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**GAMIFICATION IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING: CURRENT TRENDS**

*The article deals with gamification as an innovative educational strategy in the process of teaching a foreign language in non-linguistic higher education institutions. The article analyzes modern concepts and methods of foreign language learning based on the principles of gamification, which will allow to modernize the foreign language course at a non-linguistic university. Theoretical foundations and practical aspects of gamification implementation, which differs from traditional game-based learning by using specific game mechanics, are analyzed. The article provides a general definition of the term “gamification” and presents general data on the use of gaming tools in non-gaming areas, where game elements are used to motivate and make tasks novel, promote the development of dialogic speech, and obtain better results. The importance of using systems of points, levels, badges, leadership boards, rewards and digital achievements to increase motivation, engage and encourage students to engage in active learning activities will be emphasized. Game elements contribute to better learning of lexical and grammatical material, development of communication skills, group cooperation, and sustained interest in the subject. The study summarizes the work of both foreign and Ukrainian scholars on gamification in modern education. Considerable attention is paid to the digital platforms MyGrammarLab and Lingua Attack, which offer interactive, leveled, multimedia and adaptive learning with instant feedback. The article contains information about the prospects for distance learning using the basic concepts of gamification. Examples of gamification in classrooms are presented, including role-playing games, interactive quizzes, and simulations that form language and social competencies. The risks associated with oversaturation, decreased motivation and monotony, as well as dependence on external incentives are considered and analyzed. Practical advice is offered on how to strike a balance between entertainment and learning. The study confirms the effectiveness of gamification as a means of improving the quality of foreign language education in higher education institutions.*

**Key words:** gamification, educational process, game technologies, game, foreign language.

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**ГЕЙМІФІКАЦІЯ У ВИВЧЕННІ ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ: СУЧАСНИЙ СТАН**

*У статті розглядається гейміфікація як інноваційна освітня стратегія у процесі викладання іноземної мови у немовних закладах вищої освіти. Проаналізовано сучасні концепції та методи вивчення іноземних мов на основі принципів гейміфікації, що дозволить модернізувати курс вивчення іноземної мови нелінгвістичного університету. Аналізуються теоретичні засади та практичні аспекти впровадження гейміфікації, яка відрізняється від традиційного ігрового навчання використанням конкретних ігрових механік. У статті наведено загальне визначення терміна «гейміфікація» та представлено загальні дані використання ігрових засобів у неігрових сферах, де застосовуються ігрові елементи задля мотивації та надання завданням новизни, сприяння розвитку діалогічного мовлення, отримання кращих результатів. Наголошують на важливості застосування систем балів, рівнів, бейджів, лідерських дошок, винагород і цифрових досягнень для підвищення мотивації, залучення та заохочення студентів до активної навчальної діяльності. Ігрові елементи сприяють кращому засвоєнню лексичного та граматичного матеріалу, розвитку комунікативних навичок, співпраці в групі та стійкого інтересу до предмета. У дослідженні узагальнено доробок як зарубіжних, так і українських учених щодо гейміфікації у сучасній освіті. Значну увагу приділено цифровим платформам MyGrammarLab і Lingua Attack, які пропонують інтерактивне, рівневе, мультимедійне та адаптивне навчання з миттєвим зворотним зв'язком. Стаття містить інформацію про перспективи дистанційного навчання з використанням базових концепцій гейміфікації. Наведено приклади реалізації гейміфікації в аудиторіях, зокрема рольові ігри, інтерактивні вікторини, симуляції, що формують мовні та соціальні компетентності. Розглянуто та проаналізовано ризики, пов'язані з перенасиченням, зниженням мотивації та одноманітністю, а також залежністю від зовнішнього заохочення. Запропоновано практичні поради щодо забезпечення балансу між розвагою і навчальною метою. Дослідження підтверджує ефективність гейміфікації як засобу підвищення якості іноземної освіти в умовах ЗВО.*

**Ключові слова:** гейміфікація, навчальний процес, ігрові технології, гра, іноземна мова.

**Problem statement.** The integration of foreign language pedagogical and professional components of the educational process of a non-linguistic university involves mastering skills that will ensure the competitiveness of future agricultural specialists in Ukraine. The latest technologies and approaches to teaching a foreign language will help a modern university teacher to achieve the European quality of education. Of course, this requires some effort and reformatting of the foreign language learning process, but the goal is worth it. An alternative to traditional approaches to teaching a foreign language is the gamification of the learning process, which allows you to increase the degree of student motivation to master professional skills, leadership qualities and the ability to convey their own thoughts in a foreign language. The need to modernize a foreign language course at a non-linguistic university through the use of game technologies for mastering professional competencies determines the relevance of the study. Undoubtedly, gamification has a social character; people use games in a developmental way from birth, studying in educational institutions and subsequently improving their professional skills during corporate trainings. Defining the essence of gamification in education, it is worth noting that the elements of the game are indirectly related to the acquisition of certain knowledge, in the case of our study, in a foreign language or professional skills through “cognitive interest, interactive interaction and a high level of motivation.” Scientists have long researched game theories, and the use of role-playing games or game situations in teaching foreign languages to students has been very popular since the end of the last century. The communicative methodology seemed to have nothing new to offer in foreign language teaching. One of the objectives of this study is to prove the opposite. It is possible to gamify any routine activity with low motivation for the sake of an individual’s interest in performing this activity. Based on this statement, the gamification process turns into a “promising innovative means of improving the foreign language competence of higher education students”.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** The concept of “gamification” has entered the scientific discourse relatively recently. Many sources date the emergence of this term to 2010. Despite the considerable interest of researchers in the issue of gamification of the educational process, the question of its effective use in foreign language classes requires in-depth study, which is still ongoing, but many modern foreign and domestic experts offer their definitions, views and opinions on gamification, its means and effectiveness in the educational process.

Among the foreign experts who have made a significant contribution to the study, we can first of all highlight the works of M. Barber, K. Verbach, S. Deterding, D. Clark, E. Cornoran, J. McGonigal, L. Sheldon. A significant contribution to the substantiation and development of the main provisions of gamification was made by representatives of national science – Y.A. Gapon, L.B. Kotlyarova, T.V. Pankiv, T. Svyrydiuk and others. Scientists agree that games are a powerful tool that allows you to effectively learn new material or train and consolidate existing skills and abilities.

**The aim of this study.** The purpose of the article is to highlight the theoretical foundations and main aspects of the mechanism of gamification of a foreign language course at a non-linguistic university.

**Presentation of the main material.** Thanks to gamification, people perceive the world in a new way. Teaching how to get positive experience from life is the primary task of a university teacher of any specialization. First of all, we have to define the difference between game technology and a gamified university class. According to N. Onyshchenko, game technology is a certain system of methods and techniques of a teacher’s work, which is subject to a certain goal and contributes to the development of students’ personal qualities. The author includes both business and computer games in game technologies.

The main difference between gamification and gaming technologies, according to T. Shelestova and M. Tkachenko, is that reality does not become a game, despite the use of game elements and game guidelines, but remains reality. In a general sense, gamification is the use of gaming approaches for non-gaming processes, when gaming elements (awarding points, badges, scoring, competition, achievements) are applied in non-gaming situations to make performing routine tasks a more interesting experience. Gamification affects various spheres of human life, as gaming is not only present in the educational process. Numerous promotions, bonuses, and loyalty programs are examples of gamification in everyday life. It helps to quickly engage modern youth who are experienced in using computer games and social media. But, as mentioned above, gamification is most valuable in education (Кутасевич, Якубовська, 2021: 80).

A game is usually an active activity with defined rules and goals. Victory and defeat are an integral part of the game, stimulating participants to be active and improve their skills. Although the main attention in games is usually focused on the game itself, rewards or recognition can also be important. Creating complex and high-quality games can be a time-consuming and costly process due to the need to develop the

story, gameplay, graphics, etc. Games include diverse scenarios and stories that add depth and intrigue to the gameplay, stimulating participants to a deeper engagement with the gaming process.

Gamification involves the use of game elements, such as points, rewards, or defined tasks, to stimulate participants to be active and achieve certain goals. In a gamified setting, failure or achievement can be strategically designed to encourage participants towards specific behaviors or learning outcomes. The core of gamification lies in leveraging inherent game elements to motivate and challenge engagement, even if the game itself doesn't offer tangible rewards. This can include points, levels, leaderboards, and other incentive methods. In comparison with a real game, gamification is typically simpler and more accessible to implement. Often, gamification provides motivation through game mechanics without the need to create one's own game. Gamification elements are often added to learning management systems or other platforms for convenience and to improve user motivation. They can enhance participant engagement and interest in the learning process or task completion.

The term gamification has been around for a long time. Gamification as an activity helped the Cracker Company achieve success in 1912, when it began adding surprise toys to its products. Today, the term gamification has gained great popularity and has several interpretations, which often boil down to one thing: the use of gaming activities in a non-gaming context. If we go a little deeper into understanding the meaning of the term, we will realize that gamification improves the joint activities of children and adults (Онищенко, 2021: 264).

Gamification in English language learning uses game elements and principles to engage learners in active language learning. This approach uses game mechanics such as badges, levels, points, and other rewards to motivate learners to achieve certain goals. When learning English, you can also use game tasks, online games, interactive exercises, or special mobile applications. Gamification tools include structured reward systems, competition and collaboration opportunities, and personal achievement tracking features. This helps to create a stimulating environment that increases motivation and desire to learn the language. For example, using a vocabulary game where students earn points for each correct word or sentence can encourage them to actively use English to achieve the game's goals and earn rewards.

All of this contributes to improved English language learning outcomes, increased motivation, and a positive attitude toward language learning, which in turn leads to a more effective learning process and more sustainable

language acquisition results. The market for game-based learning is gaining more and more recognition around the world by schools, institutions, organizations, and businesses. Consequently, teachers have identified a number of important aspects of this learning.

It's worth emphasizing that some students are naturally motivated, while others need a push. Game-based learning can have a huge impact on motivation by "rewarding" effort. And since these achievements are associated with positive experiences, children can remember them for a long time. Gamification in the English classroom can give students a challenge and at the same time make them interested in what is happening around them. The more opportunities students have to interact, the more likely they are to participate in a lesson or activity. This increases student attendance and motivation and reduces the time it takes to get everyone back on track after interruptions (Пасічник, 2018: 344).

Gamification makes learning informative, fun, and engaging. It gives learners more control over their learning. Learners decide how long it takes them to complete a task. In addition, adding interactive elements to lessons creates an immersive learning experience and makes learners feel involved in the entire learning process, which increases motivation.

Gamification is particularly effective in helping students retain information longer after completing a course. Studies have shown that when people play games or do other activities that require them to learn new information, their brains absorb this knowledge faster than when they read information or watch videos.

Game-based learning has the potential to develop a wide range of skills and abilities. In the context of English language learning, it promotes communication by enriching vocabulary and grammar variation. Game scenarios can help learners develop their ability to communicate, adapt what they have learned to real-life situations, and improve grammatical structures in a natural context. In addition, game-based methods can enrich vocabulary by creating situations where learners use new words and expressions in a comfortable and motivating environment. Games also promote the development of cooperation, planning, and strategic thinking skills, which are useful in learning any language (Сарап, Лазарук, 2020: 92).

These skills are important both for language learning and for the development of general cognitive and social skills, which become important in various aspects of learning and life in general. The game should set a goal to be realized, whether competitive or cooperative, which will encourage potential players to participate. This creates interaction through elements that drive motivation.

In our opinion, the use of game technologies has become particularly important in the process of teaching foreign languages. Teaching material to students using game elements has proven to be a powerful tool that helps create a unique and safe learning environment with a wide range of support options, significantly helps to memorize the target material, and unlocks the hidden abilities of students through game moments.

There are already many different tools used to increase interest in learning a foreign language. In particular, the MyGrammarLab platform from the international organization Pearson Dinternal Ukraine is widely used in the Ukrainian market. This platform has a large number of learning resources, exercises and additional material for learning foreign languages. Almost every official textbook of this publisher has additional online resources for both teachers and students. It is also worth noting that this platform has instant automatic assessment of the results of tasks, which is very useful and appropriate for self-education.

It should be noted that the Lingua Attack platform, which was created by media and video game specialists in collaboration with teachers and neuroscience experts in 2019 as an innovative online language resource for the modern “digital” generation of foreign language learners, and which has 26 interface languages and 6 main languages for learning (English, Spanish, French, German, Portuguese, Chinese). The level of difficulty varies from A1 to C1 (according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), where A1 is elementary proficiency and C1 is fluency), which is important in group learning when there is an uneven level of student knowledge. This platform exists in a browser version and also separately as a mobile application (Figueroa, 2021: 35).

As an alternative to online platforms, we should mention individual games, not platforms in general, which are used to prepare for exams or to repeat the material studied in a game form, which increases the percentage of repetition and is useful for students of any category (visual, auditory or kinesthetic) to successfully pass tests or exams. “The material learned through video games is retained in students’ memory longer and is more structured,” says Rui Silva, associate professor of accounting at the University of Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro, Portugal, who used ‘serious’ games to work with Portuguese students in the 2017–2018 academic year. The Accounting game was used for first-year economics students and first-year management students, and the Marketing game was used for first-year marketing students. “Both games included a quiz with questions regarding the syllabus of core disciplines. Students from several universities

participated in the experiment. To begin, registration and access were required individually or as part of a group. The obtained results were analyzed, and it was proven that a high percentage of those who used games in their preparation successfully passed the corresponding exam.”

However, there is a risk of over-saturation and this is one of the possible disadvantages of gamification. This can happen when a game or reward system is used too often or continuously, which can lead to a decrease in the effectiveness of such incentive methods. Constant rewards can lead to participants expecting a reward for every action, making them less motivated to complete tasks on their own. Constant use of games or rewards can lead to participants becoming bored with them and losing interest in learning or completing tasks. To avoid this risk, it is important to carefully plan and develop the gamification system, using rewards or game elements with balance and regular updates to prevent monotony and excessive predictability.

There are practical tips and strategies for implementing gamification in the English classroom that can help improve the language learning process and make it more engaging for students. Firstly, it is important to set clear learning objectives and align the game elements or activities with these goals. It is also important to choose the right game or activity that matches the language level of your students. Encouraging cooperation and competition by creating group tasks or competitive games promotes active language learning. Rewarding and encouraging students, creating a reward system, and providing material rewards also motivate learning. It is important to monitor students’ progress and adjust game strategies based on feedback. It is also important to create a positive and inclusive environment where students feel comfortable and can actively participate in gamified activities.

**Conclusions.** Gamification is an effective tool for increasing learners’ motivation, engagement, and activity in the process of learning foreign languages. The use of game elements such as points, rewards, levels, leaderboards, etc. creates an engaging and dynamic learning environment where students enjoy learning. Gamification allows teachers to collect data on students’ progress, provide individualized advice, explanations, and recommendations, and choose the level of difficulty of learning materials according to individual needs, which increases learning efficiency. Further research in this area can help to introduce gamification into the process of learning foreign languages, including English, even more effectively and maximize educational results.

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