

GAMERS AS TEACHERS: USING GAME ELEMENTS TO GAMIFY LANGUAGE

LEARNING AND TEACHING

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Trabajo de grado para optar al título de licenciado en inglés y español

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Resumen:

Este trabajo de grado hace parte de un macro proyecto acerca de gamificación conducido por el grupo "gaming and digital literacies in second language contexts" (#TeamLaV), el cual hace parte del semillero de investigación LSLP (Literacies in second languages project). Por lo tanto, este trabajo se centra en cómo los elementos y los principios de los juegos pueden ser implementados por los maestros dentro de las aulas de clase, con la intención de involucrar los estudiantes en el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua y la posibilidad de tenerlos en cuenta dentro de ambientes educativos.

Para hacer esto se usó la metodología de etnografía digital para reunir información referente a los elementos de los juegos que pueden usar los docentes para generar motivación y compromiso al adaptarlos al contexto escolar. De la misma manera, se implementó la auto etnografía digital dado que los investigadores también están inmersos en el efecto motivacional que tienen el espacio de los videojuegos acorde a su composición. Finalmente, se presentan los hallazgos encontrados gracias un análisis de los datos en el que se contemplan diversos juegos, comunidades e interacciones en los espacios digitales mencionados tal como los videojuegos, incluyendo las experiencias de los investigadores en dicho campo.

Palabras clave: Gamer, maestros, elementos del juego, segunda lengua, gamificación.

Abstract:

This thesis is part of a macro project about gamification conducted by the group of "Gaming and digital literacies in second language contexts" a research student team also known as #TeamLaV, which is part of the Literacies in Second Languages Project student research lab. Therefore, this work focuses on how the elements and principles of games can be implemented by teachers within the classrooms, with the intention of involving students in the learning of a second language and the possibility of taking them into account within educational environments.

To do this, digital ethnography was selected as methodology to gather information regarding the elements of the games that teachers can use to generate motivation and commitment by adapting them to the context of learning and teaching. In the same way, digital auto ethnography was implemented since the researchers are also immersed in the motivational effect that the video game spaces have according to their composition. Finally, the findings are presented as a result of the data analysis in which various games, communities and interactions are contemplated in the digital spaces such as video games, including the experiences of researchers in this field.

Key words: Gamer, teachers, game elements, language education, gamification.

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Introduction

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To do this, digital ethnography was selected as methodology to gather information regarding the elements of the games that teachers can use to generate motivation and commitment by adapting them to the context of learning and teaching. In the same way, digital auto ethnography was implemented since the researchers are also immersed in the motivational effect that the video game spaces have according to their composition. Finally, the findings are presented as a result of the data analysis in which various games, communities and interactions are contemplated in the digital spaces such as video games, including the experiences of researchers in this field.

There are social conceptions of videogames that recognize them for being fun and joyful, as the main idea is to produce merely entertainment. However, before the game is launched its composition needs to be selected and implemented. In this part, game makers select carefully which game elements are going to be included so the game can be enjoyable to different audiences. As a result, the game acquires an engaging effect that leads the gamer to enjoy it and remain committed and motivated from the beginning to the end. Because of the previous statement, this work looks at the game elements as a possible resource to rethink language teaching and to make it more enjoyable so the students are

motivated in their learning processes. The correct game elements moved into teaching give the opportunity to the teacher to have a more successful language teaching.

Statement of the problem

Today, education and especially language teaching are facing challenges concerning the new generations of learners and some of the late advances of technology that influence the way learning is conceived (Sánchez, 2019). These challenges have transformed the teacher's role in terms of communication, interaction and teaching strategies (P21, 2014). Thus, the classroom settings and the approaches that we as teachers use to get the students involved into learning are some features that need to be in constant evolution.

When we talk about videogames and education, we can tell for sure how this conjunction has gained a great deal of traction in the past two decades. Since the first part of the century, there have been some notions about how much we can learn about videogames in education. Some of these ideas have inspired scholars all over to think about the idea of gamification or bringing principles from video games into educational settings (Gee, 2003). In recent years, we have seen ideas around the use of gamification in everyday life, teaching, and even second language teaching.

What we know is that games in general have the particularity to captivate and unite people from all over the world. But, how does this happen? What we have found out so far is that games are composed of several elements that makes them engaging. There are around 140 game elements (Sillaots, Jesmin & Rinde, 2016). The configuration of these game elements is what allows a game to be engaging, to catch people's attention and initiate a bond between the game and the gamer.

As a result of these gamer-game interactions the gamer starts to learn a lot of features as the rules, goals, challenges, roles, the lore etc. That at the beginning he was not looking

for, and kept the gamer immersed in the game. As gaming and gamification are becoming a subject of interest in education, it is important to understand that the use of game elements in the classroom is not intended to turn the class into an entire game. Rather, the goal is to collect the most engaging configurations of the games, translate them into the class context, and emulate the appealing effect of games. The biggest achievement in terms of education is learning, but it is often mistaken for grades.

Therefore, the main idea of the game elements is to bring into the classroom satisfaction and knowledge by involving the student based on them. Although these game elements were not conceived with this purpose, the plan is to turn them into learning tools. To be able to create a productive environment inside the classroom through a composition of game elements it is necessary to understand that we are not going to use all the game elements. What we want is to assemble the best elements that can be implemented to make the classroom and the class more enjoyable.

Purpose and Question

This work intends to achieve two main goals. First to analyze the use of game elements as tools to rethink language teaching, especially how the motivational and commitment elements of games can be moved into educational environments. Second, we will suggest some uses and applications of game elements inside learning environments. The following research question will address these purposes: *How can teachers employ game elements as a mechanism to innovate, rethink and redesign their teaching practices?*

Literature review

Characterizing the games inside education as a tool for improvement, involves understanding the course that the games have had in the teaching environment. When referring to games inside the classroom there are two common assumptions in research. First, the use of a play in a class as a way to entertain the students. Second, the use of rewards and punishments as a method to gain control. Plass' (2017) argued that there is a place for games to take a part in an educational environment, but the potential will only be met if it is tackled correctly.

On the other hand, Nicholson (2015) exposed that the rewards method was firstly taken from the casinos where rewards were given regularly to the player as an incentive to keep him playing. However, both assumptions have a factor in common, the motivation. The argument for both is that games for its own were created for entertainment processes and at the same time they needed to give the player the motivation and engagement to keep playing.

For their work they categorized engagement from the INTERACT model of learner activity (Domagk, Schwartz, & Plass, 2010) as it divided engagement in three parts; Cognitive, affective, behavioral. The idea for this division inside the project was to carefully maneuver which elements from games can be used and how they psychologically speaking

affected the students. From the affective approach they acknowledged the importance for players experiencing emotions, attitudes and beliefs. Similarly, it was the case for the behavioral approach that they saw improvement by providing experiences that they enjoyed and wanted to continue (Plass, Homer, Kinzer, 2019). Leading to assume that even games moved to a game-based activity was efficient to produce motivation.

Conversely, Nicholson (2015), stated that the rewarded-base gamification was worthy in a few scenarios, and only if the idea was a short-term change. The reason for that, was that this method will work until the rewards are given. Once the rewards stop it doesn't matter if it is the same activity, as the reward is not at the end, the outcome won't be satisfactory. However, it did prove to be a good method for a skill-learning process as once the skill is learnt the reward is given.

Part of his research is the meaningful gamification where he states that the problem about it is that a meaningful process is directly connected with each individual. As people engage in it because of intrinsic motivations or personal matters. In order for something to be meaningful, there has to be a connection to something or someone in the individual's past (Nicholson, 2015). However, with gamification the learners have the chance to learn concepts in different ways and to train different skills giving a higher chance to each learner to find a meaningful connection to the material. Conversely, there have been studies about the potential of games and game elements in education environments.

Squire (2014), stated that in order to take advantage of the benefits that the games could have inside an educational environment, it was necessary to leave aside the social consequences that game play might have. On this research he highlights the possibilities of game-based material like interactive stories, digital authoring tools, and collaborative worlds. Video Games are useful instruments for learning specific strategies and for acquiring knowledge (Gros, 2007).

Also, Gede Putra Kusumaa, Evan Kristia Wigatib, Yesun Utomob, Louis Khrisna & Putera Suryapranatac (2018), surveyed 33 papers about gamification models in education in 4 different domains: generic, STEM, history and language.

The research was conducted under 4 statements:

- Comprehensibility
- Description
- Examples
- Comments

The game elements that were case of study:

Objectives	Level	Acknowledgement
Point	Competition	Novelty
Data	Puzzle	Classification
Scarcity	Sensation	Cooperation
Time pressure	Chance	Economy
Choice	Renovation	Social pressure

This survey was answered for 11 experts in education, agreeing that these game elements would fit in education. In the same line, they analyzed the effect that these elements had in learners' behavior, where most of them faced an increase in engagement and motivation. Concluding that the use of game elements applied in models could work as a tool to increase motivation, achievement and engagement in learning activities.

Conceptual framework

Part of the conceptual framework draws from multiple discussions within #TeamLaV. Our shared focus is to study the strategies and interactions that gamers engage in as part the playing experience and how to turn those experiences into instructional practices. Therefore, gamification and game elements are part of this project and put together the basis of this conceptual framework.

Gamer

According to De Grove, Courtois & Van Looy (2015), “gamer identity is for a significant part dependent on how being a gamer is socially constructed in a cultural context and this social construction is now openly being subject to discussion and reconfiguration”. (p. 359). With that said, there is no clear consensus to construct a comprehensive meaning of the word gamer. Commonly, this notion is used in gaming environments or it’s described in some social conceptions, but in reality, there is not a real understanding of who gamers really are and what they look like. Thus, when we talk about the concept of “gamer”, the idea goes beyond the fact of merely playing videogames (Sánchez & Sanmartín-Arango, 2020).

In other words, a gamer is a person who moves from just playing games to developing a sense of commitment to them and also an extended participation in communities. When we talk about commitment, this notion is related to expending a specific amount of time trying to learn more about a game. Such interest in those elements leads the gamer to gain information both from inside and outside the game and, in this way, develop extended networks for learning (Mazo & Sánchez, 2020).

Hence, expanded participation, as a follow-up to commitment, entails joining gaming communities outside the game itself such as forums, chat channels, fan and fanfic groups, or competitive teams, just to name a few. The idea of participation influence gamers to have a sense of identity where they could engage in social interaction to enhance their gaming

experiences and ultimately become gaming connoisseurs (Sánchez & Sanmartín-Arango, 2020).

Gamification

It's a concept to apply game elements in non-game contexts. To understand gaming as something more than just a method of entertainment (Eusse, 2017). From a closer point of view, Zichermann (2010) describes gamification as the process of using game thinking and game mechanics to engage audiences and solve problems. We need to understand gamification as a process to use a composition of game elements outside of its main nature. These days, gamification is applied in different scenarios. The following are the most common. 1) Business, as they try to improve production and satisfaction among the employees. 2) Entertainment, to make more enjoyable the user experience. 3) Marketing, as a way to make the product more attractive to different kinds of customers. And finally in education, to improve the student's effort.

A closer definition for gamification can be found in Bunchball.com (2010) where gamification is defined as the use of game mechanics into nongame environments. However, gamification is commonly misunderstood with game-based practices as they are sort of similar. While game-based activities are just tasks transformed into a game or what Plass, (2015) calls it, the use of play in an educational context and for purposes of learning. While Landers (2014) defines gamification of learning as the use of game elements, including action language, assessment, conflict/challenge, control, environment, game fiction, human interaction, immersion, and rules/goals, to facilitate learning and related outcomes. According to the previous information one can say that gamification is choosing game elements for a target task with a learning product.

Game Elements

Game elements are all the features that make the game a whole composition. In game design there are different tools to create a game and test whether it is going to be successful or a failure. One of these tools was proposed in the Game Developer Conference, San Jose 2001-2004. It was called the MDA framework. It is a tool to deconstruct the game elements into three main categories: 1) Mechanics 2) Dynamics 3) Aesthetics. However, this is not the only game designed framework recognized by game designers. The second framework is called elemental tetrad and it divides the game elements into 4 categories: 1) Mechanics 2) Story 3) Aesthetic 4) Technology. The correct use of these frameworks allows the game designers to create compositions that will make the game fun and engaging. Moreover, there are crucial elements of the games that will support the structure such as rules, goals, challenges, interactions and story lines. What is important about these game elements is how their specific configuration makes the game engaging (Mazo, 2019).

Game-Based Teaching

Game-based teaching refers to a game play with the intention of having learning outcomes. The priority in game-based teaching is to make the class a play and the learning a product of that game. In a way, game-based teaching includes game elements, but they are used mostly as rewards. Actually, these game elements that are included in these exercises such as scoreboards with points and prizes, are only an incentive system to keep playing. Therefore, the activity turns into a game with the ability of games to engage and motivate players by providing experiences that they enjoy and want to continue (Gee, 2003).

The argument for game-based teaching stands on the idea of entertainment, on having the students playing within an interactive class that they can have fun. Even though this has a motivational effect, it will be because of the player's engagement with the game, and not with learning. Plass (2010) argued that another argument for game-based activities was the

graceful failure, as games allow the player to overcome failure in different ways. Therefore, once lowered the consequences of failure, the student would be able to take higher risks and will try different methods to overcome difficulties.

Gamified teaching

Gamification means to use games in non-game contexts. Deterding, Dixon, Khaled and Nacke (2011) However, when the idea is to gamify teaching it should be taken into consideration the use of game elements as a method to rethink the praxis and not merely use games inside teaching. The gamified teaching can be used under the goal setting theory of Locke (1990). In his research he uses 5 principles to improve the chances for success. The 5 principles are the following:

- Setting clear goals
- Setting challenging goals
- Securing team commitment
- Gaining feedback
- Considering task complexity

For that time that research was guided for a corporation environment looking for improvement in task resolution. The results showed that employees were more motivated as they were able to increase production and complete the goals. In this same line runs the gamified teaching. Selecting principles that were not mainly meant to be in teaching, as they can contribute to improve learning throughout motivation. To this study we are going to consider 5 game elements that applying gamification can increase the student engagement with learning.

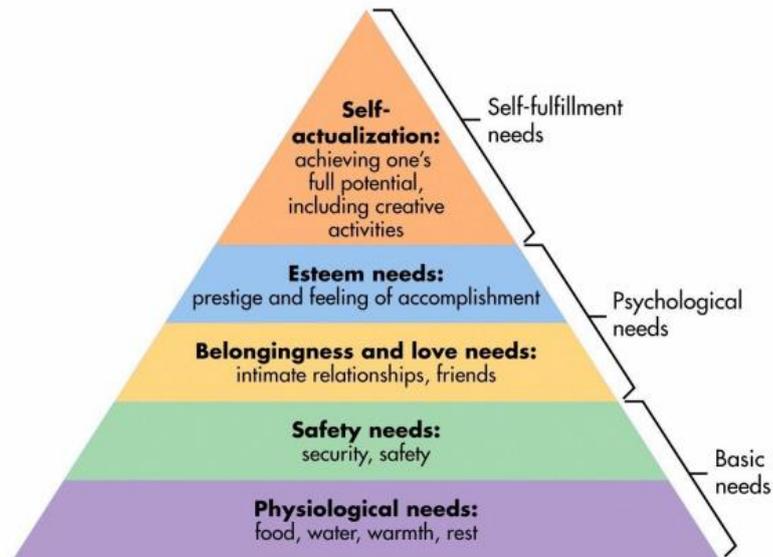
- Achievement
- Avatar
- Collections

- Points
- Teams

Motivation

Motivation has been a case of study of psychology throughout the years. Where lack of consensus would be the top when defying this concept. The mayor argument about getting a general agreement is that it involves human's emotions, human's toughs and humans believes (Ghergulescu, Muntean 2010). Conversely, in the learning context we could define motivation as the enthusiasm to assimilate and become well-versed in the topic of study. However, enthusiasm is connected with each person's personality and the ability to associate their believes with a final outcome. That means that motivation by itself would not be enough, and it must include self-determination at a certain point. Cherry (2015) argues that self-determination can craft people towards growth as long as they have autonomy, competence and connections in a sense of belonging.

To this study we are going to consider Maslow's hierarchy of needs as it involves both parts of motivation, corporal and psychological. On a recent study, McLeod (2018) highlights Maslow's theory as it looks at the complete physical, emotional, social, and intellectual qualities of an individual and how they impact on learning.



McLeod, S. A. (2018, May 21). Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Retrieved from <https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>

Methodology

This study is part of a macro project about video game literacies at #TeamLaV, which is part of the Literacies in Second Languages Project. In this team, we have explored the idea of using videogames as a way to rethink and innovate second language teaching. Within this group, Gaviria (2020), has reviewed some of the concepts related to the use second language in videogames to evidence second language literacy practices. Additionally, Walter & Julian (2019), have discussed the inputs of their life experiences as gamers and how gaming has shaped their views as teachers. Furthermore, Castaño (2017), brought ideas related to gaming fanfiction and gaming interactions in order to have more comprehension of digital literacies.

For that reason, one of the goals of this work is to have a better understanding of game elements and their potential for learning and teaching as we explore new realities and literacy practices such as those coming from games. In this work, we aim to fulfil that purpose by

analyzing actual elements found in different games considering our participation as gamers inside these virtual settings.

In order to create a comprehensive analysis of the game elements found from the perspective of gamers who are thinking critically about their identity as teachers, our methodology for this work is intended to shift between *digital ethnography* and *digital autoethnography*:

The #TeamLaV (2020), has identified *digital ethnography* as one of the forms of understanding different communities and growing interactions of the new century. This method works towards exploring the evolving influence of new technologies and virtual environments that become important in people's lives. "Digital ethnography serves as the most appropriate approach to inquire about and understand the subtleties of the technologically mediated social practices and communities of today's world." (#TeamLaV, 2020). In this case, digital ethnography as one of our methods will help us shape our findings in the reality of diverse gaming environments where communities of players and gamers constantly cooperate virtually.

Digital autoethnography is also part of our method, we think that we also need to explore how we see ourselves in the gaming spaces in order to have a better awareness of the elements found. According to Dunn and Myers (2020), "digital autoethnography is situated within and concerned about digital spaces and the lived experiences, interactions, and meaning-making within and beside these contexts". We consider ourselves gamers, we participate in different communities and contexts related to gaming. Therefore, we believe that our experiences in these digital fields should be included and analyzed in this work. After all, from our perspectives we are also creating our own insights related to the game elements reached to eventually think on how to adapt them into principles for learning and new teaching possibilities.

Techniques and instruments

Participant Observation

The idea of participant observation refers to the involvement and concurrent interplay inside a community or a group of people in favor to acquire a better understanding of them. (Laurier, 2010). Thus, this approach serves as an essential resource that allows the researchers to interact and contemplate a comprehensive interpretation inside the group or field where they are working. As Gaviria (2020) pointed out, participant observation allows researchers to “(...) participate in their daily-life interactions to better understand and make sense of these groups”. This method is applied in our work directed towards gathering the pieces of information coming from the games studied, including the interaction between players and their gaming spaces, but also the interactions with the researchers and the game itself.

Instrument

The instrument practiced in this work is a set of image captures from a computer screen or in other words, a series of screenshots gathered by the researchers. Some of these screenshots contain the nicknames of diverse players unconnected to the researchers, therefore, their names will be blurred in order to respect their identities. The nicknames or avatars of players connected to the researchers will not be blurred. The context of these screenshots is varied, they come from different games such as *Ark: Survival Evolved*, *Ream Royale* and *Overwatch*; or gaming related platforms such as *Twitch* and *Steam*.

Object of study - Games and gaming users

Ark: Survival Evolved

Ark: Survival Evolved is a sandbox survival game developed and published by Studio Wildcard. In this game players are stranded on a lush tropical island inhabited by dinosaurs.

The goal of the game is to get knowledge of the world and the dinosaurs around them, find a way to tame them and finally defeat the different bosses in epic battle arenas. Players are allowed to create tribes in which they can cooperate with other players and explore game together.

The game also allows tribes to battle between them in PvP (Player-versus-player) interactions to make the environment more competitive and interesting. Players of this game usually create communities to find other people to play with, cooperation and communication is key to have a strong position in the territory. The bigger the tribe, bigger are the chances to win fights and gather more resources from enemy tribes. In this case, language becomes essential as players need to mutually exchange information to coordinate their way to victory. (Mora, S Castaño, Orrego, Hernandez, & D Ramírez, 2016).

Ream Royale

Realm Royale is a “free-to-play battle royale game from Paladins’ developer Hi-Rez Studios. (...) Supports five different character classes—Warrior, Mage, Hunter, and Assassin, each with its own unique abilities.” (Chalk, 2018). In this game players can play up to groups of four, the goal is to try to defeat the other teams and be the last team standing. *Realm Royale* contains role systems, mastery systems, challenges and rewards systems, including ranking systems that allow players to be involved.

Overwatch

Overwatch is a vibrant team-based shooter set on a near-future earth. Every match is an intense 6v6 battle between a cast of unique heroes. The goal of this game is to work cooperatively in order to defeat the other team, different maps and settings are in play to allow diverse game styles and strategies. Players usually communicate in text chats allowing the exchange of ideas to create game plans, although, it is more common for players to interact via voice chat to have a better communication for strategizing their gameplay.

League of Legends

League of Legends is a team-based strategy game developed by Riot Games. It was released back in 27 of October 2009. The idea of this game is that two teams composed by 5 players each, will select from over 140 champions the most powerful in order to destroy the enemy base. The arena is called “The summoners rift” and it is plagued of sub-objectives such as turrets and living creatures that would give who ever kills it or demolish it an advantage to gain control inside the map. Players would use sound alerts and chats to coordinate or prevent an ambush. However, in a more competitive context they would rather use voice to get more accurate and succeed.

Steam (Platform)

According to Valve, they created Steam in 2003 to serve as a digital content distribution channel, before app stores existed. It has since grown and evolved into a platform for thousands of creators and publishers to deliver content and establish direct relationships with their customers. This platform is currently used by people to acquire games, create communities and be in touch with all kinds of gaming related interactions such as content workshops, game discounts, gaming achievements, among other things.

Twitch.tv (Platform)

Twitch is an interactive livestreaming service for content spanning gaming, entertainment, sports, music, and more. This platform is commonly used by gamers all over the world to create content related to gaming. Twitch allows gamers to broadcast to other people while they are playing games, in this way, they can interact using a chat system, have conversations, play with them and even be supported by the viewers. As a gaming platform, a lot of communities are created to support their favorite streamers and have a good time while watching them create content live.

Data analysis: Polyangulation

With the aim of analyzing the data collected using screenshots, we intend to first share our common interpretation of the findings related to the elements observed from our gaming experiences. The idea is to give a comprehensive analysis of information found by using our gaming background and at the same time connect it with our insights as language teachers. This in order to allow the creation of meaning-making ideas in which we explore the potential of the elements detected for learning and teaching opportunities. As we inquire about our findings, we will also share gamified thoughts on the use of those game elements identified to ultimately tie them into the concept of a gamified learning environment such as the classroom.

After sharing our common ideas, we also contemplate to share our own separate insights regarding some of the elements found, this is due to the idea of not only build a unique shared interpretation but instead creating separate meanings of the projections caught while analyzing the information. In other words, including autoethnographic reflections of the data found in the games. As Dunn and Myers (2020) argued, this method relies on personal experience(s) to foreground how meaning is made among people occupying and connected to those digital spaces, in this case, videogames.

The approach selected for the data analysis is Polyangulation, a technique that allows an extended interpretation within the essence of qualitative research. This method has been conducted in diverse studies among our research group (LSLP), in which we have actively participated in the look for new perceptions of gaming and digital literacies. Mora (2014) argues, “polyangulation is an alternative to the traditional idea of ‘triangulation’ in qualitative research. It recognizes the existence of multiple realities, but it also acknowledges the existence of multiple layers and dimensions of analysis for these realities”. With this form of data analysis, we are able to create a broad recognition of the games and the elements inside

them, as well as comprehensive meanings of the spaces, their users and the possible outcomes for teaching.

Findings

Going through the line of exploring different gaming spaces, such as the actual games and the platforms connected to the act of gaming, we have been able to catch sight of some game elements that have potential to be included in spaces like the classroom. It is important to remember that, the idea of using game elements into teaching it is not equal to think about playing video games in the classroom, but instead addressing the principles and elements of games to gamify and adapt them to the creation of new learning and teaching practices (Sánchez & Mazo, 2021). For instance, it is important to recognize the opportunities that gaming principles and gaming elements bring into the context of education.

As a result of the previous statement, our findings are directed to give a comprehensive understanding of how the game elements and gaming principles coming from gaming environments are full of possibilities to approach educational contexts in an innovative and significant way, both for learners and teachers. Something that is also relevant about our findings, is the fact that by applying and gamifying learning environments using the elements found, could also have an impact in the motivation and engagement of students. A matter that is pressing in terms of how 21st century teachers are undertaking the new generations of learners and those left to come. (Sánchez, 2019)

The screenshots presented include the visual representation of game elements used in the games, as well as interactions of players that support the ideas of elements that could be applied in teaching. The screenshots will serve to analyze and comprehend features of the diverse games or digital spaces of gaming that contain essential lineaments that could be observed as part of the digital ethnography methodology explained in previous pages. The

evidence will also share own experiences from us as gamers who have also participated in gaming spaces, this as part of the digital autoethnography method, in which we are considering ourselves as object of study as well. For instance, our insights also deliver meaningful ideas to appreciate the potential the elements in question.

Screenshot 1

Timeo de juego de las 0h
Últimas 2 semanas:
[Ver estadísticas de logros mundiales](#)

81 de 88 (92%) logros conseguidos:

Logros personales

	Virtuoso Desbloquear todos los trofeos	Se desbloqueó el 27 SEP 2016 a las 19:05
	Abastecido Reúne 150 artículos	Se desbloqueó el 24 MAY 2016 a las 15:28
	Lejos, muy lejos... Conduce un total de 50 km	Se desbloqueó el 19 MAY 2016 a las 21:04
	Súper victorioso Gana un total de 30 partidos en cualquier modo de juego	Se desbloqueó el 4 MAY 2016 a las 17:03
	Campeón Gana el campeonato de la temporada	Se desbloqueó el 11 MAY 2016 a las 16:33
	La racha Gana 10 partidos seguidos en cualquier modo	Se desbloqueó el 24 MAY 2016 a las 17:12
	El orgullo de Helen Marca 6 goles en un único partido	Se desbloqueó el 7 MAY 2016 a las 23:56
	Coleccionista de Coches Consigue 5 coches	Se desbloqueó el 28 ABR 2016 a las 13:33
	Gotas en el vaso Junta 50 ítems	Se desbloqueó el 4 MAY 2016 a las 17:12

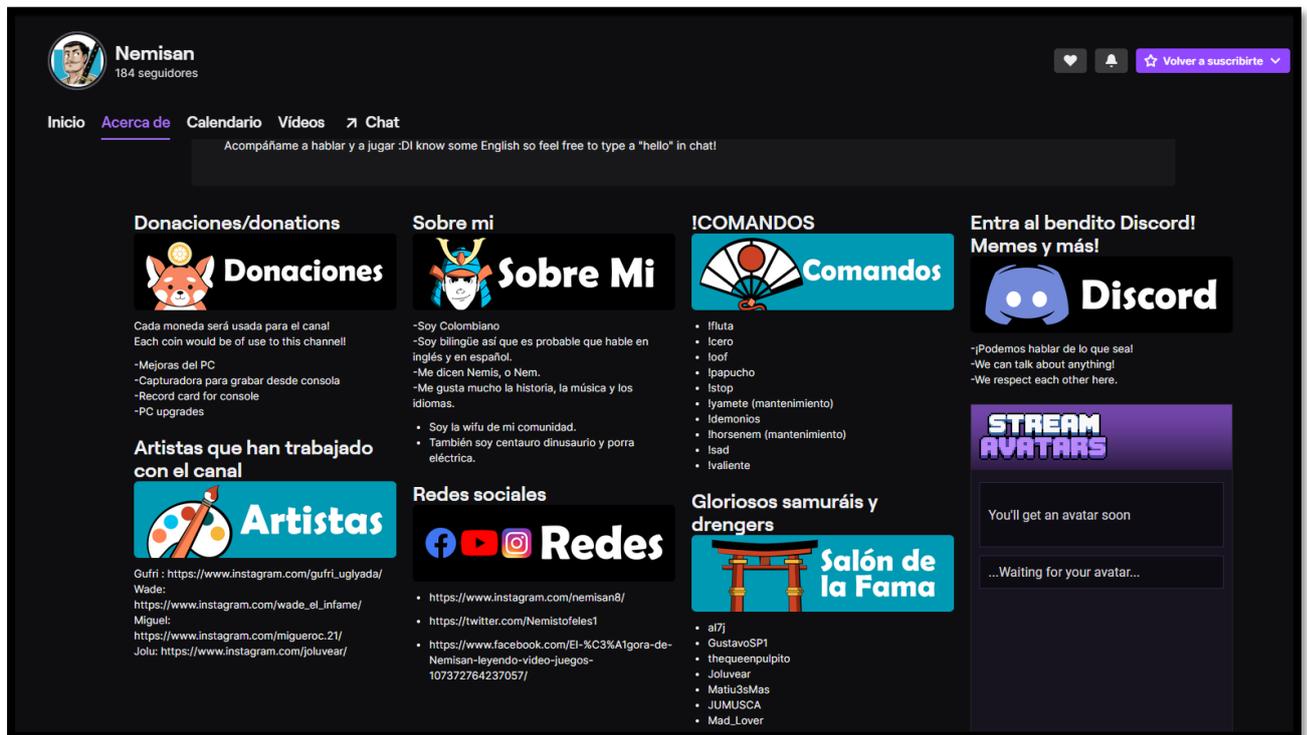
This is the example of one of the achievement profiles of a gamer in the digital gaming platform Steam. Almost every game available in the platform contains achievements that players need to unlock as they play, there are challenges to complete in order to get the achievements, some harder than others, but the point is to unlock them all. Players can manage their own progress of the achievements in their player profiles. In this way, they can know which challenges are missing to complete, follow their advancements and their evolution through the game.

In the screenshot, we can see the achievements of a player in the game Rocket League, however, the player has not completed all of them, there is a progression bar showing 92% completion of the challenges which is 81 achievements unlocked out of 88. This means that the player still needs to work to get that 100% and finally be proud of getting all the achievements. For gamers this implicates matters such as be involved, engaged and motivated in order to complete the goal. Additionally, the players are putting effort and time on what they are doing, they are inspired and persuaded by the game itself and the challenges that the game offers so they feel the need to be able to accomplish them.

From this example we can see the constitution of several game elements such as achievements, challenges, motivational and engaging tasks, player profiles, among other things. These elements help gamers in their progress to become better players, complete their quests, interact with diverse components of a game and ultimately allow them to obtain results such as a learning path of what they experienced. The elements provided in these contexts are essential for gamers and their adventures, this leads them to learn more and be more acquainted of their game knowledge. Hence, this is a process in which gamers are involved to obtain a certain encouragement to complete something or in other words, have the ability to perform their own journey as they play.

In education, all these elements provide a set of ideas that can be implemented into actual learning environments like the classroom. Adapting those elements into teaching could help educators to rethink and re-design several aspects of what we know today as learning. As the new generations of learners come into our educational settings, teachers need to be prepared to innovate and move forward with different strategies and resources for teaching. The concept of gamifying these elements could become a good opportunity do that, this by motivating students and creating engaging challenges that could allow to keep them in look for a much interesting and meaningful learning.

Screenshot 2



Screenshot 2 is taken from the profile of a content creator in the livestream platform *Twitch* (he gave us permission to show this in our work). There are some elements in this image that are relevant to discuss. Initially, this profile allows us to see a nickname, in this case *Nemisan*, which is part of the identity of the person in question. The screenshot also provides relevant data such as some information about the streamer, which is given to the rest of the users in the platform to get to know him a bit more. In other words, with this information the streamer is building a conception of himself that he wants to share with the rest of the people, he creates a perception of his identity that he wants people to see.

The screenshot provides another set of elements that help the streamer interact with his audience. For example, he gives commands that people could use while he is broadcasting to have live interactions, he also acknowledges the presence of his most relevant viewers and supporters by naming them in a “hall of fame”. He shares his own media and also shares the work of others to recognize what they do. He is building his own identity for the platform but

he is also allowing interactions to happen within a community. Basically, a group of people could follow his work, support him and at the same time be able to create a reciprocal connection with the participant.

When it comes to talk about creating an identity inside an educational setting, in most of the cases, students or teachers just have a name or a number that represents a distinction from the others. With elements such as the those given by the screenshot, teachers could think in a way to allow their students to create their own profiles, let them feel free about who they are and let them share such identity with the rest of their partners. This will motivate students to think about how they want other people to see them, they could create their own avatars, their own essence and their unique forms to participate in an environment where they feel comfortable and not just defined by a simple number or by only their own names.

Screenshot 3



Screenshot 4



Screenshots 3 and 4 have some elements previously spotted in screenshots 1 and 2, but this time the context it is not given from a gaming related platform such as *Steam* or *Twitch*. In this case, the elements detected are situated inside an actual videogame: *Realm*

Royale. Screenshot 3 provides information about the game lobby in which players are preparing for a battle. They are given the chance to select a class which is the role they want to play, for example: a mage, a warrior, a hunter, or a rogue. They also can see what are the quests for that day and what rewards they can get by completing them. Screenshot 4 provides a better a look of these quests when they are completed.

The reward system in this game allows players to get “crowns” which is a coin they can trade inside the game to buy different aspects, cosmetics and entertaining objects they can use while they play. Thus, the players try to complete the daily challenges in order to get rewards and buy the things they want, in this game they can only get props but not advantages of any kind in relation to other players. *Realm royale* provides a lot of visual customization of different characters that motivate players to obtain and collect them as they play.

If we move these elements into an educational setting and adapt them to work similarly, teachers could create their own challenges and rewards systems in their classrooms. This will allow students to daily complete a task that would be rewarded, teachers will motivate them to be focused in a determined learning objective by completing challenges and eventually get prizes or incentives to keep them involved in their tasks. If we go back to screenshot 1, we could also think in the implementation of achievements systems that students could get through a series of tasks, challenges, or quests. The achievements could be categorized in different learning outcomes and as they complete them, they are rewarded with badges, points or benefits. In other words, elements gamified from digital spaces such as games or gaming related platforms.

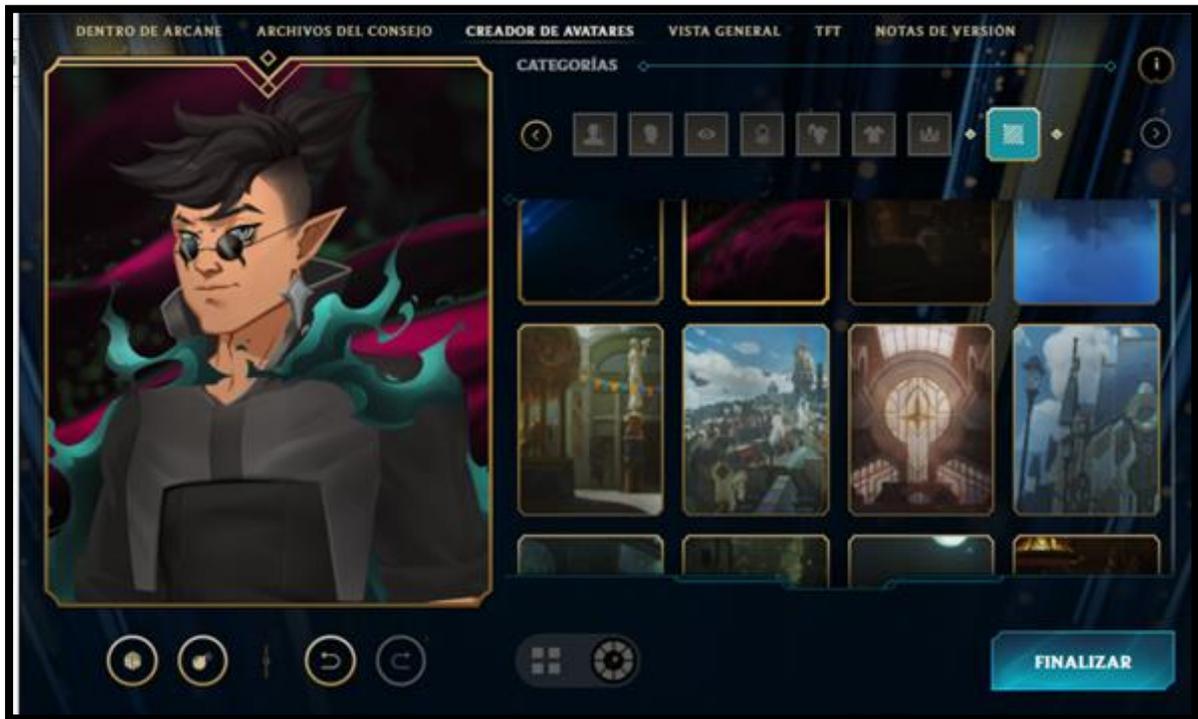
Additionally, teachers could even create roles for the students that could be classified within different purposes, identities or personalities. In this way, students could have

diversified learning perspectives according to how they see themselves, they could choose a role adapted to their skills or their favorite characteristics.

For example, a teacher could gamify roles from gaming in the following way:

- **Warrior:** leader, strong, extrovert, ready to organize and lead the team.
- **Mage:** intelligent, clever, supportive, full of ideas, ready to adapt and complete tasks.
- **Hunter:** agile, flexible, creative, ready to work in any field and visualize the team from the back.
- **Rogue:** quiet, introvert, sneaky, ready to strategize in silence and help the team if they are in trouble.

Screenshot 5



This screenshot shows a new feature inside league of legends where the idea is to create an avatar with the aesthetic of Piltover. In this section, you can navigate through all the features of the character such as face, ears, nose, haircut and even clothing. Once you are finished you can download an image to share on social media.

In this screenshot we have an illustration of an avatar. However, in this case this game element goes beyond its pure nature. One might think that it is merely a character creator but there is more than that. As you may see, in league of legends you have the opportunity to select from over 140 champions and you can choose skins to personalize every match. Nevertheless, this is the first time you can create your own avatar.

The launch of a character creator in league of legends was directly connected with the release of Arcane, a 2021 French-American animated streaming television series. This series take place in Piltover and that is why the character creator has that specific aesthetics. Therefore, the idea was not only to give the opportunity to exhibit your character in social media but to make part of the animated series.

From this example we can grasp how a game element can be gamified in a non-gaming experience. In here, they are giving the gamer the opportunity to feel that they are at the same time in the game league of legends and in the animated series Arcane. As we have expressed before, the feel of belonging creates motivation. Moreover, it illustrates the importance using gamification to promote engagement.

In education, this kind of game element offers an opportunity to see the students as characters that can change. It is necessary to see the classroom as a place to have the chance to try as many characters as you want without the fear of failure. From a personal perspective, we as teachers need to motivate our students to get to know themselves as they won't be if there is no place to try.

Screenshot 6



Realm royale Ranking system [Screenshot] Retrieved from: <https://rankedboost.com/realm-royal/ranking-system/>

Screenshot 7



Realm royale Ranking system [Screenshot] Retrieved from: <https://rankedboost.com/realms-royal/ranking-system/>

Screenshot 6 and 7 provide an example of a ranking system in the game *Realm Royale*. This game ranking allows players to be categorized in different ranks according to their gaming performance, their victories and their skills. The ranking sets bronze as the lower placement possible and Grandmaster as the best and highest placement in the game. In order to reach the latest, players need to spend a lot of time improving, learning and winning, only the best players can reach higher ranks.

For instance, if a player has a bad performance or never really tries to learn about the game and win, it will be placed in lower ranks. However, if the player is skilled, studies his way to victory and improves constantly, it will be placed in higher positions. It is also possible to escalate in the ranking system by playing constantly, players can move from

bronze to silver, from silver to gold and so on. It is possible to reach a good rank if the players are interested in developing strategies to improve.

Now, in terms of education, this element of the ranking system could also be implemented in learning environments. Imagine teachers using a ranking system gamified into badges representing each rank. The students with a bad behavior or worst performance in class get the lower rank badge as penalization. Nevertheless, if students are wise, judicious and have a good performance, they get higher rank badges to award their achievements. Hence, students will be motivated to get higher ranks and those in a lower rank position might try to improve and behave in order to escalate and get better placements.

Autoethnographic analysis

Carlos Sánchez - insights of a semiprofessional gamer

As a gamer involved in a lot of gaming experiences, I have been able to see the potential of the game elements and gaming principles that could be implemented in education. Thanks to videogames I was able to learn English, improve my language skills and interact with a lot of people around the world. The act of gaming brings features that only as a player I couldn't perceive or completely understand, however, from the perspective of a teacher and a researcher I could draft a comprehensive meaning of what videogames and gaming practices have to offer.

There was a time where my identity as a gamer was conflicted with my identity as a future teacher, I didn't know how to link my gaming background with the idea of becoming a teacher. This changed when I joined the LaV project (LSLP), a group of gamer-researcher enthusiasts that were exploring gaming and digital literacies in second language contexts. From that moment, I realized that it was possible to put together my gaming experiences and my thinking as a future language teacher.

In the previous paragraphs, Camilo and I were able to create comprehensive meanings of how videogames have indeed resources that could be adapted in teaching by analyzing different games and platforms where players and communities take part of. With that said, for this part of the analysis, I will share my own experiences when I was playing with some friends to describe how important is communication in games, and how this interaction could bring even more features into learning and teaching.

Screenshot 8



The game in question for screenshot 8, it's called *Ark: Survival Evolved*. It was taken previous to a boss battle in which I was going to participate. In this case I was not alone, I was part of a group of seven people and we were communicating using discord (an application that permits voice chat). I mention this because this is another game element that I was able to identify as I was playing in this virtual setting with my friends.

The act of communication is of great importance when playing videogames in groups, we needed to cooperate and combine our efforts in order to defeat the boss and reach our objectives. (Mora, S Castaño, Orrego, Hernandez, & D Ramírez, 2016). We had a team leader that was prepared to give directions once we entered the arena. The rest of the team needed to communicate, cooperate, help each other and be calm in order to progress and succeed. That was only possible by using the correct words, the correct tone and especially maintaining order to avoid casualties or misunderstandings.

I relate this experience with the teamwork happening in the classrooms, or in educational settings where people, students and even teachers need to communicate correctly

in order to achieve or complete a task. This element of communication has been in educational contexts, and it is also part of the gaming experiences of players like me. However, teaching the correct communication for a good cooperation is a complex task that not every learner, teacher or gamer is able to perform.

From videogames we have examples of teamwork and communication that come from the competitive teams that play games professionally. In my case I have been part of semiprofessional teams in the region of Colombia. I know what is like to communicate with a group of people with the same goal in mind, there is cooperation, a leader voice and the correct time for expressing thoughts and ideas. Such principles applied into the teamwork communication in our learning and teaching environments could help to have even better results and interactions with those who are part of the act of cooperation.



Annexed photo #1 – captured in Medellín, Colombia at the Monterrey Gamers Event. 2019

Juan Camilo Mazo – insight of a semiprofessional gaming coach

Since I was very young, I've been involved in videogames and virtual communities. From there, I was able to interact and connect with people from all over the world. However, while I was gaming, I never intended to learn English. I ended up learning through the games and the interaction with these communities. I remember enjoying English classes as I felt I was more advanced, and which ever progress I made regarding the language it was first share with my gaming friends.

The games are part of my life but since I became a researcher, I realized that it has always been more than entertainment. Once I joined the LAV project (LSLP) I got aware of the importance of getting a wide perspective about videogames. Before a I entered the project I was on my prime of gaming, I got to be a couch and I used to keep my gaming knowledge and gaming experiences inside games and tournaments. However, with the project I learnt to embrace gaming as a whole and make it part of my everyday life.

Through this work, Carlos and I were able to show a variety of gamified game elements that showed how gaming can improve our way to perceive language teaching. Moreover, I will express from my point of view my experience with videogames and make known how they impact my motivation.

Screenshot 9



In this case the game is League of legends. In the first screenshot we can see how many games I've played, time spent playing and which role is the one I played the most. I've always played ADC (All damage carry) and this year my biggest rank was platinum, which is not bad. In this instance I played with several friend at the same time I was giving semiprofessional coaching.

Screenshot 10



However, in this second screenshot we can see the historical of the girl I coached. She started the year with a bronze rank and now she is Diamond, even higher than me. As you can see, the number of games compared with mine is huge. At this time, I was way much more motivated to help her overcome her difficulties than mine, I was already satisfied with my gaming, but helping her to reach her full potential was way much more satisfactory.

I relate this experience with my work in the classroom, or in any educational process where people need advice or need someone to recognize how to improve and get better. The motivation that the game elements can contribute to every scenario if they are well gamified goes beyond making things more enjoyable. Moreover, taking the principles of game elements to the educational field give us as teachers the opportunity to get the best from our students.

Conclusion

Video games and the concept of game elements are notions related to digital spaces where players interact and go through diverse experiences. Most of these experiences allow the understanding of the need of language use and communication for success. (Mora, S Castaño, Orrego, Hernández, & D Ramírez, 2016). Additionally, inside these spaces, gamers start to learn from different elements that eventually help them to get more acquainted with the game knowledge, be committed and eventually create participation inside communities (Sánchez & Sanmartín-Arango, 2020).

On the other hand, motivation contains a full composition itself to forge a path with a meaningful learning impact, it is plausible to think that a student can learn at the same time he feels energized to overcome his challenges. Moreover, self-determination can be guided and crafted towards constant improvement (Cherry, 2015). Hence, understanding game elements as a practice to boost a motivational effect inside learning and teaching has the opportunity to reconnect education with diverse kinds of students.

With that said, at the moment of looking the games and their elements from another perspective such as the one coming from educational insights, it is possible to create comprehensive meaning of the application and usage of some of the elements to gamify learning and teaching practices. However, the idea is not to use actual games for this purpose, or bringing consoles or gaming PCs. Instead, it is possible to adapt and appropriate the game elements through gamification, an approach that intends to innovate and move educational perceptions forward in order to help the current and future generation of students.

Game elements chart

Each game element is composed by a short description defining its concept and an example of usage where each game element can be implemented in the teaching praxis.

Game element	Use in games – game definitions
Achievements	Completing goals
Avatar (Meta avatar)	Individual player character
Points	Rewards given after concluding a challenge.
Teams - Team work - Communication	Group of players for common goal. Use communication for common purposes.
Collections	Set of accumulated badges

Game Element	Use in classrooms – Gamified definition
Achievements	After finishing a workshop/task/activity the student receives a recognition in a form of a medal, badge or coin that will be post in a scoreboard.
Avatar	The students will be able to create a profile with a nickname, descriptions and interactive options to share it with their classmates through their course.

Points -Rewards	The implementation and adaptation of rewards systems that will motivate students to finish the tasks, complete quests and have a good behavior. The student with more points at the end of the course will receive a special prize. All rewards and points will be posted in scoreboard.
Teams – Team work - Communication	The adaptation of communication systems brought from competitive teams or coaches to create better ways to communicate in class.
Collections	From the first activity until the last one, the points and medals will be shown in the scoreboard.

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