



Introduction

In recent years, gamification has emerged as an innovative approach to language learning, leveraging game design elements to make learning activities more engaging and effective. Research has shown that applying gamification strategies in listening instruction can significantly improve students' comprehension skills by promoting active participation and sustained motivation (Rodríguez, 2023). Gamified tasks that include badges, leaderboards, and competitive elements help transform traditional passive listening exercises into interactive experiences that sustain students' attention and encourage repeated practice (Hariadi et al., 2021). Such approaches also foster collaboration and social learning through group activities embedded within gamified quizzes, contributing to deeper cognitive engagement (Juntunen, 2019).

Despite the promising findings, there remain gaps in understanding how these gamified strategies affect different aspects of listening comprehension, such as listening for gist versus listening for specific details, especially from the qualitative perspectives of the learners themselves (Syafii et al., 2020). Most existing studies rely heavily on quantitative pre- and post-test comparisons, often overlooking qualitative insights into how students perceive gamification, how it influences their motivation and self-efficacy, and what challenges they face during gamified listening tasks. Addressing these gaps through qualitative research can provide a richer, more nuanced understanding of gamification's pedagogical impact and reveal practical implications for enhancing listening instruction.

Gamification in language learning can be theorized through the lens of self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), which emphasizes the role of intrinsic motivation in effective learning. By integrating elements such as points, badges, and immediate feedback in gamified quizzes, learners experience increased autonomy, competence, and relatedness—key psychological needs that foster intrinsic motivation. This heightened motivation is critical for engaging with complex skills like listening comprehension, which requires sustained attention and active processing of auditory input. Furthermore, constructivist learning theory supports gamification by advocating learner-centered, interactive approaches that encourage exploration and meaning-making. Gamified quizzes provide an environment where learners actively participate in listening tasks through challenges and rewards, thereby reinforcing listening strategies and enhancing cognitive engagement. This integration of motivational and constructivist perspectives underscores how gamified quizzes can positively influence listening outcomes by making learning both enjoyable and effective.

The urgency to conduct this research is heightened by the rapidly changing educational landscape, accelerated by the increasing prevalence of online learning environments where traditional teaching methods may fall short of engaging digital-native learners (Mazabel, 2021). As educators worldwide seek to integrate technology



meaningfully to foster language development, evidence-based qualitative insights into gamification's effects on listening comprehension are critical. This study focuses on junior high school students, a population at a key developmental stage for language acquisition, where strengthening listening skills can significantly support their overall academic success and communication competence. By exploring gamified quizzes from students' viewpoints, the research aims to inform both theoretical frameworks and practical applications, supporting more effective and personalized English listening instruction.

Many studies have looked into how gamification affects language learning, but there are still big questions about how Gamified Quizzes affect students' listening comprehension and overall engagement during listening activities. Listening is a skill that most people agree is hard on the brain because it requires focused attention, sustained motivation, and active processing of sounds. Traditional teacher-centered approaches frequently fail to sustain student engagement, especially among digital-native learners who respond more favourably to interactive and gamified educational settings. These deficiencies in the literature motivated the current study to investigate how students understand listening materials when taught through Gamified Quizzes and to assess whether this method provides motivational advantages that exceed those of conventional instruction.

In light of this need for a deeper understanding, the study seeks to explore the degree to which Gamified Quizzes can improve students' listening comprehension and to assess whether this pedagogical approach fosters greater motivation and engagement compared to traditional listening activities. Instead of just looking at the scores before and after the test, the study also wants to know how the elements of gamification, like rewards, competition, feedback, and challenge, might help people understand better and stay interested in learning. The study offers a more comprehensive understanding of gamification's operation in actual classroom settings by analysing these elements collectively.

The importance of this research is found in both its theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the study enhances current discourse on gamified learning in second language acquisition by providing empirical evidence regarding the impact of game-based elements on both cognitive outcomes and motivational processes critical to listening development. In practice, the results should help teachers use Gamified Quizzes in their listening lessons to make the learning environment more interesting and focused on the students. The study underscores the necessity for educational institutions to endorse technology-enhanced pedagogies that correspond with students' learning preferences. Additionally, the findings may motivate subsequent researchers to explore gamification in various language skills or educational tiers, thereby enhancing comprehension of how digital motivational strategies can elevate learning outcomes.

Method

This study utilised a quasi-experimental design, specifically the Non-Equivalent Control Group Design, typically employed when random assignment is unfeasible.