

CHAPTER 18

GAMIFYING PdPR: FLIPPING HOME-BASED LEARNING WITH GAMLET MODEL

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ABSTRACT

Grammar has been given due attention for conveying messages accurately. Home-Based Learning or PdPR has become challenging for both Malaysian primary ESL teachers and learners. Low participation and engagement among Malaysian primary ESL learners in PdPR have resulted in the difficulty of mastering Subject-Verb Agreement (SVA) knowledge via PdPR during COVID-19 pandemic. The innovation project was an extension of the Flipped Classroom Approach (FCA) which is enhanced to Gamified Flipped Home-Based Learning (GAMLET) Model in order to improve Malaysian primary ESL learners' mastery of SVA knowledge. This project adopted a quasi-experimental design in which 30 Malaysian Year 3 ESL learners from Selangor and Johor were selected as the participants of the project. A pre-test and post-test were administered prior and after 2-week intervention respectively. Then, a questionnaire was given to the participants to examine their perceptions towards learning SVA via the GAMLET Model. The findings from pre-test and post-test depicted a significant improvement in learners' SVA competence. The results from the questionnaire revealed that learners hold positive perceptions towards GAMLET-based PdPR English lessons. This shows that the GAMLET Model is effective and positively accepted among Malaysian primary ESL learners. This project may provide an insight to the stakeholders, particularly ESL teachers who may modify their teaching approaches to cater ESL pupils' needs and learning styles by incorporating games into the flipped lessons. Future research can focus more on integrating different gamifications in the flipped home-based learning to suit the different levels of ESL learners.

Key Words: English as a second language (ESL), gamified learning, flipped classroom approach, home-based learning, grammar

1. INTRODUCTION

As we were transitioning into the 21st century era, things took a drastic turn when the global pandemic of COVID-19 affected nearly every area of life. Particularly, the education sectors around the world were also challenged. The best alternative that was available for all the countries were to shift from the traditional method of teaching to a full-fledged online teaching and learning to ensure that their learners would not miss out on education (Haug et al., 2020). Hence, in line with World Health Organisation's (WHO) guidelines, the government of Malaysia too took the step forward in closing all educational institutions in Malaysia. In order to avoid jeopardization of learners' learning process, the Malaysian government brought home-based learning or better known as *Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran di Rumah* (PdPR) into action to engage learners from the comfort of their home. However, the pandemic which resulted in school closures accelerated the learning difficulties and barriers faced by learners around the world (Sabates et al., 2021). One such difficulty faced by Malaysian ESL learners was mastering grammatical items via PdPR.

Studies have shown that grammatical mastery is indeed crucial for ESL learners to augment their second language acquisition (Hidayat, 2021). Accordingly, Pandapatan (2020) revealed that the mastery of subject-verb agreement (SVA) among ESL learners is crucial in order to determine one's grammatical ability in English language. In line with that, Febriyanti (2019) added that mastering the SVA knowledge has been the main struggle among non-native language learners. However, it is believed that the sudden shift to remote learning has heightened the difficulties among ESL learners in mastering them. Consequently, their low level of engagement and participation in online lessons contributed to their barriers in mastering grammatical knowledge (Destianingsih & Satria, 2020).

With that being said, the GAMLET model developed in this study would be used to address the issue of mastering SVA knowledge among Malaysian primary ESL learners during PdPR sessions. Thus, this study is intended to bring about changes into ESL learners' PdPR experience by incorporating flipped classroom approach (hereafter FCA) with gamification in order to enhance and improve their grammatical mastery of SVA. In conjunction with this, this study will address the following research questions:

1. Is the GAMLET Model effective in improving Malaysian Year 3 ESL learners' SVA competence?
2. What are the perceptions of Malaysian Year 3 ESL learners towards learning SVA via the GAMLET Model?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The emergence and development of instructional technologies in recent years has made learner-centred pedagogy more workable and more popular at all levels of academia. Even though there is not a single model, FCA is characterised by a conception similar to

that of inverted classrooms, reversed instructions and blended learning (DeLozier & Rhodes, 2016; Hao, 2016). Instructional content is previewed by learners before they come to class. In-class time is utilised for interactive activities such as discussion (Wei et al., 2020), problem-solving activities (Cheng et al., 2019), brainstorming and gaming (Jo et al., 2018). Most research on FCA cited constructivist learning theories based on the works of Piaget (1968) and Vygotsky (1978). Piaget introduced the concept of cognitive conflict that occurs following the interactions with peers, and Vygotsky's concept of zone of proximal development (ZPD) explained learning that occurs because of the interactions with more advanced individuals. Both scholars highlight the fact that the learning process depends on interactions with others, and FCA manages to increase peer interaction since more in-class time can be utilised to implement cooperative activities. Simultaneously, FCA also incorporates mastery learning, a theory based on the belief that learners must attain a level of mastery in a level of learning before moving on to the next level of learning (Bloom, 1971). In the proposed GAMLET model as shown in Figure 1, learners engage in a few cycles of studying (videos and PowerPoint slides) and testing (synchronous and asynchronous games). This allows reinforcement to take place, and eventually learners are able to achieve a level of mastery in the target language item.

As mentioned previously, gaming is one of the elements that can be incorporated in FCA (Jo et al., 2018). According to Landers, Armstrong and Collmus (2017), gamification is the process of using game mechanisms to encourage problem solving and to engage players in non-game contexts. The theory of gamified learning (Landers, 2014) proposes that effective instructional content directly influences learners' behaviors as well as learning outcomes. Gamification does not replace instructions; it improves instructions by eliciting positive behaviours among learners which are conducive to learning. With the gamification of in-class activities in FCA, active learning can be fostered. Through past studies that investigated gamified learning in FCA, positive outcomes on learners' motivation and learning achievement could be observed compared to the other learning approaches (Lo & Hew, 2018; Yildirim, 2017; Zainuddin, 2018). Nonetheless, there is still limited research that evaluated the effectiveness of gamified FCA in a primary classroom setting. Though past studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of FCA and gamified learning, more evidence is still needed on its effectiveness in teaching and learning of grammar, which has always been a challenge for ESL teachers and learners. The GAMLET Model has been designed with the integration of FCA and gamified learning. Hence, this paper aimed to report the effectiveness of the GAMLET model on improving the mastery of SVA items among lower primary ESL learners.

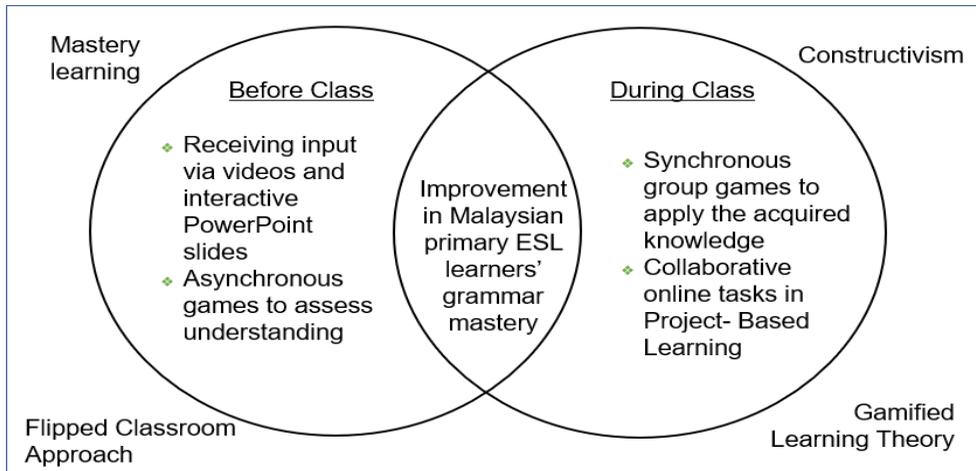


Figure 1: The Framework of Gamified Flipped Home-Based Learning (GAMLET) Model

3. METHODOLOGY

A quasi-experimental research which involved 30 Malaysian Year 3 ESL learners from three national-type primary schools located in Selangor and Johor was conducted. The research participants were selected via purposive sampling.

A pre-test and post-test were administered prior and after the intervention respectively to measure the pupils' performance and progress in their mastery of SVA. Their scores will be analysed via mean, standard deviation and margin of improvement. Then, the participants completed a questionnaire after the intervention to explore their perceptions towards learning SVA via the GAMLET Model.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 RQ 1: Is the GAMLET Model effective in improving Malaysian Year 3 ESL learners' SVA competence?

The participants' pre-test and post-test scores were analysed and tabulated in Table 1. The findings depict that the participants had a statistically significant improvement in scores, with a mean difference of 12.07. Also, the pupils demonstrated a margin of improvement with the score of +362. This implies that adopting GAMLET Model appears to play a role in enhancing the participants' SVA mastery level. This result corresponds to the studies which claimed that FCA and gamification lead to better understanding and mastery of knowledge among learners (Lo & Hew, 2018; Yildirim, 2017; Zainuddin, 2018).

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation of Participants' Scores and the Margin of Improvement

Mean		Standard Deviation		Margin of Improvement
Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test	
67.80	79.87	19.48	16.60	+362

4.2 RQ 2: What are the perceptions of Malaysian Year 3 ESL learners towards learning SVA via the GAMLET Model?

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of the data collected from the questionnaire. The findings of the questionnaire illustrate that most participants hold positive perceptions towards learning SVA via the GAMLET Model as 93% of the participants found the lessons fun and enjoyable and all participants wish to attend GAMLET-based lessons in future. This corresponds to the findings of Jo et al. (2018) which claimed that the incorporation of FCA and gamification would lead to an active learning environment among learners. Moreover, it is noticeable that the participants perceive themselves hold a better understanding of SVA as 76% of them found themselves able to apply the knowledge after attending the lessons which is pertinent to their improvement of test scores.

Table 2. Malaysian Year 3 ESL learners' Perceptions towards Learning SVA via the GAMLET Model

Item	Agree	Disagree
1. I had fun while attending GAMLET lessons.	93.33% 28	6.67% 2
2. I understand the SVA rules better after the GAMLET lessons.	93.33% 28	6.67% 2
3. I can apply SVA rules in my work after the GAMLET lessons.	76.67% 23	23.33% 7
4. I wish to attend GAMLET lessons again.	100% 30	0% 0

5. CONCLUSION

To sum up, it is proven that the GAMLET Model is effective in improving Malaysian primary ESL learners' SVA competence. Moreover, most of the participants hold positive perceptions towards learning SVA via the GAMLET Model. Future studies are recommended to be carried out by researchers to discover how the GAMLET Model can

be employed effectively in other grammatical items in the Malaysian primary ESL classroom context.

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