

การพัฒนาความสามารถด้านการฟังภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อความเข้าใจ
และเจตคติโดยใช้เกมมิฟิเคชันร่วมกับการเล่าเรื่องดิจิทัล
ของนักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 1
Using Gamification Combined with Digital Storytelling
to Enhance English Listening Comprehension Ability
and Attitudes of Mathayomsuksa 1 EFL Learners

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บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาความสามารถในการฟังภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อความเข้าใจของนักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 1 ก่อนและหลังการจัดการเรียนรู้โดยใช้เกมมิฟิเคชันร่วมกับการเล่าเรื่องผ่านสื่อดิจิทัล และเพื่อศึกษาเจตคติของผู้เรียนที่มีต่อการจัดการเรียนรู้ดังกล่าว กลุ่มตัวอย่างเป็นนักเรียนจำนวน 17 คน จากโรงเรียนดงเวียงดงเจริญวิทยา จังหวัดหนองคาย ภาคเรียนที่ 1 ปีการศึกษา 2568 โดยใช้การสุ่มแบบกลุ่ม การวิจัยเป็นแบบทดลองกลุ่มเดียววัดผลก่อนและหลัง เครื่องมือประกอบด้วยแผนการจัดการเรียนรู้ 12 แผน แบบทดสอบวัดความสามารถในการฟัง และแบบวัดเจตคติ ใช้เวลาในการทดลอง 12 สัปดาห์ รวม 24 ชั่วโมง วิเคราะห์ข้อมูลด้วยค่าเฉลี่ย ร้อยละ ส่วนเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน และการทดสอบ t แบบกลุ่มตัวอย่างไม่อิสระ โดยมีผลการวิจัยดังนี้

1. คะแนนเฉลี่ยก่อนและหลังการจัดการเรียนรู้เท่ากับ 13.94 (34.85%) และ 30.35 (75.87%) ตามลำดับ โดยคะแนนหลังเรียนสูงกว่าคะแนนก่อนเรียนอย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติที่ระดับ .01 ($t = 18.67, p < .01$) และสูงกว่าเกณฑ์มาตรฐานร้อยละ 70

2. ผู้เรียนมีเจตคติต่อการจัดการเรียนรู้การฟังภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อความเข้าใจด้วยเกมมิฟิเคชันร่วมกับการเล่าเรื่องผ่านสื่อดิจิทัลในระดับดีมาก

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คำสำคัญ: การพัฒนาการฟังภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อความเข้าใจ, เกมมิฟิเคชัน, การเล่าเรื่องผ่านสื่อดิจิทัล, เจตคติของนักเรียน

ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study were to assess and compare the English listening comprehension of Mathayomsuksa 1 students before and after the instruction using the gamification combined with digital storytelling, and to investigate students' attitudes toward instruction using gamification combined with digital storytelling in English listening instruction. The sample of this study consisted of 17 students in the first semester of the 2025 academic year at Dongwendongcharoanwittaya School in the Office of Nongkhai Primary Education Service Area 1. The researcher used cluster random sampling as the technique of selecting the sample. A one-group pretest-posttest design was employed in this study. The data collection instruments in this study consisted of 12 lesson plans, an English listening comprehension assessment, and an attitudes questionnaire. The instructional design in this study lasted for 12 weeks with 2 hours per week, totaling 24 hours. The data analysis techniques in this study consisted of means, percentages, standard deviation, one-sample t-test, and dependent t-test. The data analysis results are as follows:

1. The students' mean scores on the pretest and posttest of English listening comprehension were 13.94 (34.85%) and 30.35 (75.87%), respectively. The posttest mean score was significantly higher than the pretest score ($t = 18.67, p < .01$) and exceeded the predetermined criterion of 70 percent.

2. The attitudes of the students toward the instruction of English listening comprehension ability using the gamification combined with digital storytelling were at a very good level.

KEYWORDS: The development of English listening comprehension, gamification, digital storytelling

Introduction

English plays a central role in global communication in the 21st century, acting as a lingua franca in education, business, science, and technology. With the increasing velocity of globalization, having knowledge in English is an essential skill for anyone seeking to leverage global knowledge, pursue higher education, and be successful in the global job market. Thus, many countries, like Thailand, are strengthening their English

education systems in preparation for the knowledge-based, interconnected global society. In Thailand, English is considered a foreign language (EFL). The country's curriculum focuses on communicative competence, which is an integral part in the teaching and learning of English. Despite the long years of education, many Thai learners have relatively low levels of English proficiency (EF Education First, 2023), particularly in the receptive skill.

Listening helps learners to acquire the essential linguistic features of a language, which in turn promotes language development. Vandergrift and Goh (2012 : 1) point out that among the four language skills, listening has been identified as the key to language acquisition, as it offers learners the major linguistic input to build upon for the development of speaking, reading, and writing. Furthermore, Field (2008: 4) states that listening has been identified as a key component of communicative competence, as communication largely relies on the ability to comprehend what the other person has to say. However, listening comprehension has been identified as one of the most difficult skills for Thai EFL learners to master. Learners experience difficulties in processing fast speech, unfamiliar words, reduced forms, and accents. In addition, learners often lack exposure to natural English outside the classroom, which further limits their development in listening comprehension. These difficulties cause anxiety and undermine the self-confidence and motivation of Thai EFL learners, which in turn influences their learning outcomes.

With regard to English listening difficulties among Thai secondary school students, four dimensions of difficulties have been identified. First, the linguistic-phonological difficulties are due to the differences between the Thai and English phonological systems. Such difficulties make it hard for Thai learners of English to listen to connected speech because of the fast speech rate, as noted by Wiriyaichitra (2002 : 4-9) and Noom-ura (2013 : 139-147). Secondly, the strategic difficulties are due to the learners' inability to use metacognitive strategies. Such difficulties cause learners to have listening comprehension problems, as Vandergrift and Goh (2012 : 1) highlight that listening is the key skill most affected by poor metacognitive strategy use. Thirdly, the lack of exposure to real-life listening makes Thai learners of English unable to predict the meaning of words when communicating. If these issues of listening are not addressed, it will have significant implications beyond one particular skill. For instance, learners who cannot comprehend English will continue to be unable to take part in communicative activities, thereby limiting their development in all four skills. Vandergrift and Goh (2012: 1) emphasize that neglecting the development of listening skills can severely limit learners' academic prospects and their professional readiness in an English-dominated

global context. Therefore, it is imperative that teachers seek and apply effective interventions at the secondary school level.

Fourth, from a Foreign Language Anxiety perspective, Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986 : 125-132) proposed a framework for Foreign Language Anxiety that included listening comprehension as a significant source of language anxiety. When Thai EFL learners are afraid of failing in listening comprehension, they experience a high level of anxiety. Consequently, their anxiety causes them to experience a high level of cognitive load and self-monitoring. MacIntyre and Gardner (1994 : 283-305) argue that high cognitive load and excessive self-monitoring often lead to failure in listening comprehension, creating a self-reinforcing cycle where anxiety triggers failure, and failure, in turn, exacerbates anxiety. In the Thai EFL context, Kitano (2001 : 549-566) suggests that this "Foreign Language Anxiety" is further intensified by cultural values, specifically the emphasis on linguistic accuracy and the social importance of "face-saving."

Furthermore, the low level of motivation among Thai EFL listeners presents a significant barrier to listening development. Conventional listening instruction, which is mostly passive and teacher-centered, fails to satisfy learners' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, causing motivation to diminish over time (Deci & Ryan, 2000 : 235). This suggests that both affective and motivational factors must be addressed alongside linguistic ones in order to foster meaningful progress in listening comprehension.

In spite of these challenges being well known, however, traditional methods of teaching listening skills within a Thai EFL classroom setting continue to focus on teacher-led audio playback and subsequent questioning, a passive and unengaging methodology that does little to encourage active interaction and fails to sustain interest beyond a limited time frame. Such methodologies also do little to support affective development, and learners struggling with listening anxiety have little support available to help them build confidence. Digital storytelling, as a methodology, has shown significant promise as a means of adding interest and interactivity to listening development by adding additional multimodal content, but as a standalone methodology, it does little to support learner motivation and active involvement. Gamification, as a methodology, does directly support learner motivation and active involvement but, as a standalone methodology, does little to support learners in terms of actual content, and as such, learners may become passively involved but will not necessarily become more active and engaging learners.

Richards (2015 : 369-405) suggests effective listening instruction typically follows three stages: pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening. These stages support

learners in activating background knowledge, developing listening strategies, and consolidating comprehension. Wilson (2008 : 82-85) further classifies listening into four types—listening for gist, specific information, detail, and inference—which together provide a framework for designing balanced listening lessons and assessments.

To address these challenges, educators have increasingly explored innovative approaches to enhance student engagement. Among these, gamification has gained considerable attention. Deterding, Dixon, Khaled, and Nacke (2011 : 10) define gamification as one such method that has been gaining popularity. Gamification is a practice where gamified elements, such as points, badges, levels, and challenges, are incorporated into a non-game context to increase engagement and motivation. Gamification is based on human behavior and has been found to elicit active engagement, attention, and positive emotions while performing a task. Lee and Baek (2023 : 5) also suggested that gamified environments can enhance concentration, persistence, and language skills. Gamified listening activities can help reduce anxiety and promote a more proactive attitude towards listening.

For this current study, gamification was conducted through an application of the six-step gamification framework developed by MacMeekin (2013 : 3) and based on an instructional design approach. The six steps of this framework are as follows: (1) Identify Learning Outcomes, in which specific learning outcomes for listening comprehension were identified for each lesson in order for the gamification elements to be appropriately aligned; (2) Choose a Big Idea, in which each lesson was designed around a key theme identified from the digital storytelling content, allowing learners to engage in a meaningful way; (3) Storyboard the Game, in which the sequence of listening activities and challenges, as well as reward milestones, was identified in advance of instruction in order for learners to engage in a meaningful way; (4) Design Learning Activities, in which gap-fill, multiple-choice, true/false, and sequencing activities were designed as gamified elements for learners to engage in; (5) Build Teams, in which learners were encouraged to work collaboratively in groups in order for gamification elements to promote a sense of relatedness; and (6) Apply Game Dynamics, in which points, feedback, level systems, and leaderboards were used in order for learners to engage in a meaningful way. These components of gamification collectively constitute the gamification variable in this current study.

Another innovative approach that has been gaining significant attention in language instruction is digital storytelling. In this mode of instruction, speech and other multimedia materials like pictures, animations, music, and sound effects are combined to develop listening input that is not only rich and meaningful but also highly motivating

for students. Such multimedia support relieves students of any cognitive burden and helps them comprehend what they are learning, especially for EFL students who find it difficult to comprehend purely audio materials. Sütçü (2021 : 271-277) indicate that digital storytelling enhances students' listening comprehension, engagement, and motivation by providing them with emotionally rich learning experiences. By creating connections between what they are listening to and other multimedia materials, students are able to make more sense and retain what they are learning. Robin (2008 : 220-228) identifies seven key elements of digital storytelling that are essential in determining the quality of the listening input that is provided to the learners. The seven elements are: (1) Point of View: This element enables the learners to infer the intent of the speaker in a way that can be related to inferential listening. (2) Dramatic Question: This element provides a sense of tension that keeps the listeners engaged in the story. (3) Emotional Content: This element provides a sense of emotional connection to the story that can reduce anxiety levels in the learners. (4) The Gift of Your Voice: This element provides a sense of naturalness to the story that can be related to the pronunciation of words in a foreign language. (5) The Power of the Soundtrack: This element provides a sense of non-verbal cues that can be related to a foreign language. (6) Economy: This element provides a sense of conciseness to the story that can be related to the content that can be taught to the learners. (7) Pacing: This element provides a sense of rhythm to the story that can be related to a foreign language. In this study, all these elements were included in the digital stories to ensure that they were used as a listening input that can be a scaffold to the comprehension of a foreign language.

To further enrich the theoretical underpinning of the present study, gamification may be described in terms of the Self-Determination Theory by Deci and Ryan (2000 : 229), which focuses on the idea that the motivation of learners may be increased if the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are satisfied. As gamification in learning environments includes the use of points, levels, and feedback, it may foster the development of the learners' competence, as well as interactive activities that may foster relatedness, thus enhancing the intrinsic motivation of the learners, which plays an important role in the development of learning outcomes, especially in the field of listening comprehension.

Moreover, Sweller (1988 : 257-268) described the effectiveness of digital storytelling may be in terms of the Cognitive Load Theory. According to which learning may be facilitated if the instructional material minimizes unnecessary cognitive load in the learners' minds. As digital storytelling includes the use of both visual and contextual cues in the form of an audio file, it may be an effective tool in the learning process, as it

may reduce the unnecessary cognitive load in the minds of the learners, especially in the field of EFL, as the learners may face problems in processing the auditory information.

As such, it is argued that, whilst gamification directly supports learner motivation and involvement, and whilst digital storytelling is rich and engaging for learners, the combination of these two methodologies supports a synergistic effect that addresses both linguistic and affective barriers to learners simultaneously. Therefore, this study investigates the effects of gamification combined with digital storytelling on Mathayomsuksa 1 students' English listening comprehension ability and their attitudes toward this instructional approach. By addressing both cognitive and affective aspects of listening development, this study aims to provide evidence-based guidance for improving English listening instruction in Thai secondary schools.

Purposes of the Study

The purposes of the study were:

1. To study and compare the English listening comprehension ability of Mathayomsuksa 1 students before and after studying English listening comprehension using gamification combined with digital storytelling,
2. To investigate students' attitude towards teaching English listening comprehension using gamification combined with digital storytelling.

Hypotheses of the Study

The hypotheses of the study were as follows:

1. English listening comprehension ability of Mathayomsuksa 1 students after studying English listening comprehension using gamification combined with digital storytelling is higher than the set criterion of 70 percent.
2. English listening comprehension ability of Mathayomsuksa 1 students after studying English listening comprehension using gamification combined with digital storytelling is higher than prior.

Scope of the study

This study focuses on the following aspects:

1. Population

The population in this study was 95 of Mathayomsuksa 1 students of 4 classrooms enrolled in the course, Basic English E21101 in the first semester of the academic year 2025 in School network Muang Nongkai 4, Ponsawang Sub district, Muang Nongkai District, Nongkai Province, under the office of Nongkai Primary Education Service Area 1.

2. Variables

The variables in this study are:

2.1 Independent variable

The independent variable was the instructional method using gamification combined with digital storytelling. This method included game elements (points, levels, rewards, and competition) integrated with digital storytelling components (audio, images, and narrative structure) to enhance students' engagement in listening activities.

2.2 Dependent Variables:

The dependent variables are:

2.2.1 English listening comprehension ability,

This refers to students' ability to understand spoken English in terms of main ideas, details, and overall meaning, as measured by the listening comprehension test.

2.2.2 Attitude towards teaching English listening comprehension using gamification combined with digital storytelling.

This refers to students' feelings, opinions, and satisfaction toward learning English listening through gamification combined with digital storytelling, as measured by the attitude questionnaire.

3. Content

The contents of this study was from the English listening texts book "ACTION 1" based on the English curriculum of Thailand according to the Basic Education Curriculum of 2008 and the School Curriculum. There were 12 Listening audio files including: 1) School day 2) My favorites! 3) Food and Beverage 4) My home, my castle 5) Fashion 6) The animal kingdom 7) In all weathers 8) Glory days 9) Special days 10) Modern living 11) Holidays, and 12) Occupation.

4. Duration

This study was conducted in the first semester of the academic year 2025. The experimental period was 12 weeks, two hours a week, 24 hours in total.

Methodology

Research Design

This study was designed in a form of experimental research with a one group pretest - posttest design to improve English listening comprehension ability using gamification combined with digital storytelling.

A diagram of the design is shown below.

T1	X	T2
Symbols used in Experimental Design		
T1	means	Pretest
T2	means	Posttest
X	employs	Teaching English listening comprehension using gamification combined with digital storytelling

Sample

The participants in the study consisted of 17 Mathayomsuksa 1 students from Dongwendongcharoeanwittaya School in the Office of Nongkhai Primary Education Service Area 1. These participants were enrolled in the Basic English course (E21101) during the first semester of the 2025 academic year. The sample was obtained using cluster random sampling. Specifically, one classroom was randomly selected from the total of four classrooms, and all students in that selected classroom were included as the sample group. Though the number of participants in the study is only 18% of the total population, it is considered adequate for the one-group pretest-posttest research design and the high homogeneity of the population. In addition, Meejaitam and U-nakarin (2021: 76) point out that it is worth noting that the use of an intact class is in line with pedagogical research guidelines in Thai EFL contexts.

Research Instruments

Three research instruments were employed as follows:

1. Lesson plans were developed to promote the development of the students' English listening comprehension skills through gamification combined with digital storytelling. The program of instruction was comprised of 12 lesson plans, for 12 weeks with 2 hours of instruction per week, totaling 24 hours of instruction. The content validity of the lesson plans was assessed using the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC), where the IOC value of the items was 1.00.

2. Listening comprehension test was conducted in three parts.

Part 1: Gap Filling

Students listened to short digital storytelling and completed 10 gap-filling sentences to assess recognition and recall of key vocabulary. All items had an IOC of 1.00. Item difficulty ranged from 0.58–0.67, discrimination from 0.45–0.55, and reliability was 0.82.

Part 2: Multiple Choice

This section included 20 four-option questions measuring comprehension of main ideas and details. All items had an IOC of 1.00. Item difficulty ranged from 0.55–0.75, discrimination from 0.45–0.50, and reliability was 0.88.

Part 3: True/False

Students judged 10 statements based on the listening content to assess overall understanding. All items had an IOC of 1.00. Item difficulty ranged from 0.57–0.67, discrimination from 0.25–0.45, and reliability was 0.80.

3. Attitude Questionnaire

A 20-item questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale measured students' attitudes toward learning listening through gamification combined with digital storytelling. All items showed an IOC of 1.00.

Data collection

The data were collected from Mathayomsuksa 1 students in the first semester of the academic year 2025. The procedures were as follows:

1. Before the data collection process began, permission to carry out the research was sought from the school administration. Informed consent from the students and their parents or guardians was sought. The participants of the study were made aware of the intention of the research, the process of the research, and the right to withdraw from the research at any time without facing negative consequences. The data collected for the research purposes only was kept confidential. The participants of the study were kept anonymous to ensure privacy.

2. The students took a pretest to measure their English listening comprehension ability prior to the instruction. The pretest consisted of 40 items, which were divided into three parts: (1) Gap filling, (2) Multiple-choice, and (3) True or False.

3. The researcher conducted the lessons. The instructional method using gamification combined with digital storytelling was implemented according to 12 lesson plans over 12 weeks, totaling 24 hours.

4. The students took the posttest, which measured students' improvement in listening comprehension ability, consisted of similar items to the pretest.

5. The attitude questionnaire measured students' attitude towards teaching English listening comprehension using gamification combined with digital storytelling.

6. The scores obtained from the pretest, posttest, and attitude questionnaire were statistically analyzed and interpreted to determine the effect of the method of instruction.

Data Analysis

The data were statistically analyzed as follows:

1. Descriptive statistics, including the mean ($\bar{X}$), percentage, and standard deviation (S.D.), were employed to analyze students' scores on both the pretest and posttest.

2. Several statistical methods were used to evaluate the quality of the research instruments. The Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) was applied to assess content validity based on evaluations from three experts. The internal consistency reliability of the English listening comprehension test was determined using the Kuder–Richardson Formula 20 (KR-20), as the test items were scored dichotomously. These procedures ensured that the instruments were valid and reliable for measuring students' listening comprehension ability and their attitudes toward learning through gamification combined with digital storytelling.

3. Inferential statistics were used to test the research hypotheses. A one-sample t-test, conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows, was used to compare students' posttest scores with the 70 percent criterion. A dependent-samples t-test was also performed using SPSS to compare students' pretest and posttest scores.

Results

Results of the study and the comparison of scores on English listening comprehension ability before and after teaching English listening comprehension using gamification combined with digital storytelling were as follows:

Table 1 The results of the comparison of English listening comprehension ability of Mathayomsuksa 1 students before and after using Gamification combined with digital storytelling

Test	n	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Percentage	t
Pretest	17	13.94	4.74	34.85	18.67**
Posttest	17	30.35	2.64	75.87	

** p<.01

From Table 1, the mean score of English listening comprehension ability of 17 Mathayomsuksa 1 students before learning English listening comprehension using gamification combined with digital storytelling was 13.94 and the mean score of English listening comprehension ability of 17 Mathayomsuksa 1 students after learning English

listening comprehension using gamification combined with digital storytelling was 30.35. The results showed that the posttest mean score was significantly higher than the pretest score was significantly higher than that of the pretest at the 0.01 level.

Table 2 Results of the comparison of English listening comprehension ability of Mathayomsuksa 1 students' posttest score results after learning using gamification combined with digital storytelling and a set of criterion of 70 percent.

Test	The set criteria of 70 percent				t
	n	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	70%	
Posttest	17	30.35	2.64	75.87	47.32**

** $p < .01$

Table 2 shows the students' posttest mean score on English listening comprehension ability which was 30.35, and significantly different at the 0.01 level. The posttest score of 75.87 percent was significantly higher than a set criterion of 70 percent, supporting the first hypothesis that the students' English listening comprehension ability after the instruction was higher than the set criterion of 70 percent.

Table 3: The results of the investigation of attitude of Mathayomsuksa 1 students toward teaching English listening comprehension using gamification combined with digital storytelling

Attitude Test	n	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Interpretation
Attitude toward teaching English listening comprehension using Gamification combined with digital storytelling	17	4.64	0.21	Very good

Table 3 shows the highest level of students' attitude toward teaching English listening comprehension using Gamification combined with digital storytelling with the mean score of 4.64. The results presented above indicate students' highly positive attitude towards the intervention that strongly encourages them to learn English listening.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the English listening comprehension Of Mathayomsuksa 1 students before and after studying English listening using gamification combined with digital storytelling and to study students' attitude toward teaching English listening comprehension Of Mathayomsuksa 1 students. The sample consisted of 17

Mathayomsuksa 1 students in the first semester of the academic year 2025 at Dongwendongcharoeanwittaya School, under the office of Nongkai Primary Education Service Area 1. The sample was selected by cluster random sampling. The design of this research was a one group pretest-posttest design. The research instruments included 12 lesson plans, an English listening comprehension ability test and an attitude questionnaire. The experiment lasted 12 weeks, two hours a week, or 24 hours for all. The mean, percentage, standard deviation, one-sample t-test and t-test for Dependent Samples were used for data analysis. The findings of this research were as follows:

1. The students' pretest and posttest mean scores on English listening comprehension ability were 13.94 or 34.85 percent and 30.35 or 75.87 percent respectively. The students' posttest mean score was higher than the set criterion of 70 percent and higher than that of the pretest.

2. The students' attitude toward teaching English listening using gamification combined with digital storytelling was at a highest level.

Discussion

The results of the study can be discussed as follows:

1. Improvement in English listening comprehension ability

The results revealed that students' posttest listening comprehension scores were significantly higher than those in the pretest and 70 percent criterion, thus proving Hypotheses 1 and 2. This shows that teaching English listening through gamification with digital storytelling is an effective method for improving students' English listening comprehension ability.

This improvement in students' English listening comprehension can be explained by the role of gamification in motivating students in learning English listening skills. Kapp (2012: 7) states that gamification is an approach to teaching and learning that uses game design elements, such as points, rewards, levels, and competition, to engage learners and promote learning. In this study, students were motivated to learn English listening skills through an interactive learning experience in digital storytelling, where they were rewarded with points for active participation in English listening activities, which is considered a key factor in successful language learning of English listening comprehension skills.

The results of this study are consistent with previous studies on the use of gamification in language learning, which have revealed that gamification is an effective method for improving students' language learning performance. Meejaitam and U-nakarin (2021 : 75-90) reported that students who were taught through gamified learning methods

were able to perform significantly better in language learning than before they were instructed in this method. Lee and Baek (2023 : 1-19) reported that gamification has a significant medium effect on students' English learning performance, specifically in English listening skills. Therefore, this study is consistent with previous research on the use of gamification in language learning, which revealed that this method is an effective method for improving students' English learning performance.

Another significant factor is the use of digital storytelling as a medium for listening. Khasanah (2023 : 155-159) proved that digital storytelling provides contextual, meaningful, and multimodal input for understanding. It is found that the use of such meaningful input is significant for the understanding of the contextual meaning of the sounds being heard. In this research study, the students were provided with the opportunity to engage in gamified gap-filling, true/false, and sequencing the events of the digital storytelling while listening to the audio.

Furthermore, the listening stages, including pre-listening, while listening, and post-listening, ensured the effectiveness of learning outcomes by Richards (2015 : 369-405). In the pre-listening stage, vocabulary, as well as the prediction of pictures, assisted students in the attainment of the set goals, reflecting the perspectives of Qasserras (2025 : 107-128), who argued that pre-listening facilitates students' comprehension and minimizes anxiety. In the while listening stage, the gamified activities ensured student engagement, whereas during the post-listening stage, the group activities ensured comprehension, thereby assisting the students in the processing of meaning.

2. Students' attitude toward learning English listening comprehension

Attitudes of students, as revealed in the questionnaire, showed learning English listening in a very positive level when it comes to gamification combined with digital storytelling. Generally, the average score was in the very good level, pointing to the fact that learning was enjoyable, motivating, and even beneficial.

These results corroborate what Torres Rodríguez, Pérez, and García (2023 : 30-55) found that, indeed, the gamification of EFL classes enhances students' engagement and enjoyment. Students found the listening activities enjoyable and less stressful, suggesting that the gamification reduced the usually negative associations that come with listening.

In addition, the digital storytelling also played an effective role in creating positive attitudes. From the literature, Koroğlu (2020 : 65-84) observed that digital storytelling promote increased levels of emotional engagement and make the learning experience more significant. In this context, the students were also creating the

connection between the content of the story and reality, which increased interest and the level of willingness to participate.

Moreover, accomplishing the gamified tasks enabled the students to feel confident. In this regard, the findings of the present research were in agreement that suggested repeated victories made learners more confident in their skills. For instance, the students were rewarded points as they cleared listening challenges; in this vein, they developed positive feelings about listening to English.

Although the results of the present study showed that the method of instruction is effective, the following limitations are noted. First, the present study is a one-group pretest-posttest design without a control group. Therefore, it is not possible to confirm the improvement of the listening comprehension ability of the students solely due to the instruction method. It is possible that various external factors may have affected the results of the study. It is recommended that future researchers include a control group to confirm the results of the instruction method.

Recommendations

1. Recommendation from the study

1.1 Gamification, blended with digital storytelling, has also been shown to result in an engaging and unstressful classroom atmosphere within research, transforming learners from passive receivers into active participants, which boosts their self-confidence and attitude towards listening very fast.

1.2 Attitudes, as surveyed, also prove that students' interest and motivation are increased by the insertion of game elements in virtual story. Not only are listening activities more purposeful, but the entire learning experience becomes more positive for the students.

2. Recommendation for further study

2.1. Other possible directions for future research might include a focus on the effectiveness of the use of gamification combined with digital storytelling as a tool to promote English listening comprehension for different levels of education.

2.2. Researchers should think about applying gamification combined with digital storytelling to other skills: speaking, reading, and writing, to find out the role of story-informed gamifying factors in language acquisition.

2.3. Future research can consider the issue of time management in applying gamified digital storytelling lessons. Since real-time scoring, feedback, and assessment in listening activities could devour significant instructional time, researchers are encouraged to explore more efficient assessment methods. For example, the application of

automated scoring software, peer-assessment software, or simplified rubrics can allow teachers to provide instant feedback with rapid classroom management and sufficient time for instruction and reflection.

2.4 Future studies are recommended to report effect size, such as Cohen's *d*, alongside statistical significance. This will provide a clearer understanding of the magnitude and practical significance of the instructional intervention. Additionally, comparing effect sizes across different instructional methods or research designs may offer deeper insights into the relative effectiveness of various teaching approaches.

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