The Potential of Gamified Learning to Improve Comprehension of Jungle Book Graphic Novel: A Concept Paper

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Abstract

Gamification is an intriguing technology that has undergone a paradigm shift in spite of its notoriety as a double-edged sword. The incorporation of gamification in the teaching of Contemporary Children Literature is believed to elevate English as Second Language (ESL) learners' learning experience to another dimension. The use of gamification serves as an intervention that reduces learning gaps when learners read (*Rudyard Kipling's* The Jungle Book, 2011). Based on positive outcomes from past studies in different skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing and grammar, this paper examines the potential use of gamification as a platform to promote pupils' understanding on the comprehension of Jungle Book Graphic Novel. This research incorporates the use of graphic novels in promoting pupils' effective learning. The contribution of this study is to gain insights into the use of gamification in teaching graphic novel. For future research, it is proposed that a mixed method can be used to collect data on the features of graphic novel for effective learning and the use of gamification in enhancing comprehension of The Jungle Book Graphic Novel. A semi structured interview and pre-test and post-test will be conducted among primary school students to amass data. Therefore, it is envisaged that this study will demonstrate the efficacy of gamification as an ideal tool in producing critical and creative creators in ESL classrooms with the aid of the Jungle Book Graphic Novel.
Keywords: Children Literature, English as a Second Language (ESL), Gamification, Interactive Game, Motivation

Introduction

Over the past two years, a catastrophic pandemic known as COVID-19 has obliterated the globe. In defense against the pandemic, the World Health Organization (WHO) suggested social distancing, which aims to curb the spread of the pandemic. In hindsight, this has compelled schools to shut their doors (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020) which disrupted learning continuity. While educational institutions stay shuttered, concerns over teaching and learning during the pandemic were expressed worldwide (Sulkowski, 2020). In such cases, some state governments were proactive by taking immediate acts to revitalise education. The

exponential rise of technology throughout the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) has provided a positive impression, reiterating that online learning is a viable alternative as an effort to maintain learning continuity during the pandemic. As a corollary, gamification becomes a catalyst in e-learning for creating a productive and entertaining learning environment for learners of all ages and ability levels.

Malaysia runs a centralised educational system in which the Ministry of Education (MoE) is responsible for the national educational transformations, policy choices, and general direction of its education. Local schools are responsible for administering endorsed national educational policies. In the current education system, the Contemporary Children Literature (CCL) Programme was introduced to pupils in Malaysian primary schools in 2003 with the aim of strengthening students' vocabulary and language content, as well as their critical-thinking abilities, by encouraging them to read, analyse and interpret the meaning of the text with appropriate guidance by teachers. The literature curriculum is considered as a mechanism for exposing students to a variety of literary genres early on in order to foster their awareness and appreciation regarding topics of the literary work (Pulimeno et al., 2020). In compliance with the objectives and goals of executing CCL Program's, the MOE has provided strong support for the integration of children's literature into educational systems. Therefore, children's literature provides an opportunity for young learners to interact with literature and create their own perspectives on the subject.

Moving from expectation to reality, teaching literature is a daunting task for many educators during virtual classes (Sokip, 2020). Unlike language skills, children's literature, a component, steals the limelight as teachers realise that pupils encounter problems understanding the graphic novel during online classes. According to Misbah et al (2017), problems in learning CLL is a matter of ubiquity among young learners throughout Malaysia. Apropos to the point, graphic novel "The Jungle Book" deserves a red-carpet treatment for its dire straits in teaching and learning literature. There are numerous studies on the analysis of CLL made by students from different levels of education. However, only a few types of research have been conducted on interventions to render assistance for pupils to master CLL.

Research Objectives

Our purpose in the present study is that visual depiction in graphic novels may attract the pupils to understand the novel better. For students who struggle with reading as well as proficient readers who are bored or pressed for time, picking up a graphic book can be a great way to improve their comprehension and spark their interest in learning. To follow Norris (2013), the researcher believes that the mix of visuals and words helps increase students' reading comprehension. That is to say, the visual aid is the most effective tool for grasping the text's ideas. This aids in understanding and provides additional nuance that would be lacking in a purely textual presentation. The educational and literacy benefits of graphic novels for pupils are manifold. According to research by Halwani (2017), using visual aids in English classrooms improves students' memory, imagination, and ability to follow lectures. Important though individual studies may be, when considered collectively they provide credence to the argument that visual aids help students learn a language more effectively. As a corollary, this research endeavours to examine the engaging characteristics of "The Jungle Book" graphic book in order to boost students' successful learning.

Gamification has entered the English language education landscape at an opportune time. This is because, there are unexplored opportunities for developing the cognitive growth of pupils with regard to the understanding of Graphic Novel due to the traditional old-

fashioned chalk and method. In reality, this study is of the utmost relevance since it might throw light on the influence of gamification on improving students' understanding of The Jungle Book Graphic Novel at the primary level, whereas an abundance of research has been undertaken at the secondary level in different skills (Livingstone & Raturi 2015). There are a plethora of ways to gain insight on the comprehension of graphic novels. Gamification is one of the effective platforms that promote creativity in English as Second Language (ESL) classrooms. In other words, there is a shortage of research on the efficacy of gamification in teaching The Jungle Book Graphic Novel. In an effort to address pupils' poor understanding of graphic novels and expand awareness for educators of the multitude of platforms of gamification, the researchers conducted a study on the usage of gamification to improve comprehension of Jungle Book Graphic Novel among Year 4 students.

Research Questions
(a) What are the features of graphic novels that promote pupils' effective learning?
(b) How does the use of gamification improve comprehension of Jungle Book Graphic Novel among Year 4 students?

These questions will be explored by a comprehensive review and literature analysis. As a result, ESL educators will find this conceptual paper useful in teaching contemporary literature using the gamification platform as well as explore multimodality of graphic novel features.

Literature Review
Teaching and Learning Literature in ESL Classrooms
The connection of children with literature is crucial because the latter contributes to the development of children's language acquisition as well as their literary requirements. Literature plays an excellent option that serves an educational, recreational, moral, cultural, and socio-political function in the learning environment (Azmi, Hassan & Sidek, 2020). In addition, children's association with literature is pivotal since it helps their language development and meet their literary demands. Therefore, in ESL classrooms, literature furnishes the pupils with a window of opportunities.

The Curriculum Development Centre of Malaysia implemented CLL in Malaysian schools which includes the instruction of graphic novels, short stories, and poems since 2000 (Ministry of Education, 2003). There are a total of three short stories, three graphic novels, and twenty-six poems to be used with year 4, 5, and 6 children. The curriculum offers the course's goals, objectives, and learning outcomes. The learning outcome is to enhance the capability to comprehend, interpret, and engage with literary materials. Exploring the issues depicted in a selection of literature, and poetry contributed to the growth of the learners. Literature appreciation provides children with personal and emotional gains while expanding their awareness of themselves and the world. Literature provides entertainment while fostering ingenuity. In addition, it helps children make sense of their own experiences and inspires thoughts around life situations. Beginning with all Year 4 elementary school students, the selected texts in the form of storybooks are designed to accommodate all students' English language levels, independent of level division. The literary text also provides critical literacy whereby the pupils need to engage in text reading to increase their cognitive capacities, intellectual development, knowledge and comprehension of the world, democracy, power distribution, social conditions, and responsibility (Blixen & Pannell, 2019). Therefore, literature provides innumerable benefits for the pupils.

Using Technology in Literature Classroom

The 21st century has equipped the students with a plethora of modern technological tools in the implementation in educational contexts. Students in the present day are continuously exposed to computer networks (Yunus et al., 2010). Although the purposes of utilizing technology across many fields differ, the common ground is that it serves as a medium to facilitate and improve learning. The massive changes in the technological features nowadays promote creativity in the teaching and learning process. Education system, which is poorly affected in the light of the COVID 19 pandemic, has come back to its shape with the help of technology. Besides, the highly tuned platforms such as Quizizz, Kahoot, and Wordwall cater to the needs of teaching practices such as the exigency of creativity, innovation, and invention (Suswati et al., 2019).

Teachers can employ various technology medium means in their teaching practice to promote creativity in the ESL classroom. English language teachers have lately begun to examine the possible use of digital tools to enhance ESL learners' self-practice both within and outside of the classroom (Lee, 2020). On the other hand, students acquire new creative skills in learning by exploring various technological platforms. Research conducted by Yunus et al (2018) proves that learners can be independent in their learning when technology is integrated. In contrast, Zou and Xie (2018) found that the incorporation of digital resources has produced a mixed learning environment that stimulates student participation. While students like learning remotely with digital tools, Yunus et al (2019) discovered that some required face-to-face learning assistance. Regardless of the number of research conducted in other parts of the world, the number of studies in Malaysia that employ digital tools to improve learning, particularly in primary school settings, is limited. Thus, teachers are unaware of the efficacy of the instruments for enhancing all skills.

Gamification in ESL Teaching and its use in CCL

Our educational system has been outfitted with cutting-edge technology in order to provide the top-notch assistance to learners. Gamification is an intriguing technology that has undergone a paradigm shift in spite of its notoriety as a double-edged sword. Innumerable studies have been conducted to evaluate how gamification impacts language learners in the ESL classroom (Cuesta, 2022). Today, in this cutting-edge technology, gamification teaching in the classroom is an essential educational approach that must be prioritised in response to the current shift and equip pupils to adapt to those changes (Salehudin, et al., 2019). Leveraging current technology such as exploring gamification platforms to teach English is not limited to the use of modern appliances and technologies, but also includes the introduction of modern systems and methods that encourage and facilitate the learning process to make it easier and more thorough (Mofareh, 2019). To achieve the intended objectives, ESL teachers that utilise technology are able to combine the integrated perspective of current teaching techniques or approaches with additional components that are helpful to pupils. Thus, gamification should be incorporated into teaching and learning sessions to get a productive and creative outcome (Maley & Kiss, 2018).

As for language classrooms, levels of achievement in second language learning have also been connected to the use of gamification. As a result, teachers are advised to increase creative activities by engaging in cooperative learning, discussion, or designing a product that incorporates gamification into the learning process. Such creative learning activities with the incorporation of gamification would improve children's capacity to work as part of a group and optimise their creative potential in the ESL classroom (Henriksen et al., 2016). Therefore,

gamification can make learning more enjoyable, resulting in students' enthusiasm and good emotional participation.

The goal of performing the game in teaching graphic novels is to practise as well as promote authentic responses and natural language in an intellectual discussion among students. Numerous studies have been pursued in all the skills such as speaking, listening, writing, grammar over the past decades yet there are limited studies done for teaching CCL even the issues demand a diverse approach to seek an effective resolution. In recent years, issues in teaching Contemporary Children's Literature have escalated dramatically, and rectification is needed to solve the problems aroused. Although a few studies in the area of teaching literature propose diverse solutions, gamification steals the spotlight as it yields innumerable fruitful outcomes. This claim is further supported by Kayan and Aydin (2020) in their study by stating that gamification establishes a captivating and engaging atmosphere for learning English. As a result, when students learn something in a trailblazing technique, they enjoy it more and their learning spirit nourishes (Castaneda & Cho, 2016; Reitz et al., 2016).

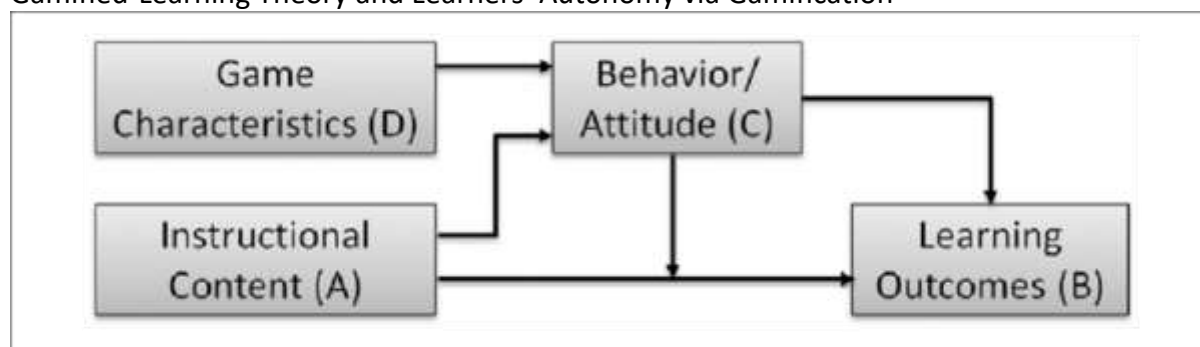Gamified-Learning Theory and Learners' Autonomy via Gamification

Figure 1. The Gamified Theory of Learning (Landers & Landers, 2014)

Zaric et al (2021) posit that GLT defines gamification as a dynamic process in which the attributes of a game exert an extrinsic influence on the learning-associated behaviours or attitudes. The Gamified-Learning Theory is one of the prominent theories in the field of game-based research since it is developed by Landers and Landers (2014) with a theoretical framework. There are three main factors proposed in this theoretical framework, namely, Instructional Content (A), Behaviour/ Attitude (C), and Game Characteristics (D) which bring a huge impact on the Learning Outcome (B) (Landers & Landers, 2014). As the result of the confluence of these three factors, two fundamental processes are established by (Landers and Landers, 2014). The process whereby the positive effect of the instructional content on the learning outcome is supported by a great degree of constructive Behaviour is known as the mediating process. On the flip side, when a game's characteristics (verbal appraisal and motivating phrases) strongly influence the learning outcome with the aid of optimistic behaviour/ attitude, the process is known as the moderating process. Both the processes are taken into consideration and employed by many researchers in their studies for years to highlight the salient merit of gamification in yielding fruitful outcomes in education. Hence, The Gamification Theory has a significant role in game-oriented learning as it contributes to future intellectuals' upbringing.

Zourou et al (2017) found the significance of gaming and social networking in the development of learner autonomy in their recent study of a gamified language learning platform. Learner autonomy is viewed as a means of empowering students and fostering

their capacity for collaborative action. There are five aspects impacting learner autonomy extrapolated from earlier research by Kemala (2016), which are motivation, instructor, environment, material and task. By altering the five factors using the application, students' autonomy increased dramatically. Moreover, Afshar et al (2014) discovered that learners with greater degrees of learner autonomy are highly motivated in their second language learning. Therefore, an independent learner will be able to adapt the lesson with the aid of gamification and, as a result, will develop their knowledge abundantly.

Multimodality Theory

A multimodal text is created when two or more semiotic systems are combined in a text. Since the 19th century, the increasing popularity of multimodal communication and means of text circulation has led to an increase in the popularity of comics (Chu & Coffey, 2015). Gardner (2012, p. 11) argues that comics are an inefficient narrative form that requires active reader imagination because diverse semantic systems are multimodally fitted into crowded frames, making meaning both 'collaborative and competitive.' The graphic book utilises a combination of text and graphics to express meaning. With numerous availability of multimodal texts, educators should provide them to facilitate the growth of varied multiliteracies (Rajendra, 2015). Consequently, comics and graphic novels offer an interesting ground for multimodal narrative research. Due to this concept, the Malaysian Ministry of Education has incorporated the use of graphic novels in introductory English Language classes in an effort to improve students' proficiency and understanding of a foreign text. As the graphic novel is an introductory text in primary literature classrooms in Malaysia, it is vital to analyse the visual characteristics that separate graphic novels from conventional novels in order to better understand the impact graphic novels have on students' reading engagement.

Methodology
Research Design

The researchers propose doing mixed-method research to amass data. This study aims to explore the effectiveness of gamification in teaching The Jungle Book graphic novel among Year 4 pupils. Besides, the researcher also aims to conduct an interview to understand the viewpoints of pupils on the features of graphic novels for effective learning. So, with the relationship of research questions, a mix-method was applied to this research to meet the objective and motive of the study. According to Creswell and Clark (2011), integrating two approaches as opposed to adopting a single strategy enhances comprehension of the identified study topic. Therefore, using a mixed method research gives a clearer perspective by creating better and more particular instruments based on the context of the investigation.

Samples and Population

This research study will be conducted at a Banting urban government school. For the first research question which spotlights the features of graphic novels that promote effective learning, a total number of 10 pupils will be chosen to participate in this study. Respondents will be selected using the approach of convenience sampling since they study in the same class where the researcher teaches, making it considerably easier and less time-consuming to conduct the study. For the second research question, the study will employ convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is a sort of sampling in which the first accessible source of primary data is used for the study and persons who are simple to approach without additional constraints are selected (Etikan, 2016). The sample is conducted by selecting students from a

year 4 taught by the researcher stated in the issue description. 30 pupils from one of the national schools located in the area of Selangor were selected to take part in this study. The students who will take part in this study are enrolled in the first of five classes at the school as the class selected for this study consists of students with high proficiency, intermediate proficiency, and low proficiency.

Research Instruments
This study will use semi structured interviews and assessment tests as research instruments.

(a) Semi-structured Interview
An interview is defined as a purposeful discussion with a person or group of people (Lodico et al., 2010). Interviews are essential for allowing participants to elaborate on their ideas about the world. The outcomes of data analysed through thematic analysis. This study will include semi-structured interviews since it is expected that they will allow for a more in-depth assessment of teachers' views on the features of graphic novels that promote pupils' effective learning. There will be 8 open-ended questions with an estimated duration of 30 minutes. Before conducting the interviews, they will be piloted. All interviews will be recorded and transcribed confidentially, and all data will be erased after usage. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis entails identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data, as well as interpreting various aspects of the study problem. The researcher makes extensive use of thematic analysis to obtain understanding and insight into the research. Then, the data segments were identified by highlighting the questionnaire's essential codes. According to Boyatzis (1998), codes identify some aspect of the data that is of interest to the analyst and can be evaluated meaningfully in relation to the investigated phenomenon. Therefore, this study utilised thematic analysis to analyse and interpret the qualitative data, as it has the ability to provide rich and precise information.

(b) Assessment Test
For this research, the gamification platform serves as the primary instrument, and the game is built with different levels using the online gamification app. A total of 38 Malaysian primary school students will be selected to participate in this study, in which a pre-test will be administered prior to each of the interventions using gamification platform and a post-test will be administered after each intervention. The pre- and post-tests will contain 25 questions with different levels, and the results will be recorded as percentages and letter grades in accordance with the Malaysian grading system. The data from the pre-test and post-test will be analysed to get percentages and frequencies for this study. The percentages and frequency counts will be calculated using descriptive statistics.

Discussion
This conceptual paper sheds light on teaching contemporary children literature using the gamification platform and exploring the graphic novel features for effective learning. First of all, the features of graphic novels are designed to arouse the reader's sense of excitement. This is especially crucial for hesitant readers, for whom the desire to have fun and to be enthusiastic is useful in engaging them in the reading activity. The proponents of integrating graphic novels in the classroom. Echevarria et al (2004), assert that reducing text length and using images are crucial in the making reading a more enjoyable and attractive chore rather than a tough one. Colors are another visual aspect that transcends all other visual

components. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) are firm believers in the capacity of colours to provide viewers with an emotive dimension. Beenfeldt (2016) also hypothesized that most students who participated in her study cited colours as the visual element that affected their emotional connection to graphic tales. It is evident that a graphic novel is one type of text that may pique the interest of ESL readers, keep their attention, and convince them that the text may help them grasp the plot with interesting features.

The benefits of tailoring gamification in classrooms have been the subject of research in recent years. This conceptual paper sheds light on the current status of gamified education teaching graphic novels and suggests a research agenda for the future. Many studies have been done in the previous few years on this issue, suggesting that experts see it as one fraught with various unanswered questions. This paper carries the purpose of considering gamification as a potential platform to improve comprehension of graphic novels in the times of Covid-19 invasion and the physical classroom. In the epoch of new media, gamification, a facet of the platform, assists English teachers in establishing a creative language learning atmosphere in ESL classrooms. Gamification is favored by today's digital natives to a great extent (Erarslan, 2019). This opens a window of opportunity for English educators to promote creativity among ESL learners during the Covid-19 pandemic. The notion that gamification in education is a high-potential medium to cultivate creativity and user engagement has been accepted widely due to its interesting and engaging features. Besides enhancing student engagement, this gamification platform is intended to encourage students to define specific learning objectives, maintain open lines of communication, and consciously form their identities as students. These gamification features can be utilized in teaching and learning English in ESL classrooms. Gamified learning enhances the learning experience of pupils. Morschheuser et al (2017), claim that the inclusion of gamification as a teaching aid significantly enhances pupils' understanding of the concepts of graphic novels. Therefore, teachers that implement games in the classroom need not worry about their student's academic progress.

Although the incorporation of gamification in the teaching and learning of English has beneficial effects on ESL learners, its drawbacks should be considered. In the context of education, gamification is regarded as a double-edged sword. The overuse of gamification can lead to negative impacts on students' health. Pupils can be allured by the spellbinding features of gamification platforms and become addicted to them. As a consequence, severe health conditions like sleep deprivation and mental exhaustion will drive them to the brink of distress. Besides, using gamification to teach literature in school requires access to computers and the Internet. Some school districts do not have the budget available to purchase computers. Other than that, students of low-income families may not have technology available to them in the home to support learning. Therefore, teachers and parents must jump on the bandwagon to help the students savor the beneficial effects of gamification in education to promote positive learning.

Conclusion

Numerous research has been undertaken on teaching gamification in different skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing and grammar in primary and secondary school. Nonetheless, there is a need for research on the use of gamification in teaching literature as it inculcates love towards learning literature in class. The idea of the gamification will come to fruition with the sole purpose of enhancing pupils' understanding of

comprehension of Jungle Book Novel. In accordance with the intention, the research will yield fruitful results. Gamification learning is one of its merits as it draws pupils' attentiveness towards the learning process. Another virtue of the innovation is the opportunity provided for the pupils to practice graphic novel at their own pace to master the comprehension. Taking the benefits of this gamification learning into serious consideration, educators can adopt and adapt the idea of this gamification to teach literary texts and enhance critical literacy among pupils.

Regarding future research on this issue, the researchers might examine the effects of gamification on learning The Jungle Book Graphic Novel from the perspective of students. In order to maximise the efficacy and applicability of gamification in e-learning and physical classroom, instructors and students are required to demonstrate a high degree of synergy. All stakeholders should take gamification into consideration in order to use it for the improvement of instructional practises and to include creativity into the teaching and learning process so that students can wear a smile on their face and say yay!

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