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## **ИЗУЧЕНИЕ ВЛИЯНИЯ ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЯ ОНЛАЙН-ИГРОВЫХ ИНСТРУМЕНТОВ НА ПОВЫШЕНИЕ МОТИВАЦИИ СТУДЕНТОВ ВЫСШЕЙ ШКОЛЫ В ИЗУЧЕНИИ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА**

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## **EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF UTILIZING ONLINE GAME-BASED TOOLS ON ENHANCING HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS' MOTIVATION IN LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

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**Аннотация:** В данной статье в первую очередь исследуется влияние использования инструментов онлайн-игр на повышение мотивации студентов к изучению английского языка как иностранного в условиях Узбекистана. В статье представлены результаты количественного исследования, в ходе которого были изучены опыт и взгляды студентов второго курса Ферганского государственного университета. Результаты опроса показали, что значительное большинство учащихся благосклонно относятся к использованию инструментов на основе

онлайн-игр на уроках EFL. Несмотря на некоторые соображения по поводу недостатков, большинство участников заявили, что использование инструментов на основе онлайн-игр может повысить их интерес и мотивацию к изучению английского как второго языка.

**Ключевые слова:** онлайн-инструменты, мотивация, преимущества онлайн-инструментов.

**Abstract:** This paper primarily investigates the influences of using online game-based tools in enhancing students' motivation towards learning English as a Foreign Language within the setting of Uzbekistan. The article contains the findings of a quantitative research that investigated the experiences and viewpoints of second-year students at Fergana State University. The results of the survey indicated that a significant majority of students possess a favorable disposition towards utilizing online game-based tools in their EFL lessons. Even though, there are some considerations about disadvantages, majority of the participants declared that using online game-based tools can enhance their interest and motivation towards learning English as a second language.

**Keywords:** online tools, motivation, disadvantages of online tools in EFL classes.

The integration of online and digital technologies in education, especially in language teaching, is becoming increasingly important in the modern world. As technology continues to advance, it is essential for language teachers to adapt and incorporate these tools into their teaching practices. Distant learning platforms have become particularly crucial in light of recent global events, specifically Covid-19 lockdown period that have forced many educational institutions to shift to online modes of instruction.

The term online tools refers to the online internet platforms or websites which allow their user to do multiple actions, including making presentations, info graphics, forming activities, editing video or audio materials [1, p.64]. To the list of functions, we can add creating and conducting online educational games as well, which is employed as a subject of our article. In terms of the target feature, a range of online platforms and Web 2.0 internet sites can be found and are being utilized by EFL teachers effectively. For example, Kahoot!.com, Jeopardy.com, Bamboozle.com, Edpuzzle.com, Socratve.com and many others.

To examine the historical development and features of online tools we can take Kahoot.com as an example. Kahoot was first introduced to the public in 2013 by Morten Versvik, Johan Brand, and Jamie Brooker as a part of the scientific project

conducted in Norwegian University of Science and Technology and soon became popular due to its interactive and game-based approach towards assessing students' foreign language competencies [2, p.219]. Educators in EFL have acknowledged the capacity of Kahoot to enhance the enjoyment, involvement, and efficacy of English language learning. Teachers can enhance vocabulary, grammar, listening, and speaking abilities by designing personalized quizzes that incorporate multimedia features. The competitive aspect of Kahoot, characterized by its leaderboard and points system, served as a strong incentive for pupils to actively engage and work towards enhancing their performance [3, p.40]. As Kahoot progressed with the addition of features, such as image and video questions, educators discovered creative methods to improve language learning experiences. Kahoot's adaptability with a wide range of devices enables students to easily participate in classroom settings or remotely, thereby fostering flexibility and inclusivity. Studies investigating the efficacy of Kahoot in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms have emphasized its beneficial influence on student involvement, drive, and educational achievements. Currently, Kahoot remains a highly valuable tool for (EFL) teachers around the globe. In order to explore the benefits of using online tools in EFL classes and understand the students' perceptions on it, we posed the following primary research question:

- a) What are the students' perceptions on using online game-based tools in EFL classes?
- b) Do online game-based tools improve students' motivations towards learning EFL?

### **Literature review**

A growing number of researchers are interested in incorporating online game-based tools into English as a Foreign Language classes because of the potential benefits which these technologies could bring in terms of motivation, integration and assessment. It has been documented by researchers such as Fuentes et al. that online games have the potential to increase student engagement and motivation, as well as provide the opportunity for immersive learning experiences [4, p.160]. Redjeki & Muhajir has declared that as a result of using online game based tools, educators can encourage active engagement and a continuous interest in the process of language acquisition [5, p.70]. In addition, academics such as Chapelle believe that these technologies improve the process of language acquisition by facilitating opportunities

for authentic language usage, expanding vocabulary, and increasing language practice. In terms of the features which are listed above, they valued the online game-based tool, Kahoot.com [6, p.576]. On the other hand, Morera (2018) have voiced their concerns regarding the numerous technical difficulties that may impede the successful implementation of using these kinds of tools in EFL/ESL classes [7, p.63]. These obstacles include limited access to technology resources and restrictions in network capabilities, and other technical and non-technical issues which can face while using online tools in classroom setting. Another downside of using online tools, he cautioned, the limited amount of time that is available may make it difficult to achieve a balance between activities that are focused on games and the requirements of the curriculum [8, p.1331]. Additionally, Sukendro et al. (2020) has raised attention to the difficulties that are connected with evaluating the results of learning in English as a Foreign Language classes that are based on games [9, p.152]. Even though, there are massive literature in the target topic, to the best of our knowledge, it does not provide an adequate understanding the psychological benefits of incorporation of online game-based technologies in EFL classrooms, which is a significant omission. As a consequence of this, there is an urgent requirement for study to investigate this facet and fill the hole that has been created. In term of fulfilling the omission, we have conducted a quantitative research which is going to be fully analyzed in the upcoming paragraphs.

## **Methodology**

In order to achieve analytic answers to the research questions mentioned in the article, we used the quantitative research method. More specifically, a structured questionnaire was used to determine the opinions of higher education students regarding the use of game-based online tools in EFL classes. The questionnaire questions are divided into two groups. The initial section has two questions designed to ascertain the level of expertise possessed by the respondents in the respective field, as well as the frequency with which they utilize it in their lectures or in the classes they attend. In the second section, there are a total of six questions that specifically inquire about the respondents' attitude towards the utilization of online tool-based language training.

The fourth year students of English language and literature (Fergana State University) faculty students are selected as respondents in the questionnaire. Consent of the dean of the faculty was achieved to visit to the EFL classes and to conduct the questionnaire with the students. 270 (52 male and 218 female) students have participated in the questionnaire and responded to all questions. All of the students are eligible to understand the questions in the survey which are written in the English language.

The questionnaire was held on Telegram – an online social networking platform and the questions were responded by students during the class in which we visited in. According to Lefever, one of the advantages of conducting the data collection process by survey/questionnaire is that respondents' identities can be anonymous which enables the interviewees to answer the questions without any pressure [10, p.575]. The language of the survey is natural and comprehensive for the students. Furthermore, all questions are based on their experience in the lessons, so it can be considered that the questionnaire is actual and valid.

### **Data analysis discussion of findings**

According to the results of the data collection tool, the overall attitude of the respondents towards using online gamification and educational tools in language classes is positive. Before looking at the rationale of this consumption in symbols, let us look at the numbers which refer to the rate of using internet-based tools in respondents' own and attending classes.

<b>Question items</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Usually</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Rarely</b>
<b>Does your teacher use online gam-based tools in your classes?</b>	43%	25%	21%	11%
	Yes	No		
<b>Do you believe online gam-based tools are advantageous in boosting students' motivation to learn the target language?</b>	94%	6%		

**Table-1. The rate of using online tools in students' own teaching classes and the classes they attend at University**

According to the results of the first stage of the survey, majority of the students who participated in the questionnaire reported that they exposure online tool-integrated classes more than sometimes. The table shows this with the percentage of 43% for those people who use Web2 tools often which refers to 117 of 270 respondents. At the same time, 25 percent of the interviewees which include 68 people said that they are issued with an online mode of teaching in their classes usually. The other 85 of the respondents which are 33% of the total number reported that they see online technology-based classes less in their language classes. Coming from the answers to the second question in the survey which identified students' overall belief about the trend, it can be concluded that nearly all (94%) of the respondents believe that using online gamification tools in EFL classes positively effect on the language teaching process.

In the second stage of the survey, respondents answered to 7 questions focused on identifying the main problems in online game-based classes and exploring more specific aspects of the classes. In the second part, students chose one of the four items: totally agree, agree, disagree, and totally disagree which can refer to the level of students' agreement on the stated idea or questions.

№	Question items	Totally agree	Agree	Disagree	Totally disagree
1	The group activities which are done through the use of online game-based tools are convenient and easy to participate.	25%	40%	33%	2%
2	When I joined to those online game-based tools in our language classes, I feel more motivated rather than traditional activities (such as group activities done without digital technologies).	25%	67%	6%	2%
3	I can see more group dynamism when we play online games comparing to the our traditional in class games such as Bingo.	18%	64%	16%	2%

№	Question items	Totally agree	Agree	Disagree	Totally disagree
4	The reason for students' higher motivation in online-game based lessons is that there is an immediate feedback feature where students can see their results right after the game finished.	24%	69%	5%	2%
5	Participating as a team is more interesting than acting as an individual in online game-based activities.	31%	49%	13%	7%
6	The teachers' role is essential in organizing a quality online game-based activities in class.	23%	58%	17%	2%

**Table-2. Understanding main challenges that students come across during the class**

According to the findings, it can be concluded that while a considerable number of respondents (65%) found using online tools in EFL classes to be uncomplicated and easily accessible, 33% of students reported difficulties in accessing and participating in online games and activities. This suggests that a significant challenge in incorporating game-based tools into EFL classes is effectively managing and implementing online tools-based teaching. This involves addressing challenges such as limited internet access and students' lack of digital literacy. The second question yielded more favorable outcomes, as 92% of the 270 respondents (249 students) expressed feeling increased motivation and enthusiasm to study the target language when participating in online gamified sessions. Simultaneously, an almost equal proportion of participants (93%) held the belief that the presence of immediate feedback is the cause for increased motivation and enthusiasm. According to Mirzayev, one of the key benefits of using game-based tools in language training is the ability to receive quick feedback [11, p.82]. This is seen through the manifestation of competition outcomes. For instance, on Khoot!.com, the screen displays the list of highest-ranked pupils after each question is answered. Upon observing their rankings

on the list, all participants strive to increase their level of engagement and utilize their full potential in order to secure higher positions.

The participants' perspective on working as a team is similarly favorable. 80% of students expressed a combination of complete agreement and partial agreement that working collaboratively as part of a team is more engaging and stimulating than to working independently. This is likely due to the fact that classroom interaction plays a crucial role in language development by offering opportunities for practicing the target language [12, p.48]. Fortunately, almost all online gamification tools offer a functionality that enables students to engage in tasks as part of a group. The following question plays a crucial role in the survey since it inquires about the teacher's position in online classes that utilize tool-based methods. Despite the essential function of the teacher in these classrooms, many educators tend to neglect their responsibilities and let students to independently complete assignments and activities during class, without the guidance of the teacher. Moreover, this is a feature that receives limited attention from experts researching the matter. Regarding students' perspectives on the teacher's involvement in online technology-based classes, 81% (58+23) (219 respondents) concurred that learners may derive fewer benefits from the approach without the support of a teacher. Undoubtedly, there exists a subset of individuals (52) who perceive the job of the teacher as relatively insignificant. Therefore, it is advisable for researchers to conduct a thorough investigation on the responsibilities of teachers in digital and online technology-based classes, as well as the appropriate conduct that educators should exhibit in such classes. The final question pertains to the students' overall preference about the style of teaching classes: online tool-based or traditional. The results indicate that while 21% (57 respondents) expressed a preference for traditional offline instruction, a substantial majority of 79% (213 respondents) considered that lessons based on online resources are more preferable.

## **CONCLUSION**

In order to improve students' competency in foreign languages, it is vital to take into consideration psychological aspects such as motivation and the dynamics of individual groups. Simultaneously, it becomes obvious, through the evaluation of questionnaire responses and the subsequent analysis of the conversation, that the usage

of online game-based tools can considerably boost the motivation of students and the group dynamic of the classroom. A strong illustration that demonstrates the need of motivation in language learning courses is provided by Pavlov's theory of conditioning. The premise of Pavlov's theory of conditioning states that when an organism is exposed to stimuli, it creates a reaction through particular structures, such as salivation [13, p.280]. In the process of language training, language learners who are sufficiently motivated are able to respond to stimuli by producing linguistic elements. This situation can be related with the process of language instruction. The use of reinforcement tactics, such as punishment or rewards, that are dependent upon the performance of the learners is something that Gardner recommended as a way for language educators to improve the learning process [14, p.147]. Consequently, the probability of students reaching the same degree of success may either grow or decrease as a consequence of this. In this particular setting, the reason for employing the theory is based on the large impact that having an understanding of the psychological components of language instruction has on the enhancement of the language skills of students. It is possible for a language instructor to get much better results in their instructional sessions if they have a solid understanding of the notion of how to improve student' motivation and interest towards learning a foreign language.

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## **ФОРМИРОВАНИЕ СОЦИОКУЛЬТУРНОЙ КОМПЕТЕНЦИИ НА УРОКЕ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА НА ОСНОВЕ АУТЕНТИЧНОГО ТЕКСТА**

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## **FORMATION OF SOCIO-CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN ENGLISH LESSONS BASED ON AN AUTHENTIC TEXT**

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**Аннотация:** статья посвящена проблеме эффективности использования аутентичного текста с целью развития социокультурной компетенции на уроке