grades are not presented. Instead, results are categorized as: *successful recall, partial recall or difficult recall of vocabulary* (see Figure 3). Results indicate that both tools were effective in promoting vocabulary recall. The majority of students demonstrated successful recall of vocabulary after engaging in both types of activities. A few students experienced partial recall or found it difficult to remember the vocabulary in both cases.

Regarding motivation and participation levels, students also expressed feeling more participative due to the competitive activities and that they had fun in using both tools. Students appreciated the fun, competitive aspects, which made learning vocabulary feel effortless and enjoyable.

Figure 3. Codes from Exit Tickets



In summary, the integration of TikTok and gamification effectively enhanced motivation, engagement and classroom participation, creating a dynamic and enjoyable learning environment for students with low English proficiency. These tools also significantly supported vocabulary acquisition and retention. While gamification facilitated immediate vocabulary recall through competition and repetition, TikTok enabled deeper, long-term learning by encouraging students to use new concepts in meaningful and creative contexts. This highlights the importance of pairing gamification with contextual tasks like TikTok creation to consolidate learning. Future implementations could focus on incorporating more reflective or retrieval-based practices to ensure deeper vocabulary retention.

7. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of gamification and TikTok on the vocabulary acquisition process of fourth-year ESO students. The results confirmed the initial hypothesis, highlighting the effectiveness of these tools in enhancing vocabulary acquisition and retention, as well as students' fluency, engagement and overall satisfaction with the English subject. This was particularly significant for the group of 15 students with low English proficiency, suggesting that integrating gamified activities and familiar social media platforms can positively influence language learning outcomes.

Students demonstrated notable gains in vocabulary acquisition and retention as well as understanding and internalization of new concepts. This improvement was noticed through students' TikTok video productions, where they naturally used these vocabulary items after having practiced them through gamified activities. Therefore, vocabulary was more accurately and frequently used over time, and most students showed successful recall of vocabulary after activities, as demonstrated in the exit tickets.

Similarly, both TikTok and gamification significantly increased motivation and classroom participation, as learners valued the competitive nature of gamified activities and the creative freedom of TikTok tasks. As presented in the results section, *engaging and enjoyable* were the most frequently coded themes, reinforcing the link between emotional engagement and learning. As a result, these tools led to greater speaking confidence, improving their pronunciation and expression in English, while performing enjoyable tasks. Motivation and engagement are closely linked to learning, as students feel more involved in the learning process when activities are meaningful and enjoyable. In this case, gamification and TikTok proved highly effective, with students reporting to have learned new

vocabulary through role-playing (via TikTok) and competition without noticing, and most importantly, while having fun.

This aligns with Silvia-Gutiérrez & Guzmán-Ramos (2024), who claim that the integration of TikTok into education is a strategic answer to the constantly changing educational landscape. Their research shows how TikTok increased student's grades in mathematics with an average of 1,75 points. As students are immersed in digital environments and social media, education must adapt accordingly. In this study, participants adapted naturally to employing TikTok as an educational tool, demonstrating strong digital skills in video editing and content creation while improving their English. Similarly, Affidah et al. (2021) highlighted students' attachment to social media—a connection that can be used in education's favor, as demonstrated in this study. Ardriana & Ananada (2020) also revealed significantly higher learning outcomes in an experimental group using TikTok, compared to the control group, which highlights and supports this study's findings on the effectiveness of this tool.

In parallel, research on gamification, such as that of Azzouz Boudadi & Gutierrez-Colón (2020), demonstrates that this method enhances students' positive experience—a result echoed in this study, where many participants reported to have enjoyed and learned while having fun, which enhanced their implication and involvement in the activities. Likewise, Jiménez Garrido (2023) found that gamification helped students retain more vocabulary, reinforcing this study's findings on enjoyable activities that foster better educational outcomes.

These findings reinforce the theoretical and practical implications of this study. Combining TikTok and gamification in the classroom boosts vocabulary learning, motivation, and participation, especially in students with low English proficiency. Theoretically, it

supports the idea that engagement enhances learning. Practically, it encourages teachers to integrate digital tools students already use to make learning more effective and enjoyable.

Despite the positive findings of this study, several limitations must be acknowledged. Firstly, the existing literature on gamification is very limited, and much of it consists of case studies rather than broader, data-driven research. The inclusion of quasi-experimental or longitudinal studies with larger sample sizes would have allowed for stronger comparisons and generalizability. Secondly, the scope of this study was quite narrow, focusing on a small group of fifteen students, all with low English proficiency. This limited sample restricts the applicability of the findings to more diverse student populations. Additionally, two participants refused to engage in the TikTok activities due to discomfort while being recorded, and two recently arrived students had very limited English skills, making it difficult for them to participate fully in the tasks.

Future lines of research could address these limitations by expanding the sample size and including students with varying levels of English proficiency to better understand the general impact of these tools. Comparative studies between control and experimental groups could also be carried out to examine learning outcomes more rigorously. Furthermore, research could explore alternative creative platforms for shy students who are uncomfortable with video-based tasks, ensuring inclusivity in digital learning. Finally, future studies might investigate the long-term effects of integrating gamification and social media tools on language acquisition and student motivation.

8. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the integration of TikTok and gamification in the English classroom has proven to be an effective approach for enhancing vocabulary learning, particularly among students with low proficiency levels. Gamification encourages students to engage vocabulary in a dynamic and enjoyable way through competition, repetition, and collaborative tasks. These activities not only foster active participation but also promote vocabulary retention, as students repeatedly encounter and use target words while striving to succeed in playful challenges. Nevertheless, this recall was often short-lived, which suggests the need of combining gamified tasks with other tools to ensure a long-term recall. On the other hand, TikTok provides an authentic and creative platform for students to produce natural language and apply vocabulary in meaningful contexts. The process of planning, recording and editing videos encourages learners to internalize new words, improve their pronunciation, and develop confidence in speaking English. By combining both approaches, students benefit from both the repetition and engagement of gamification, and the real world application and creativity of TikTok. Besides, students feel more motivated and engaged in the learning process because the activities align with their interests as digital natives, which mostly involve social media, digital tools and having fun. However, it is important to recognize that TikTok may not be equally effective for all types of students, as shy participants might not feel attracted and motivated by these types of tasks. Future implementations should consider offering non-recorded creative options to ensure all students can benefit from these innovative approaches without feeling pressured or excluded.

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10. APPENDICES

Appendix A. Learning Scenario

2 nd TERM	Who's the Next English Influencer?		4 TH ESO
<p>Teenagers often struggle to express themselves in English in class, relying on their first language. Among the reasons behind this speaking deficit, teachers observe difficulties with grammar internalization, verb tense confusion, and, most significantly, vocabulary deficits. Students with limited vocabulary repertoire cannot express their ideas in the target language, even when their grammar is correct. This lack of vocabulary, combined with low motivation, directly impacts students' engagement and participation.</p> <p>Aligning with this problem, this Learning Scenario aims to improve student's vocabulary acquisition and retention through a gamified experience. Students will engage and progress in a series of levels, each with its own set of vocabulary challenges (following the vocabulary from Unit 3, from the coursebook), where they "unlock" new words by completing tasks (in the form of TikTok videos) and collaborating with peers. Students will earn badges or rewards for completing challenges, mastering words or achieving certain scores. At the end of the scenario, they will apply all the knowledge acquired to design and create a TikTok video in groups.</p>			
SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES	LEARNING OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	
<p>SC3 To produce oral and multimodal texts with coherence, clarity, and appropriate register, following the conventions of different discursive genres, and participate in varied oral interactions with autonomy, to express ideas, feelings, and establish personal connections.</p> <p>SC 6 To search, select, and contrast information from various sources in an increasingly autonomous manner, evaluating its reliability and relevance according to the reading objectives, while avoiding the risks of manipulation and misinformation. Integrate and transform this information into knowledge to communicate it, and respect intellectual property.</p>	<p>To demonstrate their ability to produce clear and coherent oral texts using the vocabulary given in different contexts correctly.</p> <p>To evaluate and select relevant information from various sources, assessing the reliability of TikTok rumors or fake news.</p>	<p>(3.4) To use strategies to initiate, maintain, and conclude communication, request clarifications, rephrase, compare, summarize, etc.</p> <p>(6.3) To adopt habits of critical, safe, sustainable, and healthy use of digital technologies.</p>	

CROSS-CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES

<p>DIGITAL COMPETENCY 3 (DC3) Participate, collaborate, and interact through virtual tools or platforms to communicate, work collaboratively, and share content, data, and information, responsibly managing one's actions, presence, and visibility online, while exercising active, civic, and reflective digital citizenship</p>	<p>To use TikTok as a digital platform, employing editing techniques (either with TikTok or with other platforms such as CapCut, Video Star, etc).</p>	<p>To collaboratively create TikTok videos, adding filters, video editing techniques, as well as exploring other editing platforms such as CapCut or Video Star.</p>
<p>CIVIC COMPETENCY 3 (CC3) Analyze and understand fundamental and current ethical issues, critically considering one's own and others' values, and developing personal judgments to address moral controversy with a dialogical, argumentative, respectful attitude, opposed to any form of discrimination or violence — including misogyny, homophobia, racism, ableism, or ideological fundamentalism.</p>	<p>To analyze ethical issues related to ethical issues such as discrimination and violence, using respectful and argumentative language in discussions,</p>	<p>To prove their ability of critical thinking when discussing moral controversies using the language learnt.</p>

KNOWLEDGE (*sabers*)

+Development of self-confidence and initiative. Valuation of mistakes as an integral part of the language learning process.

+Use of common analog and digital tools for oral, written, and multimodal comprehension, production, and co-production; and virtual platforms for interaction and educational collaboration (virtual classrooms, videoconferences, collaborative digital tools...) for learning, communication, and project development with speakers or students of the foreign language.

+Respect for intellectual property and copyright regarding consulted sources and used content in personal, social, and academic contexts.

+Analysis, evaluation, and use of commonly used and relevant vocabulary for students, related to personal identification, interpersonal relationships, places and environments, leisure and free time, health and physical activity, daily life, housing and home, climate and natural environment, information and communication technologies, the educational system, and training, considering the gender perspective.

VECTORS

Democratic citizenship and global awareness: Students will engage with topics related to ethical issues, fostering respect and rising awareness of global challenges. These activities aim to develop a sense of responsibility towards society and the world, encouraging students to think critically about their role as global citizens.

Competency-based learning: This learning scenario focuses on teaching students vocabulary while helping them internalize and retain this knowledge. The goal is to empower students to apply this vocabulary in various contexts, integrating it into their speech and communication skills.

SESSION 1

TIMING	PHASES	ACTIVITIES & PROCEDURE	MATERIALS	GROUPING
5'	Warm-up: Who's the new teacher?	The teacher writes on the board 4/5 words/phrases that define her life. Students have to guess the information. For example, the teacher writes "Aslan", and they need to guess that it is the teacher's cat name.	The board.	Whole class.
5'	Intro: What's the plan?	The teacher explains that she will be teaching Unit 3 and shares the Learning Scenario's learning objectives (To reinforce vocabulary through TikTok and game techniques) and the assessment criteria.	The board.	Whole class.
25'	Practice: Family and relationships	1- Students start reading a text about the topic and try to guess the meaning of the highlighted words. The teacher will help them and explain the meaning of the words they don't know. 2- Energizer: "Do you have any siblings? Do you get along with them?"	The textbook & Notebooks.	Whole class.
15'	Production: Discussion battle.	Students are divided into 4 groups: - 2 groups (1 Pro Team + 1 Con Team) discuss together the statement "It's fun to be an only child", and 2 groups discuss "Too many children are spoiled by their parents". Both pair of groups have to convince the class. The rest of the class decides which group is more convincing and is announced as "Most convincing team" and awarded a sticker.	Sticker awards.	In groups.
5'	Review.	The teacher asks students which was their favorite word of the session.	Nothing needed.	Whole class.

SESSION 2

TIMING	PHASES	ACTIVITIES & PROCEDURE	MATERIALS	GROUPING
5'	Warm-up: What do you remember?	The teacher passes the ball to one student and asks them to say a word from the last session and define it. This student passes it to another, and so on.	A ball.	Whole class.
10'	Intro: Decoding dilemmas.	1- The teacher asks students to look at an image and explain what they think it is about. 2- The teacher provides a brief context on the former one-child Chinese policy.	The textbook.	Whole class.
20'	Practice: Collaborative reading.	Students read an article about the one-child policy that contains vocabulary from the previous session: The teacher assigns roles: 1 student reads the first paragraph aloud, 1 finds vocabulary from session 1, 1 student summarizes the paragraph with the teacher's help. In the next paragraph the teacher assigns new students, and so on. Then, the teacher plays the listening part of the text for a final passive reading.	The textbook.	Whole class.
15'	Production: I am an influencer!	2. Students have to design a short TikTok video (between 30 seconds and 1 minute), explaining their opinions on the topic, using some vocabulary items. They can imitate trends like "Get ready with me, while I explain my opinion", "POV: your parents are forced to abandon you". They design the script in class (3 or 4 sentences), and they record the TikTok at home and send it via email to the teacher.	Notebooks. A pen. Rubric (See Appendix G).	Individual work.
5'	Review: Exit Ticket.	Exit Ticket on the first bloc of vocabulary (see Appendix F)	Exit ticket sheet.	Individual work.

SESSION 3

TIMING	PHASES	ACTIVITIES & PROCEDURE	MATERIALS	GROUPING
5'	Warm-up: Passives.	<i>What do you know about passives? Do you know how to use them?</i> The teacher writes on the board "This house was built by me", "The books are read by students". Students need to get to the conclusion that in passives the action is more important than the doer.	The board A pen.	Whole class.
15'	Intro: The passive.	The teacher explains the passive, how it is formed and its uses. The rules are written on the board for students to note it down + 4 examples.	The board. A pen. The textbook.	Whole class.
20'	Practice: Detective Mission.	<i>Solve the mystery: A painting was stolen from the museum. You are detectives now!</i> The teacher divides students into groups of 3, each of them is a detective agency. Each team is given clues (one at a time) in printed cards in active voice. To "Unlock" each clue they have to rewrite the sentence in the passive. Once they have written the sentences correctly, they need to deduce what happened answering these questions: - What happened? When? And who might have done it? +1 Point for each correct transformed sentence, +2 points for solving the mystery correctly. Time bonus: + 1 bonus for the 3 fastest teams. The team with the higher score wins.	Printed cards. Notebooks. Pens.	Groups of 3.
10'	Production: Writing.	Students will be given 4 images; they choose one picture and invent a short text, in 3 lines, using the passive to explain what happens.	Notebooks	Individual work.
5'	Review.	Quiz (present + past passive).	Projector board.	& Whole class.

SESSION 4

TIMING	PHASES	ACTIVITIES & PROCEDURE	MATERIALS	GROUPING
5'	Warm-up: Let's remember the passive.	<p>The teacher writes on the board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>When do we use the passive? When we want to focus on ____</i> • <i>We use the ____ + the verb in past participle to form the present passive.</i> • <i>We use the ____ + the verb in past participle to form the past passive-</i> <p>The student who had the most creative TikTok (from session 2) goes to the board and writes what other students answer.</p>	The board. A pen.	Whole class.
5'	Intro.	The teacher explains that in this session they are going to continue talking about the present and past passive. She also asks if they have any doubts.	Nothing needed.	Whole class.
20'	Practice.	Students do a gap-fill activity from the textbook to practice the passive.	Textbook	Whole class.
20'	Production: Story chain.	Students engage in a speaking activity where they have to collaboratively create a story. The teacher gives a topic "Sara cheated on her boyfriend" and writes on the board some verbs that can be useful for students to guide the story. They have to create a story together using the passive and the vocabulary from session 1. The teacher starts the story saying, "Kim was seen with another girl at a party ". And the next student continues, until all students have contributed. The teacher writes the story on the board as they say it.	The board. A pen.	Whole class.
5'	Review.	Exit ticket: Reflection on the activity. <i>Was this activity difficult? What did you like the most? What did you like the least?</i>	Reflection sheet A pen.	Whole class.

SESSION 5

TIMING	PHASES	ACTIVITIES & PROCEDURE	MATERIALS	GROUPING
5'	Warm-up: What do you celebrate?	The teacher asks students what traditions do we celebrate that are not part of our culture? E.g.: Halloween, carnival, Santa Claus, Saint Valentine. <i>Do you celebrate them? Do you like them? Do you have any family traditions?</i>	Nothing needed.	Whole class.
15'	Intro: Customs and traditions.	Students write on their notebooks a list of 15 vocabulary items that the teacher writes on the board. Together they discuss the meanings.	The textbook. Notebooks. Pens.	Whole class.
15'	Practice: Collaborative reading.	Students are divided into 4 groups. Each group has one advertisement from. They have to discuss it in groups and write a summary in their notebooks. Then, one member of the group has to read their advertisement, and another member reads the summary for the rest of the groups to understand their text. The group who finishes earlier earns a positive mark.	The textbook Notebooks. Pens.	Four groups.
15'	Production.	Students do some activities (gap-fill and matching) from the coursebook.	Notebooks.	Whole class.
5'	Review: Exit Ticket.	Students are given 5-6 vocabulary items. They have to define them (See <i>Appendix F</i>).	Paper sheet & pen.	Individually.

SESSION 6

TIMING	PHASES	ACTIVITIES & PROCEDURE	MATERIALS	GROUPING
5'	Warm-up.	The teacher explains that they will continue practicing the vocabulary about customs and traditions from the previous session.	Nothing needed.	Whole class.
20'	Intro: Reading.	Students read a text about a Christmas tradition from Iceland: 'Jolabokafloð', containing vocabulary from the previous session. The teacher helps them understand the text.	The textbook.	Whole class.
10'	Practice.	Students complete a multiple-choice activity to check understanding and ensure they have understood the most important parts of the text. Energizer: TikTok video that shows how to pronounce 'Jolabokafloð'.	The board The video	Whole class.
15'	Production: TikTok.	1- The teacher explains to students that they will do a vocabulary test in 2 sessions (Family and relationships & Customs and traditions), so they review it. 2- TikTok: <i>Imagine you are an influencer, and you want to explain to your followers this tradition. Create a short TikTok explaining it! Use the vocabulary from p. 52 (at least 7 words). Write the script in class, and then, at home record it and send it to the teacher.</i>	Students' notebooks. A pen. Rubric (See Appendix G).	Individual work.
5'	Review: Interviews.	The teacher asks students what is their perception so far on the course: Do you feel using TikTok is making you speak more English? Do you think it is useful for vocabulary? Do you like it? Do you feel more motivated when you do your activities using TikTok? And when you have to compete with other groups? (See appendix B)	Teacher's notebook. A pen.	Whole class.

SESSION 7

TIMING	PHASES	ACTIVITIES & PROCEDURE	MATERIALS	GROUPING
5'	Warm-up: Chat or calls?	The teacher asks students whether they prefer chat conversations or phone calls, as well as which app they use most frequently. This activity encourages student engagement by connecting the discussion to their daily habits and interests, making the lesson more relatable and enjoyable	Nothing needed.	Whole class.
10'	Intro: Listening.	To finish the second vocabulary block, students listen to a phone conversation about a Japanese tea ceremony and do multiple-choice activities to check understanding.	The textbook.	Whole class.
10'	Practice: Future passive.	The teacher explains the last part of the passives: the future simple passive. Students write the rules in their notebooks, below the present and the past passives rules.	The board & Notebooks.	Whole class.
15'	Production: Random selection speaking.	Students are randomly given an active sentence; they have to make the passive out loud. The student who answers more sentences correctly earns a sticker.	The board. A sticker.	Whole class.
15'	Review: Quiz.	The teacher projects a quiz from <i>Wordwall</i> , and students collaboratively answer. Whoever answers more questions will earn a positive mark.	The projector. The test.	Whole class.

SESSION 8

TIMING	PHASES	ACTIVITIES & PROCEDURE	MATERIALS	GROUPING
5'	Warm-up: Have you traveled abroad?	To foster communication and engage students, the teacher asks them whether they have ever travelled to a foreign country. <i>Did you face any problems? Did you see many differences compared to Spain? Did you like it? Where would you like to go and why?</i>	Nothing needed.	Whole class.
20'	Intro: Reading – Across cultures.	Students are introduced to the final vocabulary block, focusing on cultures and the global world. They read four notices and engage in a discussion with the teacher to clarify and explore the vocabulary. As usual, they record the new terms and their meanings in their notebooks. In the following session, they will continue with this vocabulary.	The textbook. Notebooks & pens.	Whole class.
25'	Review: Vocabulary 1 & 2.	The last 25 minutes are dedicated to reviewing vocabulary blocks 1 and 2. Students are handed a short vocabulary test.	Test sheet & pen.	Individual work.

SESSION 9

TIMING	PHASES	ACTIVITIES & PROCEDURE	MATERIALS	GROUPING
5'	Warm-up.	The teacher hands in the results of the vocabulary test and explains that in this session they will continue talking about the last vocabulary block as well as doing a review of the present, past and future passive mixed.	Nothing needed.	Whole class.
10'	Intro: Vocabulary refresh.	To review vocabulary, they play a Hot Potato Vocabulary Game. The teacher plays a song while students pass around a ball. The student holding the ball must explain the vocabulary word (the teacher shows it) and use it in a sentence. In the next session, they will complete a quiz about this vocabulary.	Speakers & music. A ball.	Whole class.
15'	Practice: TikTok.	The teacher explains that they have to create the last individual TikTok to practice this last vocabulary block. They have to simulate a phone conversation explaining an exchange program or a vacation abroad. They have to use at least 7 vocabulary items.	Notebooks. rubrics (See Appendix G).	Individual work.
20'	Production: Passive quiz battle.	Students are divided into three groups for a competitive quiz game on the passive voice. The teacher projects a series of quiz questions, with each group taking turns to answer. If a group answers correctly, they earn a point. If they answer incorrectly, the question passes to the next group for a chance to earn the point. The group with the highest score at the end wins. This activity promotes collaboration, critical thinking, and a fun learning atmosphere.	Board & projector.	Individual work.
5'	Review: Exit Ticket.	Exit ticket on the last block of vocabulary (See Appendix F) Students have to define or translate 5 i-6 items + Exit ticket on gamification (See Appendix E).	Teacher's notebook.	Whole class.

SESSION 10

TIMING	PHASES	ACTIVITIES & PROCEDURE	MATERIALS	GROUPING
5'	Warm-up.	The teacher tells students a fact about her: <i>I struggle to refuse invitations; I am a people pleaser. How about you? Do you know how to say no'</i>	Nothing needed.	Whole class.
15'	Intro: Invitations.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The teacher explains that they are going to learn some expressions that will help them accept or refuse invitations. 2. They complete a dialogue to discover these expressions. 3. They copy these expressions in their notebooks. 	The textbook. Notebooks & pens.	Whole class.
15'	Practice: Speaking.	In pairs, students have to design a short dialogue, taking activity 11 as a sample and using the same expressions. The teacher goes from pair to pair listening to their speaking and making any necessary corrections.	The textbook	In pairs.
10'	Production.	Each pair who wants to earn an extra positive mark can perform in front of the class their dialogue.	Students' script.	In pairs.
10'	Review: Quiz.	Students are handed a very short test to review the last vocabulary block about cultures.	Test sheet & pen.	Individual work.

SESSION 11

TIMING	PHASES	ACTIVITIES & PROCEDURE	MATERIALS	GROUPING
5'	Warm-up	Reflection about <i>fake news</i> . How can we detect a fake piece of news?	Nothing.	Whole class.
5'	Intro.	<p>The teacher explains that they will do the last TikTok video, but this time in groups of 3 (5 groups in total):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Each group has to find a piece of fake news on TikTok. 2. They have to contrast information from various sources and come up with the real information. They need to create a 1-minute TikTok explaining the truth and justify their answer with profs. 3. Free format: they can do a news report, a parody, an interview or a debate. 4. Requirements: use at least 2 passive forms and 5 vocabulary items from any block. 5. Students are shown a 30-second example done by the teacher. 	The instructions projected.	Whole class.
25'	Practice: Research.	<p>Students search:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A possible piece of fake news on TikTok. • And search for information that debunks or supports the information. 	Computers, Notebooks and pens.	Groups of 3.
20'	Production Script.	<p>Each group has to write the script (4-5 sentences) for what they will say when they record themselves.</p> <p>- Requirement: All the members of the group have to speak.</p>	Students' notebooks. A pen.	Groups of 3.

SESSION 12

TIMING	PHASES	ACTIVITIES & PROCEDURE	MATERIALS	GROUPING
15'	Intro.	The teacher explains that they will go to the playground and record their final TikTok. They have ten minutes to check their scripts and make any changes or corrections.	Notebooks and scripts.	Whole class.
30'	Production: TikTok recording.	Students are taken to the playground where they have to record their collaborative TikTok. They should at least have it recorded and then if they do not have time to edit it, they can do it at home and later upload it.	Student's phones. The script.	Groups of 3.
10'	Review: Interviews.	Final interview: brief reflection on the course. Did you feel you have learnt more vocabulary by creating TikTok videos? Do you think you remember more vocabulary now? Have you noticed an improvement? Do you feel the competitive activities have made you feel more motivated to learn vocabulary? Did you see yourself more involved in the class? (See Appendix C)	Teacher's notebook. A pen.	Whole class.

METHODOLOGY:

- + Gamification methodology.
- + Communicative approach.
- + Collaborative learning.

ASSESSMENTFormative

- + Collaborative tasks done in class.
- + Teacher's observations.
- + Reflection tasks or exit tickets (self-assessment).
- + Individual TikTok's with a rubric.

ASSESSMENTSummative:

- + Vocabulary tests.
- + Collaborative TikTok.

CATERING FOR DIVERSITY:

Universal: teacher guidance, more time is given if needed in some activities, different ways of assessment according to each student's abilities, visual and short worksheets.

Additional:

- Student with Individual plan (IP): Simplification of the content for the individual activities. In collaborative tasks will be grouped with the students with a higher level.
- Student from Morocco who has recently joined the group (two months ago): The teacher speaks Arabic and can explain the tasks to her.

Appendix B. *Midterm interview*

I. Do you think using TikTok helps you speak more English?

Participant 1: It supports language production while also increasing engagement.

Participant 2: These activities represent the only context in which I speak English, as Catalan is what I predominantly use during regular class time.

Participant 3: The platform encourages the integration of multiple language skills, including vocabulary usage, grammatical structures, and pronunciation practice.

Participant 4: It facilitates pronunciation of unfamiliar words—often through independent research—and aids in retaining vocabulary introduced in class, thereby enhancing expressive ability.

Participant 5: Self-recording fosters greater speaking confidence.

Participant 6: I prefer speaking activities without recording.

Participant 7: The task design encourages oral participation, even in the face of linguistic errors.

Participant 8: The activity is perceived as enjoyable and informal, which reduces the pressure typically associated with academic tasks.

I. Do you find gamified activities and TikTok useful for learning new vocabulary?

Participant 1: Vocabulary retention is partial with gamified activities; only certain lexical items remain memorable after the activity.

Participant 2: Vocabulary acquisition improves when learners actively use the target terms in communicative contexts.

Participant 3: Encountering vocabulary in meaningful contexts enhances recall and understanding.

Participant 4: The primary focus during these activities is on spoken output rather than on lexical development.

Participant 6: Blooket and Kahoot can support vocabulary learning, though additional independent study remains necessary for full acquisition.

Participant 9: Repetition and frequent exposure to specific terms appear to support memorization.

I. Do you feel comfortable using TikTok? Do you enjoy these activities?

Participant 3: Participation is challenging due to introversion and a heightened awareness of linguistic inaccuracies.

Participant 4: The activities are engaging, though working in smaller groups is preferred for greater comfort.

Participant 5: Compared to traditional speaking exercises, the tasks are more stimulating.

Participant 6: The act of recording oneself induces discomfort.

Participant 7: Participation is manageable, though reluctance remains regarding visual exposure.

Participant 8: The format offers a refreshing alternative to conventional classroom practices, contributing to increased enjoyment.

I. Do you feel more motivated when you have to compete to win?

Participant 1: The competitive element introduces a novel dynamic that enhances engagement.

Participant 2: Competition provides motivation by fostering a sense of challenge among peers.

Participant 4: Motivation increases under conditions of fairness within the competitive structure.

Participant 5: Effort intensifies when competition is introduced, leading to higher levels of performance.

Participant 6: Competitive contexts generate stress, which can negatively impact participation.

Participant 7: The presence of competition encourages greater commitment to the task.

Participant 8: Although competition can enhance motivation, excessive seriousness from peers may diminish enjoyment.

Appendix C. *Final interview*

1. General Experience

I. How did you feel about using TikTok and gamification in the classroom? Did you find these activities fun? Why or why not?

Participant 1: The process of creating TikTok videos, including the integration of audio, visuals, and special effects, was engaging and enjoyable.

Participant 2: Although the activities were appreciated, personal shyness presented a challenge, particularly during the recording phase, which required additional time and effort to complete satisfactorily.

Participant 3: The experience was positively received due to its novelty and interactive nature, which contrasted with traditional lesson formats and enhanced overall enjoyment.

Participant 4: The activities resembled a form of play rather than conventional academic work, yet they still facilitated meaningful learning.

Participant 5: The innovative format captured attention and promoted greater classroom focus, contributing to increased engagement with the content.

2. Vocabulary Acquisition & Retention

I. Do you think using TikTok and gamification helped you learn new vocabulary more effectively? Why or why not? Can you remember any specific words or phrases you learned through these activities?

Participant 5: The activities facilitated the acquisition of numerous new lexical items, many of which remain memorable due to the engaging and playful context in which they were practiced.

Participant 2: Vocabulary retention improved as a result of repeated exposure to target words within TikTok videos and interactive challenges that required their active use.

Participant 7: While vocabulary is often forgotten shortly after introduction, this method promoted deeper retention by encouraging creative application of new terms.

Participant 9: Specific vocabulary items acquired include *parade* ("desfilada"), *fireworks* ("focs artificials"), and *expats* ("resident stranger"), which were remembered due to their meaningful use during the activities.

3. Motivation & Engagement

I. Did TikTok and gamification make you more motivated to participate in English class?

Participant 6: The integration of challenges and a point-based system increased classroom participation and enhanced overall motivation.

Participant 2: Although there is typically a reluctance to engage in spoken English, the process of creating TikTok videos reduced anxiety and facilitated more comfortable language production.

Participant 4: The competitive element introduced a sense of excitement and encouraged greater attentiveness and effort in class.

Participant 8: Confidence in using new vocabulary improved due to the opportunity to rehearse terms in an enjoyable and low-pressure environment prior to speaking tasks.

4. Challenges & Suggestions

I. Were there any difficulties using TikTok or engaging with gamified activities? If so, what were they? What would you change or improve?

Participant 2: Initial discomfort was experienced due to shyness when recording TikTok videos; however, collaborating with peers reduced this barrier and made the process more enjoyable.

Participant 3: Motivational levels varied initially, with some participants reluctant to engage. Nonetheless, peer involvement and visible enjoyment contributed to increased participation over time.

Participant 6: The experience could be enhanced by allocating additional time for video preparation and offering a broader range of thematic options to support creativity and engagement.

5. Overall Impact

I. Do you think this approach changed how you feel about learning English? If so, how?

Participant 1: This approach increased enjoyment in learning English, particularly in vocabulary acquisition, which was previously perceived as monotonous.

Participant 5: The activities facilitated incidental learning, making the process feel natural and effortless. There is a desire to incorporate similar methods more frequently.

I. If you had to describe your experience in one word, what would it be and why?

Participants 2, 4, 6, 7 & 9: The experience was described as *fun*, *motivating*, *creative*, *different*, and *easy*.

Appendix D. Observation notes

Session 1: Students were introduced to the first block of vocabulary. They seemed excited to use TikTok when they were introduced to the objectives and the LS planning. After seeing the vocabulary students engage in a game battle where they need to use the vocabulary and convince the class to agree or disagree with a statement. They looked engaged and involved in the activity. All groups were willing to win, which gives a positive impression on motivation and engagement.

Session 2: Students practiced the same vocabulary through reading. They noticed some vocabulary items from the previous sessions and mostly recalled all their meanings. After that, they were asked to design a TikTok using the same vocabulary. Some of them were creative and had many ideas. However, some of them refused to do it, so they were given the chance of doing it in class.

Session 3: students were introduced to the present and past passive. They initially did some transformations from active to passive along with the teacher to understand the mechanics, which they seemed to have. They did a couple of examples alone, without the teacher's aid and they succeeded well.

Session 4: students did some activities to practice the passive. These were corrected by the teacher, and they answered well using the steps that the teacher had explained. After it, they did an activity in groups that involved competition, and they were really involved. Gamification techniques show positive effects on students' motivation and implications.

Session 5: In this session, students were introduced to the 2nd block of vocabulary. They completed an activity in groups; they had to read a small text containing the vocabulary (each group had a different one), understand it and explain it to the rest of the class. They were encouraged to be fast, because the first group to finish it first was to

earn a positive mark. Students were very engaged and competed energetically to be the fastest team. This activity had the aim of internalizing the vocabulary they learnt previously. In order to assess if this activity had positive effects on vocabulary retention apart from fostering participation and boosting student's motivation and engagement, students had to complete an exit ticket defining some of the words, relying on their memories. The results were very positive, with most of the students answering 80% of words correctly.

Session 6: This session was planned to reinforce vocabulary retention. In the initial activity, they had to translate some vocabulary words by memory, and they succeeded well, which proves that the competitive task from the previous session helped them internalize the meanings of most of the words. Then, they played an interactive quiz on Blooket, a platform that incorporates videogames within educational questionnaires, so while they are answering and earning points for each correct answer, they also earn points for completing the videogame tasks. This quiz had students even more engaged than usual, they wanted to earn as many points as possible and even wanted to repeat the game twice. Again, gamification proves to be excellent for motivation and vocabulary retention, because most of the answers were correct. Then, during the last minutes of the class, some students volunteered to be interviewed (9 students) and most of them expressed their liking for creating TikTok videos, but specially highlighted how much they enjoyed the competitive tasks.

Session 7: Students were introduced to the last part of the passives, the future. Relying on their opinions about interactive competitive quizzes, the teacher designed a quiz to practice the passive, which they loved.

Session 8: Students had their vocabulary test for the first and second blocks. The results were surprisingly positive. The

combination of using TikTok and gamification showed great results on student's vocabulary acquisition and retention.

Session 9: Students enjoy Kahoot, and they even asked to do the activity twice. The second time they did it they got almost all answers right, which proves that gamification has a great impact on vocabulary retention. Also, students were given feedback for their second TikTok. Compared to the first one, this time they employed the vocabulary, and they integrated it very well, achieving solid and clear speeches. They expressed that they have noticed the improvement too. They noted that with the gamified activities they understand and remember more words, and then, when they have to use it on their TikTok videos it is easier for them to use them because they have already practiced their meanings. They think that with these videos they have the opportunity to speak in English and use this vocabulary, because if not, they would have not used it in speech.

Session 10: In order to reinforce their understanding of the vocabulary about customs and traditions, they were given some expressions that help them accept or refuse invitations. They performed their conversations in class and even used the vocabulary, which means they have internalized it.

Session 11: Students worked in groups and enjoyed looking for fake news through TikTok. In the script part they did not have many problems integrating the vocabulary and the grammar, but the teacher still provided guidance if needed.

Session 12: Students expressed in the interview their satisfaction with the LS in general, expressing how much they enjoyed imitating influencers and competing with their classmates. Then, they recorded their collaborative TikTok videos in the playground and enjoyed the process.

Appendix E. Exit Ticket on Gamification

Students' Reflections – Session 9

What's your opinion on gamified activities such as Kahoot & Blooket?

Student 1: These activities facilitate faster and more efficient learning.

Student 2: The high level of engagement and the competitive element foster enjoyment and sustained participation.

Student 3: Compared to more traditional classroom tasks, these activities significantly enhance the overall learning experience.

Student 4: The format increases motivation and emotional engagement, generating enthusiasm for prolonged participation.

Student 5: The combination of entertainment and competition sustains attention and promotes incidental vocabulary acquisition.

Student 6: The gamified structure encourages active participation, and the competitive aspect enhances motivation to perform well.

Student 7: Simultaneous enjoyment and knowledge acquisition create a positive learning environment.

Student 8: The competitive element reinforces memory retention, as the desire to succeed increases cognitive engagement and motivation.

Student 9: Personal interest in game-based learning makes these activities particularly effective and well-suited to individual learning preferences.

Student 10: The need to succeed fosters both excitement and anxiety, as learners feel pressure to avoid errors in a competitive context.

Student 11: These activities sustain engagement and promote active participation. During assessments, vocabulary recall is often aided by memory associations formed through the gamified questions. The competitive nature of the tasks enhances motivation and fosters a positive attitude toward academic performance.

Appendix F. Exit Tickets on Vocabulary

Vocabulary Block I, Session 2

Siblings:

Twin:

Get along:

Keep in touch:

Get in touch:

To argue:

Vocabulary Block II, Session 5

Fireworks:

Displays:

Parades:

All day long:

Roots:

Prayers:

Vocabulary Block III, Session 9

Settle down:

Get to know:

Take advantage of:

Foreign language:

To be aware of:

Expats:

Appendix G. TikTok assessment rubric

Criteria	Excellent (10-9)	Good (8-7)	Satisfactory (6-5)	Needs Improvement (4-0)
Content & Relevance	Clearly expresses an opinion or explains the policy.	The opinion or explanation is mostly clear.	The opinion or explanation is somewhat unclear.	The opinion or explanation is unclear or off-topic.
Vocabulary & Grammar	Uses 4-5 target words correctly; sentences are well-structured.	Uses 3-4 words correctly; minor grammar mistakes.	Uses 2-3 words; with errors; grammar mistakes affect clarity.	Uses fewer than 2 words or major grammar issues make it hard to understand.
Time & Length	The video is between 30 sec and 1 min.	Slightly too short or too long (5-10 sec off).	Noticeably too short or too long (10-15 sec off).	Video is far too short or too long (more than 15 sec off).
Creativity & Effort	Video is engaging, well-prepared, and submitted on time.	Video is interesting and mostly well-prepared.	Needs more effort or has technical issues.	Low effort, lacks creativity, or not submitted on time.

Total Score: _____ / 40

Comments: _____
