An Examination of the Factors and Challenges to Adopting Gamification in English Foreign Language Teaching

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Article Info	Abstract
	The purpose of this study is to identify key factors and barriers to implementing gamification in English Foreign language teaching. In alignment with the purpose of the study, the perspectives of English teachers (which grades) were obtained. This study was designed as a qualitative study. A total of 16 teachers participated in the study. Structured interview questions were used as the data collection instrument. The data obtained from the interviews were analyzed using content analysis. The result of the study demonstrated that most teachers use gamification in their English Foreign Language teaching. Some teachers who participated in the study indicated that gamification is very effective and important for their teaching and that they use gamification frequently in their teaching. Teachers emphasized that games facilitate language learning, ensure active class participation, make learning more enjoyable, and make the learning process effective and efficient. In addition, games facilitate the development of student language skills and make learning more enjoyable by making lessons interesting. Factors such as the occurrence of problems like irregularities, objections, and challenges during the game, the creation of a negative competitive environment, the extension of the time allotted for the game, and the creation of a noisy environment were found to be barriers to the use of gamification in the classroom. In addition, technical difficulties and problems with digital games, lack of technology and internet, technology, screen, and game addiction, and health/psychological issues are some of the main reasons why teachers do not use gamification in their EFL teaching.

Introduction

In their daily lives, most students play video games that require many skills such as solving problems using facts and information in context and receiving feedback, they use to win the games. Failure provides feedback and opportunities for learning, teamwork is essential, and learning and assessment are strongly linked. As educators, we can reinvent the learning experience by engaging this pervasive and compelling gaming phenomenon. Gamification is the introduction of game elements into non-game environments to leverage the motivational factors of games (Fulton, 2019).

Gamification in education is the process of turning the classroom and everyday activities into games (Haiken,

2021). It necessitates imagination, teamwork, and fun. Gamification in learning refers to the use of game-like aspects such as point scoring, score tables, teamwork, and peer rivalry to increase student engagement, help them absorb new material, and assess their knowledge (Gamification in Education, 2020). It can be employed in school-based topics, but it is also frequently used in self-teaching applications and courses, demonstrating that gamification's impacts do not end when we reach adulthood.

There are various ways to include games and game play in the classroom to increase learning and deepen student knowledge. Teachers can employ gamification features to improve learning and student engagement, whether they want to incorporate some aspects of gaming into their class or use a game platform across the curriculum. The theory behind gamification in education implies that learners learn best when they are also having fun (Fulton, 2019). Not only that, but kids learn best when they have objectives, milestones, and accomplishments to strive for, all while remaining enjoyable to the learner. According to the Gamified Learning Theory, gamification does not directly affect learning but rather activates a learning-related behavior through a mediating or regulating process (Zaric, Roepke, Lukarov & Schroeder, 2021). Learner-related behavior may be anticipated to some extent depending on how learners perceive, comprehend, and use information. Learning inclinations are the many approaches to learning. Flow theory, self-determination theory, and self-efficacy theory form the foundations for supporting gamification (Fulton, 2019).

Gamification has proven to be extremely useful in a variety of situations, including e-learning environments, educational settings, and even corporate training (Gamification in Education, 2020). Games cater to fundamental human needs (autonomy, value, competence, etc.), and enhance social skills. For example, games may feature leader boards or locations where high-scorers are shown so that players feel validated when they do well. Games enhance continuing engagement by allowing players to challenge their friends or ask others to participate. Gamification helps users interact by encouraging them to keep playing and earn more points and rewards, or simply discover more information. Davis (2014) assumes that we have gotten this far thanks to social media and word-of-mouth recommendations. He advises that now it is time to put serious games to the test to see which ones are suitable for classroom use. Rather of depending on unknown algorithms to select the greatest learning games, the education world requires a screening process that goes beyond the non-teaching game company employees who now evaluate what is good and what is not.

Gamification in English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

EFL is becoming widespread in non-English speaking countries (Turan & Çimen, 2018). To acquire a new language, learners need to stay motivated and engaged in the learning process. In recent years, EFL teachers have aimed to keep the motivation high in their classrooms by including technology and games (Turan & Çimen, 2018).

In recent days, technological advancements made their way into education. Technology can help in developing problem-solving, critical thinking, and collaborative work. These skills are essential in education as it is the skills needed in the 21st century. Gamification is a teaching technique that improves critical thinking, problem-solving,

and collaborative work (Díaz & Zajia, 2020). It is a new educational method that encourages learners to learn using game elements in the learning environment (Tamtama, et al., 2020). Games have rules, interactivity, and feedback which helps in motivating learners. Gamification is the newest strategy used in teaching EFL (Turan & Çimen, 2018). Turan and Cimen (2018) investigated the impact of gamification on vocabulary learning using a pre-test and post-test on 61 middle school students. The researchers used gamification tools such as Kahoot and Class Dojo. They have concluded that using gamification can positively affect students' vocabulary learning, and the students were motivated to learn.

Web 2.0 Tools as to Gamify EFL Teaching

Web 2.0 tools are internet tools that allow users to create content and interact with other users' content (Mohammad, Assam & Saidi, 2020). With the use of web 2.0, learning became more interactive, and student-centered. Web 2.0 allows the learning environment to become collaborative, which increases learners' academic performance. Communication, interaction, and information sharing can enhance learners' language learning. Studies showed that using Web 2.0 to teach a foreign language affects learners' motivation to learn the language (Aşıksoy, 2018). Web 2.0 has been used a lot in the EFL context, and it engages learners by making it fun and motivational.

Recently, the game-based Kahoot application has been one of the most commonly used 2.0 tools in education. Kahoot is a gaming website that creates competition between learners where students should select the correct answer. The fastest student that chooses the correct answers gets the highest scores. Kahoot presents quizzes in a game show format creating a fun environment. Another web 2.0 tool is Mentimeter for designing interactive presentations, quizzes, and word clouds. The teacher can present a question, and learners' type in their answers. The answers will immediately show on the teachers' screen (Gokbulut, 2020). A game-based environment enhances learners' engagement, learning experience, and cognitive development (Almusharraf, 2021). Learning using a game-based environment does not mean that it will increase learners' academic development in EFL. However, it increases their engagement and motivation, enhancing their learning experience.

Keeping student learning attention on the subject is one of the biggest challenges in digital age. Therefore, educators look for ways to capture student attention and motivate them to complete certain tasks and impart knowledge in an entertaining way. To achieve this goal, one of the most important techniques used in education in recent years is gamification. Therefore, gamification has become very popular in education. Many educational institutions are already using gamification to increase student motivation. Gamification can be used not only in the classroom, but also for professional development purposes. It can be used in any area where learning takes place.

There is no consensus in the literature on the definition of gamification. However, the most common description of gamification is the use of game elements and game design techniques in non-game contexts to digitally engage people and motivate them to reach their objectives (Betts et al., 2021). The history of gamification dates to the 1900's and began with cash incentives and coupon codes. It gained popularity when the internet became available

to the public. Companies adopted gamification applications for marketing purposes and used virtual rewards and other gamification incentives.

During the learning process, it is important to motivate students to focus on the lesson. In order to motivate the new generation for lessons and keeping their interest is challenging task for teachers. Gamification, or the incorporation of gaming tools into non-game environments, provides an opportunity to solve such problems. Teachers can use gamification in their teaching process for any suitable content and student profile by selecting appropriate gamification tools and supporting the content.

Gamification can be used in the context of motivational benefits, resulting psychological outcomes, and subsequent behavioral outcomes. When gamification is well designed in accordance with the intended content, student motivation to engage in learning activities will increase. Thus, intended student learning outcomes and behaviors will be achieved. Intrinsic motivation is the tool that gamification can use to enhance the student learning experience. It demonstrates a student's passion to complete a specific learning task.

The use of gamification in teaching can be defined as making learning more fun and interesting by incorporating game elements and game thinking into the teaching and learning process to motivate students and increase their engagement (Kapp, 2012). The power of gamification in foreign language learning is widely recognized among foreign language teachers. Gamification activities motivate language learners when used properly in the foreign language classroom (Lee & Hummer, 2011).

Most of the foreign language learning students face challenges from learning a new language associated with motivational factors (Al Issa, 2006). Gamification can be used as a tool to solve this problem in foreign language learning. Since gamification can be integrated into the teaching and learning process as a pedagogical approach to motivate students to learn by using game mechanisms in teaching environments. The goal of this approach is to increase student enjoyment and engagement by tapping into their interest and encouraging them to continue learning. There are several reasons why teachers of EFL use gamification as a pedagogical approach. First, gamification is a tool that gives students immediate feedback and puts them in charge of their learning. Second, the gamified learning environment gives students the freedom to fail and try learn without negative consequences. Finally, gamification brings more fun and enjoyment to the learning environment and makes learning more visible.

The Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this study is to identify the factors and barriers to adopting gamification in EFL teaching. This study is important as it measures the impact of gamification tools on EFL teaching. In line with the purpose of the study, the opinions of English teachers were obtained. In this context, the research questionnaire:

RQ1: What are the main factors that support EFL teachers when using gamification in their teaching?
RQ2: What are the key barriers that EFL teachers face when using gamification in their courses?

Method

In this part of the study, information is given about the method that was used in accordance with the purpose of the research. For this purpose, information is given about the research model and the participants of the study. The subtitles of the data collection instruments and data analysis are also included in this section.

Research Model

This study was designed as a qualitative study. Qualitative research uses data collection methods such as document review, interview, and observation. Qualitative research can be described as a research process that deals with events or perceptions in a natural setting in a holistic and realistic manner. The goal of qualitative research is not to arrive at results through numbers, but to provide the reader with a descriptive and realistic picture of the subject. Nevertheless, it is possible to make some numerical analyzes of the data collected by qualitative methods (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

The case study design was chosen for this research. Case studies are a qualitative research design in which the researcher examines a current phenomenon, process, or action in its real-world context in-depth and detail (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; McMillan & Schumaher, 2010). In other words, factors related to a situation (environment, processes, individuals, events, etc.) are examined using a holistic approach that focuses on how they affect the situation. In this method, where data are systematically collected, analyzed, and the results presented, an event, situation, or process is studied in all aspects with a limited number of samples (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). In this study, the case study design was used because it aims to identify teachers' opinions on the factors and barriers to adopting gamification in EFL teaching.

Participants

The research participants are teachers working in public or private schools in Ukraine, and Turkey. The teachers participated in this study voluntarily. Snowball sampling was used in this study. In this method, a person is selected for the subject of the research and other people are reached through this person (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). According to this method, participants were identified by asking the teachers interviewed in this study about the topic of the study, e.g., "who or whom would you recommend interviewing". The distribution values according to the demographical characteristics of the teachers participating in the study are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that a total of 16 teachers participated in the study, 11 (68.75%) from Ukraine, and four (31.25%) from Turkey. Regarding age groups, six (37.5%) teachers are under 25 years old, five (31.25%) teachers are 25-30 years old, and four (25%) teachers are over 30 years old. One of the teachers did not indicate his/her age. Seven (30.43%) of the teachers teach primary students, five (21.74%) teach secondary students, seven (30.43%) teach high school students, and one (4.35%) teaches university students. One teacher teaches adults.

However, two teachers did not indicate which grades they teach. Since some teachers teach more than one grade, the value of level is high. Participants' work experience varied from 0-14 years. Half of the participants (50%)

have 1-3 years of teaching experience. In addition, six (37.5%) teachers have 4-6 years of teaching experience, and two (12.5%) teachers have 7 years or more of teaching experience. Again, most teachers (56.25%) work in public schools, while some (37.5%) work in private schools. Although one teacher has not indicated in what kind of school s/he works.

Table 1. Demographical Characteristics of the Teachers

Variables	Category	f	%
Country	Ukraine	11	68.75
	Turkey	5	31.25
Age	<25	6	37.50
	≥25, ≤30	5	31.25
	≥31	4	25.00
	Not mentioned	1	6.25
Grade taught*	Primary school	7	30.43
	Secondary school	5	21.74
	High school	7	30.43
	University	1	4.35
	Adults	1	4.35
	Not mentioned	2	8.70
Years of experience in teaching	≥1, ≤3 years	8	50.00
	≥4, ≤6 years	6	37.50
	≥7 years	2	12.50
Current institution you work at	Public	9	56.25
	Private	6	37.50
	Not mentioned	1	6.25

Multiple options selected

Data Collection Instrument

In this study, structured interview forms were used as a data collection instrument. In the structured interview technique, the researcher asks the same questions in the same way and using the same words with each research participant. The answers given by the person are closed-ended (Türnüklü, 2000). In structured interviews, the list of questions should not be exceeded. In structured interviews, the researcher does not go beyond the set questions. The interview form consists of questions that emerged from the literature review and were created by the researchers themselves.

In preparing the interview form, a conceptual framework was created, a literature review was conducted, and interview questions used in related studies were examined. To ensure the validity and reliability of the interview form, the opinions of two different experts were obtained. According to the feedback, the necessary arrangements were made and the interview questions were finalized. The interview form contains a total of 10 questions, five

of which are related to demographical characteristics and five of which are related to gamification in EFL teaching. Care was taken to ensure that these questions were understandable, open-ended, and flexible. Prior to the interview, teachers were informed about the upcoming meeting. They were also advised of the importance of answering the questions in the interview form honestly.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from the interviews were analyzed using content analysis. Content analysis is to reach concepts and relationships to explain the data obtained. The data obtained should first be conceptualized and then organized by putting them into a systematic and logical form that corresponds to the concepts formed. Accordingly, the themes that explain the data should be identified. The goal is to present the results to the reader in an organized and interpreted form (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

During the analysis process, the data from the interviews from each teacher were organized. The next step was to code the data and create a code list. After reviewing the codes, themes were found that could group these codes under specific categories (Renner & Taylor Powell, 2003; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). Finally, the codes of the identified themes are presented in tables with frequency and percentage values.

In this final stage, detailed comments were provided to explain the relationships between the results and to clarify the significance of the results. Below the table, which was created as a result of the content analysis, one-to-one quotations were made from the teachers' opinions. In accordance with the ethical rules in the transmission of quotations, teachers were given the codes T1, T2, … T16 (Teacher 16). In addition, the researcher took care to avoid comments and generalizations in the data analysis.

To increase the reliability of the qualitative data analysis, re-coding was performed by two experts. As part of the content analysis method, some of the teachers' opinions on each topic were directly quoted to ensure the validity of the research and to strengthen the ideas presented. The coding conducted and the themes identified were reviewed by the researcher and the agree or disagree questions were discussed. The study used the reliability formula proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994) to calculate the reliability of the data analysis. As a result of the analysis, the reliability was found to be ~84%. If the reliability value is above 70%, it is considered reliable for the reliability of the study (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Therefore, the obtained result was accepted as reliable for the study.

Results

As part of the study, teachers were first asked whether they use gamification in their EFL course. If they use gamification, they were also asked how long they had been using gamification in their course. In addition, teachers were asked what type(s) of gamification activities they most commonly use in their course. The responses are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that most teachers (87.5%) use gamification in their course. Two teachers indicated that they do not use gamification in their course. Three of the teachers (18.75%) have been using gamification in their course for 1 year or less. On the other hand, half of the teachers (50%) have used gamification in their course between 2-4 years. The percentage of those who have used gamification in their course for 5 years or more is 18.75%.

Table 2. Distribution of whether Teachers use Gamification in their Courses

Variables	Category	f	%
Have you ever used gamification in your courses?	Yes	14	87.50
	No	2	12.50
How long have you been using gamification in your courses?	≤1 years	3	18.75
	≥2, ≤4 years	8	50.00
	≥5 years	3	18.75
	Not used	2	12.50
Type(s) of gamification activities most commonly used in courses	Digital	6	42.86
	Non-digital	5	35.71
	Digital & Non-digital	3	21.43

Some teachers indicated that gamification is very effective and important to their teaching and that they use gamification frequently in their course. Teachers use gamification in their course to make the class fun, activate students, and ensure their participation in the class. In addition, teachers use gamification in their course because gamification helps to motivate students, increase interest in learning, and support skill development.

The study also asked teachers to indicate the type(s) of gamification activities they use commonly in their course. A look at Table 2 shows that teachers use many gamification activities in their course. Six teachers who participated in the study preferred digital gamification tools in their course. Teachers who prefer digital gamification tools generally use games such as Kahoot, Plickers, DuoLingo, Voki, Padlet, Quizizz, and Hangman with Vocabulary in their classes.

On the other hand, five teachers prefer non-digital gamification tools. In addition, three teachers use both digital and non-digital gamification tools in their course. In general, teachers prefer many gamification activities their course that include group activities, are interactive, allow students to review information learned, and make lessons fun. For example, teachers prefer to use genres such as competition games, map travel game, card games, matching pictures with words, translation cartoons, creating fairy tales, playing bingo cards for language learning. In addition to this, they prefer utilizing interactive worksheet, matching activity games, who wants to be a millionaire, memory games, puzzles and intelligence - cards in their course beside gamification tools.

The study also included teachers' opinions on the key factors that encourage them to use gamification in their course. The related results are shown in Table 3. The teachers mentioned situations such as "Increases interest and attention to the course" (f=6), "Increases motivation" (f=5), "Makes the course attractive/entertaining" (f=4), "Makes learning more enjoyable" (f=4) as the main drivers/factors encouraging them to use gamification in their

courses. One teacher expressed his opinion on this situation with T3:

> *Thanks to games the lesson becomes more interesting and it's the best method for making students participate actively during the lesson. Even adults like to play in the classroom, it is always fun and can be very educational for everyone. It helps to develop our communication skills; some games force us to solve different problems and find solutions to them. Anyway, it won't be boring lesson and in the future it will attract more students as no one likes ordinary activities*".

Another teacher expressed his opinion on this issue with T12:

> *When my students play a game, they learn easily and they have fun. When I see their learning, I think I should use games in my lessons. They learn and have fun at the same time.*

Still another teacher expressed his opinion in the form of T8:

> *Gamification is a great way to make students enjoy their learning process while playing. Most of the time, students conceive school as an obligation without really understanding the purpose of it. With gamification, students can break their motivation barriers and realize that school is a fun and safe space to learn.*

Table 3. Teachers' Opinions on the Main Drivers/factors that encourage them to use Gamification in their Courses

Main Drivers/Factors	f
Increases interest and attention to the course	6
Increases motivation	5
Makes the course attractive/entertaining	4
Makes learning more enjoyable	4
Facilitates and encourages the development of language skills	3
Facilitates student interaction with their teachers and classmates	2
Facilitates learning	2
Ensures active participation in the course	2
Ability to easily dedicate students to school/classroom	1
Promotes curiosity in students	1
Provides opportunities for students to explore a particular topic	1
Ensuring the elimination of prejudices about school	1
Develops communication skills	1
Encouraging students to complete objectives	1
Make classroom time more efficient	1

Teachers were also asked to identify the main barriers to using gamification in their course. Their opinions can be found in Table 4. The main barriers for teachers to use gamification in their course are "Lack of technology and internet" (f=3), "Encountering disciplinary problems in crowded classes" (f=2), "Lack of motivation" (f=2), "Students' apathy" (f=2), "Technical difficulties and problems in computerized games" (f=2) was specified. One teacher expressed his opinion on this in the form of T8: "*The number of students in the classroom, motivation, and lack of technology*". Another teacher expressed T6: "*Sometimes there isn't any Internet connection in our*

school and some of my students haven't got any computers at home" in this regard. Another teacher said T13: "*Overstimulation or an addiction towards gameplay, chances are more for students to ignore other learning activities, lack of resources, subject fit*".

Table 4. Teachers' Opinions on the Main Barriers that prevent them to use Gamification in their Courses

Main Barriers	f
Lack of technology and internet	3
Encountering disciplinary problems in crowded classes	2
Lack of motivation	2
Students' apathy	2
Technical difficulties and problems in computerized games	2
Emergence of a noisy environment	1
Inability to prepare educational games suitable for every subject	1
Falling short of the lesson time	1
Lack of resources	1
Taking too much time	1
Causing addiction towards gameplay	1
Some students are not sufficiently involved in the process	1
Being prone to be tiring	1
Bringing about a negative competition environment	1

Discussion

In this section, the results of the research are discussed by comparing them with the critique of the literature review. Moreover, suggestions for future research are made based on the research findings. The purpose of this study is to explore teachers' opinions about the factors and barriers to adopting gamification in EFL teaching. In accordance with the research objectives, the opinions of a total of 16 English teachers working in public and private schools in Ukraine, and Turkey were obtained on this topic. The work experience of the participants varies from 0-14 years. It was also found that the participants have taught different grades.

As a result of the research, it was found that most teachers use gamification in their EFL teaching. Some teachers who participated in the research stated that gamification is very effective and important for their teaching and that they use gamification frequently in their course. Teachers use gamification in their course to make lessons fun, engage students, and ensure their participation in class activities. Furthermore, teachers use gamification in their course because it helps to motivate students, increase interest in learning, and support skill development. In addition, teachers report that they also prefer utilizing instructional games in their course, depending on the objectives of the lesson and the context of the subject. In their lessons, teachers generally prefer many gamification tools that include group activities, where students can practice the knowledge, they learned and make the lesson fun and interactive. Similar to our study, in the literature some of the teachers use digital games in their teaching and some use non-digital games (Talan, Doğan & Batdı, 2020). However, Alyaz and Akyıldız (2018) concluded

in their study that 3D digital games are not used enough in the foreign language learning process. Hazar (2018), on the other hand, found that teachers cannot use educational games appropriately in the classroom and they are inadequate in terms of instructional technology.

As a result of the research, it was found that teachers expressed many opinions about the most main factors that adopting the use of gamification in their classrooms. Teachers emphasized that games facilitate language learning, ensure active participation in class, make learning more enjoyable, and make the learning process effective and efficient. In addition, teachers indicated that gamification increases interest and attention to instruction and makes class time more productive by providing continuous motivation. Besides, games facilitate the development of students' language skills, make learning more enjoyable by making lessons interesting. The literature shows that gamification activities make teaching more effective by facilitating meaningful and permanent learning and increasing student interest, motivation, confidence, and participation in the course (Bai et al., 2012; Eltahir et al., 2021; Li, 2021; Talan, Doğan & Batdı, 2020).

In addition, it has been determined in the literature that games attract students' attention, facilitate the learning process and provide meaningful learning (Açış & Ayverdi, 2020; Çavuş & Balçın, 2017). Deubel (2006) also drew attention to the function of game-based learning in developing vocabulary skills and increasing mental quickness. It has been shown that playing games in the classroom has a positive effect on reducing anxiety and encouraging participation in speaking activities, increasing students' interest in the course and their ambition for success, which motivates them to play a more active role in classroom participation (Ebadi, Rasouli & Mohamadi, 2021; Grimshaw & Cardoso, 2018). In parallel with all these, the relevant literature has proven that educational games are effective in learner success, have a good effect on creating an interactive environment, and provide permanent learning and positive attitude development (Ashraf, Motlagh & Salami, 2014; Eltahir et al, 2021; Erol, Erdem & Akkaya, 2021; Mubaslat, 2012; Talan, Doğan & Batdı, 2020).

The results of the research show that there are barriers for teachers to adopting gamification in their EFL teaching. When examining teachers' opinions in this regard, it was found that factors such as the occurrence of problems such as irregularities, objections, and challenges during the game, the creation of a negative competitive environment, the extension of the time allotted for the game, and the creation of a noisy environment came to the fore. Negative aspects of gamification in the classroom also include that the games do not address the goal/topic, that some students are not engaged enough in the process, and that the teacher is tired at the end of the process. In addition, technical difficulties and problems with digital games, lack of technology and internet, technology, screen and game addiction, and health/psychological problems are some of the main reasons why teachers do not adopt gamification in their EFL teaching. Similar to the results of this study, negative situations have also been mentioned in some studies. Especially in the literature, it is claimed that problems such as disorder, noise, objections, criticism, and challenge may be encountered during the implementation of educational games in crowded classrooms (Bayram, 2015; Boden & Hart, 2018; Talan, Doğan & Batdı, 2020). Digital-based games can cause psychological problems, such as addiction, removal from social environment, and some health problems, such as eyestrain, headache, backache, sleep disturbance (Bilgin, 2015; Ellahi, Khalil & Akram, 2011; Talan & Kalınkara, 2020; Topçu, Küçük & Göktaş, 2014).

Furthermore, studies show that especially violent games individuals prone to violence in the long run (Hazar, Tekkurşun & Dalkıran, 2017). On the other hand, Alyaz and Genc (2016) noted that digital games are gaining more and more attention in language teaching, but their implementation is far from the expected and desired level due to technical, pedagogical, financial, and sociological obstacles. In addition, the literature mentions negative situations such as the lack of hardware infrastructure in the classroom, the difficulty of finding educational computer games that address the subject in the native language, the lack of game software for certain courses, the lack of technology, and the problem of internet connection (Demirbilek & Tamer, 2010; Ebadi, Rasouli & Mohamadi, 2021). Since the effective use of games can create productive learning results, it can be stated that such negative situations should be eliminated. For example, teachers should prefer games that are appropriate for the curriculum, facilitate complex problem solving, and address the development of more than one skill so that the games can be applied effectively in the classroom. It is thought that the selection of games considering characteristics such as grade of students, age group, educational content, and usefulness can create desired, productive, and enjoyable outcomes in the learning process. For games to be used effectively in the classroom, preference should be given to games that are aligned with curriculum, are entertaining and educational, are appropriate to the level of the students, and address the development of more than one skill.

The purpose of this study is to determine teachers' thoughts about the factors and barriers to adopting gamification in EFL teaching. It is hoped that the results of the study will contribute to the literature and be a resource for researchers. Further research could investigate the reasons why teachers do not use digital gamification tools more frequently in their classroom. In addition, researchers with an interest can investigate the impact on student attitudes, motivation, and achievement, as well as their psychological characteristics.

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