

COMPARATIVE EXPERIENCES OF EFL STUDENTS USING GAMIFIED VERSUS TRADITIONAL WEB-BASED GRAMMAR PRACTICE: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY

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Abstract: *The increasing use of digital tools in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction has transformed grammar learning, offering contrasting affordances. This study explored how university-level EFL students in Indonesia experience gamified (Quizizz) versus traditional web-based grammar platforms. Adopting a qualitative case study with 30 participants, data were collected through classroom observations and semi-structured questionnaires based on 15 behaviorally anchored indicators aligned with three research questions. Findings revealed that Quizizz heightened engagement through competitive elements, immediate feedback, and peer interaction—though some learners experienced stress due to time constraints. In contrast, traditional grammar websites promoted self-paced study, detailed explanations, and conceptual clarity, albeit with lower interaction and occasional disengagement. Cross-platform comparison showed learners valued both tools: Quizizz for motivational drill practice and traditional platforms for in-depth understanding and exam preparation. These insights suggest that neither platform alone is universally optimal. A blended instructional approach, combining gamified engagement with structured guidance, offers a more balanced grammar learning experience tailored to diverse learner preferences. Future research should include longitudinal and comparative designs across proficiency levels and integrate theoretical perspectives such as Self-Determination Theory and the Technology Acceptance Model to further elucidate learners' motivation and platform use.*

Keywords: *gamified learning; traditional grammar websites; web-based tools*

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INTRODUCTION

Technology use in the educational field is unavoidable. The use of digital technologies to improve teaching and learning, or digital pedagogy, has grown in popularity in contemporary education (Md Yazid et al., 2024). The influx of new online tools has transformed English grammar teaching during the past few years. Digital technologies must be incorporated into current educational practices because relying solely on traditional methods is no longer effective. The advancement of digital platforms and technology has also simplified teaching and learning English (Fitria, 2022). These new tools create active, hands-on, student-driven settings where learners can explore freely.

While several technologies are available, qualitative research remains limited on how different types of platforms are perceived and experienced by learners of English as a foreign language. Existing studies attempt to study a single type of platform and focus on 'effectiveness' primarily through quantitative measures, neglecting the qualitative aspects of learners' engagement. Although gamified platforms such as Quizizz have been shown to enhance grammar skills and motivation among high school and junior high learners (Munuyandi et al., 2021; R. Murtiningsih & Failaih Zulfa, 2024; Suharni et al., 2021; Sylvia et al., 2024; Vu et al., 2024), there is still insufficient understanding of how EFL learners experience both gamified and traditional web-based grammar practice. This study addresses that gap by exploring learners' comparative experiences with gamified and traditional web-based grammar tools in the context of a Basic Grammar Course.

In recent years, many online platforms have emerged to support English grammar instruction. These tools differ in their pedagogical orientation. One of them is a gamified platform (e.g., Quizizz) that applies game-design elements—such as competition, points, and immediate rewards—to sustain motivation and engagement (Deterding et al., 2011), while others are traditional web-based grammar practice websites (e.g., Perfect English Grammar, EnglishGrammar.org, or the British Council Learn English Grammar) that provide structured lessons, drills, and exercises. Although hybrid tools exist, this study focuses on comparing gamified and traditional approaches, given their distinct affordances for grammar learning.

Quizizz, as an example of a gamified platform, integrates motivation, interaction, and assessment by using avatars, memes, leaderboards, timers, and instant feedback Zhao in (Hasibuan & Depalina, 2025). Quizizz's use of leaderboards, timers, and instant feedback adds a fun and competitive element that keeps students interested while they track their progress (Hasibuan & Depalina, 2025). With its intuitive design, any educator can create or

find grammar quizzes on various topics in different levels, including tenses, parts of speech, and sentence structure. Moreover, the platform's competitive and timed format ensures active participation from students, turning grammar practice into an engaging activity.

One notable feature of Quizizz is the immediate feedback given after every question. It allows students to understand and rectify their mistakes instantly, reinforcing the learning process. Furthermore, performance analytics are provided, which benefits instructors and learners alike by showing the specific grammar aspects that require focus. With Quizizz, students enjoy greater autonomy as they progress through quizzes at their own pace, whether within a live class or individually. The game mechanics, like points, leaderboards, and memes, captured the students' interest. These instantaneous rewards are vital during consistent grammar practice. As a result, traditional grammar exercises are transformed using this platform, helping users refine their grammar skills effectively while relishing the learning process.

The role of traditional web-based grammar practice in aiding the learning process is critical due to its systematic accessibility and overt repetitive drills. Online grammar practice and instruction are one of the most practical ways to learn a foreign language (Yurko & Vorobel, 2022). A majority of these tools come in the form of educational or e-learning websites that provide learners with grammar lessons, example sentences, and a collection of exercises ranging from simple to complex. Through multiple-choice quizzes, fill-in-the-blank exercises, and sentence editing exercises, students sharpen their understanding of the grammar rules in a focused environment.

Traditional web-based grammar is very useful to find various kinds of learning material and exercises. A workable way to create accessible learning resources is to use Google Sites for educational purposes (Ardiel & Sri Mulyani Rusli, 2024). Traditional web-based tools offer several benefits. One such benefit is the immediate feedback learners receive, enabling them to know whether they picked the correct answer or not almost instantly. In addition to saving time, this feedback loop increases learner confidence while aiding long-term retention. Moreover, these platforms are always available, allowing students the freedom to practice whenever and wherever they choose.

Grammar drills aimed at reinforcing essential aspects of grammar, such as verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, articles, and prepositions, are some of the strengths of traditional web-based grammar practices. Although these mechanisms tend not to be interactive or game-like, the systematic structure enables learners to progressively build and evaluate their grammar skills. For this reason, traditional web-based grammar practices continue to be relevant. In the context of teaching and learning the English language, web-based learning (WBL) has also gained widespread recognition, especially in the wake of the pandemic (Karim in Md Yazid et al., 2024).

Several studies were concerned with the influence of Quizizz on the grammar competence of high school students and their attitudes toward the use of the program as a

grammar teaching tool. The data revealed that the learners from the experimental group performed better than those in the control group, which illustrates the role Quizizz plays in teaching grammar to high school students. The feedback from the surveys and the interviews showed that most learners appreciate using Quizizz for grammar drills (Vu et al., 2024). Additional research sought to evaluate the use of Quizizz in teaching and learning Malay grammar. The results indicated a strong demand for employing Quizizz as a formative assessment for teaching Malay grammar, especially for the Tamil population. Students' feedback obtained through survey questionnaires was noted to be positive (Munuyandi et al., 2021). In addition, one research study was conducted with junior high school students in Riau and noted that students found the Quizizz application user-friendly, contributing to their enjoyment, motivation, and interest in learning English (Murtiningsih et al., 2024). Subjects claimed that Quizizz was more user-friendly than the traditional paperwork and helped them review lessons while easing test tension (Suharni et al., 2021). Finally, this study investigates a case of using Quizizz as a game-based learning and assessment tutor in the English class of the accounting program at Universitas Islam Kebangsaan Indonesia. Findings show that learners had great pleasure in learning English and positively perceived Quizizz as an educational resource (Sylvia et al., 2024).

Besides, several studies have looked at the use of web-based platforms for grammar practice as tools for learning, yielding valuable information regarding their effectiveness. One such study (R. Murtiningsih & Failaih Zulfa, 2024) reviewed the impact of web-based language learning on the grammar ability of junior high school students. Results indicated remarkable improvement in grammar ability among experimental group learners who practiced through WBLL compared to a control group. Further study (Rezvani & Ketabi, 2011) contrasted the effectiveness of applying websites and textbooks to instruct grammar. Through this research, it was determined that integrating web-based content, even as a supplement to traditional textbooks, can positively impact student motivation and improve mastery of grammar in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) course. Finally, another study (Kruk, 2015) focused on the effectiveness of online practice and a virtual environment in teaching the second conditional. The study revealed consistent gains in students' understanding and use of this grammar structure, with gains observable immediately after instruction and maintained for eight weeks. These studies collectively suggest the potential effectiveness of web-based learning resources in enhancing the learning of grammar.

This study, therefore, seeks to address this gap by using a qualitative case study approach to explore EFL learners' experiences with both gamified platforms and traditional web-based grammar practice. Specifically, it seeks to answer three key research questions: 1. What is the experience of EFL learners with the gamified platform, exemplified through Quizizz? 2. What is the experience of EFL learners with traditional web-based grammar practice sites? 3. What are the students' perceived similarities and differences between gamified and traditional web-based grammar tools?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Grammar Learning in EFL Contexts

Grammar plays a crucial role in learning English as a foreign language because it provides learners with a structural foundation to produce accurate and meaningful communication. Beyond forming correct sentences, grammatical competence supports learners' ability to comprehend and express complex ideas, which is essential in academic and social life. Grammar enables learners not only to avoid misunderstanding but also to participate more effectively in making meaning. Formerly, Traditional grammar instruction often emphasized rote learning (memorization of rules and forms), explicit rule explanation, and repetitive exercises (Ellis, 2006). However, these methods have been criticized for monotonous and less engaging, especially for digital-age learners. Therefore, the Teachers are required to use more interesting and student-centered strategies, including technology-based ones, so that grammar learning becomes more interesting and not monotonous.

Web-Based Grammar Practice

Web-based grammar learning tools offer learners flexibility to practice anytime and anywhere, fostering autonomy in language learning (Suryatiningsih, 2019). In line with Zhou et al in Permatasari et al, such tools enhance accessibility by accelerating material delivery and removing spatial barriers (Permatasari et al., 2024). However, the design of many traditional platforms remains dominated by drill-based formats, which often replicate classroom exercises and may reduce learner engagement. From the perspective of learner autonomy theory (Benson, 2013), true autonomy emerges not only from access and flexibility but also from meaningful interaction and learner control over learning processes. Therefore, while digital platforms have the potential to support autonomy, their effectiveness depends largely on design features that move beyond repetitive drills toward activities that promote active decision making and self-regulation. Thus, the effectiveness of web-based grammar practice depends not only on accessibility but also on design and interactivity.

Technology integration in language learning has evolved rapidly, especially with the rise of web-based platforms supporting grammar instruction. Digital tools, such as language-learning apps, online grammar exercises, and interactive platforms, have transformed traditional teaching methods by offering more engaging, accessible, and personalized learning opportunities (Kaur, 2017). Gamified learning, characterized by competition, immediate feedback, and reward systems, is widespread with the development of technology in education; many platforms now offer web-based grammar practice. These platforms often provide instant feedback, diverse question formats, and self-paced learning features used to boost student engagement. Quizizz, for example, turns grammar exercises into competitive games, encouraging participation and motivation.

Gamification in Language Learning

Gamification, defined as using game design elements in non-game contexts (Luo, 2023; Urh et al., 2015), has gained significant attention in education. In EFL learning, gamification has been implemented to increase motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes. Meanwhile, Lister (2015) in Syed Khuzzan et al. (2021) further explained that elements of gamification, such as points, badges, levels, and leaderboards, were part of feedback elements that serve as an encouragement to learners (Syed Khuzzan et al., 2021). At the same time, Gamification is a process whose objective is to increase extrinsic and intrinsic motivation and get people involved in the task through ludic activities. In education, gamification is a technique that proposes dynamics associated with game design in the educational environment, in order to stimulate and have direct interaction with the students, allowing them to significantly develop their curricular, cognitive, and social competencies (Manzano-León et al., 2021). Studies suggest that gamified grammar learning can enhance students' interest and time on task, resulting in better performance compared to non-gamified methods (Abdulbaki et al., 2025). In line with this statement, Thurairasu stated that gamification incorporates gaming elements into a learning environment to increase engagement and participation (Mee Mee et al., 2020; Thurairasu, 2022).

Gamification offers some significant advantages in education, moreover, in language learning. The first is to enhance motivation and engagement (Garamkhand Surendeleq, Violet Murwa, Han-Kyung Yun & 1Department, 2014; Sudarso et al., 2024). The class that uses gamification in the teaching and learning process tends to stimulate the students' participation and reduce their boredom. The competitive and playful aspects of games help sustain interest and reduce attrition rates, which is especially valuable in language learning, where perseverance is crucial. Another advantage is involvement and active learning. Gamified environments encourage learners to apply language skills in practical, interactive scenarios, such as role-plays or challenges (Alaa Jasim Alsadaji, Sadeq Al-Fayyadh, Saeb Fadhil Al-Saadi, 2023). The other is to improve retention and confidence (Capatina et al., 2024). The "natural high" or dopamine release associated with achieving goals in games can enhance memory retention and make learning experiences more memorable. Earning rewards and progressing through levels boosts learners' confidence and creates a positive learning atmosphere, encouraging them to take risks and learn from mistakes without fear. Next is personalization and adaptability.

Many gamified platforms adapt to individual learners' preferences and performance, offering personalized challenges and content. This personalization caters to diverse learning styles, visual, auditory, or kinesthetic, making the experience more effective for a broader range of students. The last is gamification, which also contributed to reduced anxiety and increased comfort (Noveen Javed, Ruqayya Rehmat, 2024). Despite these advantages, gamification is not without its challenges. Overemphasis on competition may discourage weaker students, and excessive reliance on external rewards can shift

motivation from intrinsic to extrinsic, potentially undermining long-term engagement (Hanus & Fox, 2015). Moreover, if gamified activities are poorly designed, they may prioritize entertainment over meaningful learning, resulting in superficial engagement rather than deep understanding (Li & Liu, 2023). Therefore, while gamification offers significant potential, its effectiveness depends on careful design that balances motivational elements with pedagogical objectives.

Technology in Language Learning (Non-Gamified Approaches)

On the other hand, there are also technology-based grammar learning media but not gamification-based. It means that learning activities do not include game elements such as points, badges, leaderboards, challenges, or rewards that are typically used to increase engagement and motivation. The students do the task without competing with the other learners. No winner or loser in completing the task. Some examples of technology-based grammar learning media, like traditional grammar websites, can be used in teaching and learning English, such as *Perfect English Grammar* and *EnglishPage*. While lacking gamification elements, traditional grammar websites offer rich resources for self-paced and rule-based learning. These platforms support cognitive engagement by allowing learners to reflect on grammatical rules and apply them in context. Moreover, the flexibility of these platforms enables learners to progress at their own pace, revisit challenging topics, and reinforce their understanding through repetitive practice. Aligned with this, Hamamorad in Murtiningsih et al explained that online resources can provide helpful information and materials to language learners, integrating the target language into the learning process (S. R. Murtiningsih et al., 2024). This autonomy supports deeper learning, especially for students who prefer a more traditional and systematic approach. While they may not generate the same emotional excitement as gamified tools, traditional grammar websites provide a stable, low-pressure environment ideal for fostering long-term grammatical competence and accuracy.

Technology Acceptance Model

Talking about grammar learning technology, whether gamification-based or not, it is inseparable from the technology acceptance model. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), originally introduced by Davis (1989), has been widely used to explain users' acceptance of technology in educational settings. TAM posits that two primary factors, Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), determine individuals' attitudes toward using a technology, which in turn influence their intention and actual use (Davis, 1989). In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) grammar learning, students' acceptance of web-based platforms, whether gamified or traditional, can be evaluated through the lens of TAM. For example, if learners perceive gamified grammar platforms as more engaging, effective, and easier to navigate, they are more likely to adopt

and benefit from them. Meanwhile, traditional platforms may be perceived as more straightforward or academically credible, impacting their acceptance differently.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative case study design to capture the nuanced experiences of English as a Foreign language (EFL) learners using two different grammar practice tools. A case study was considered appropriate because the aim was not to measure effectiveness in a generalized way but to explore in-depth how learners interact with and perceive different types of digital grammar practice within their authentic classroom context (Robert K. Yin, 2018). Each case in this research was defined by the type of platform used for gamified grammar practice through Quizizz and traditional web-based grammar practice through educational websites such as the British Council grammar site. Comparing these two cases allowed a richer understanding of similarities and differences in learner experiences, which is in line with the three research questions.

Participants and Setting

Thirty-second-semester EFL students enrolled in a grammar course at an Indonesian Islamic higher education institution participated in the study. All students had prior exposure to grammar courses in their first year and had experienced both Quizizz and traditional grammar websites during classroom activities. Participants were selected through purposive sampling, with the inclusion criteria that they (a) had completed at least one prior grammar course and (b) had actively engaged in both gamified and traditional online grammar practice integrated into their course.

Instruments and Data Collection

Two instruments were used to capture student experiences: classroom observation and a questionnaire.

Observation Sheet

The observation instrument included 15 behaviorally anchored indicators, systematically grouped into three categories that corresponded with the research questions: (1) learner engagement, (2) emotional responses, and (3) learning strategies and behaviors. These indicators were developed deductively from the research questions while allowing for inductive refinement during field observation.

Table 1.
 Observation Indicators Mapped to Research Questions

Research Question	Dimension	Indicators (examples)
RQ1. What is the experience of EFL learners with the gamified platform (Quizizz)?	Engagement	1. Attentiveness during gameplay 2. Voluntary participation in answering 3. Interaction with peers during competition 4. Time-on-task (focus on quiz completion) 5. Response to leaderboard results
	Emotional Responses	6. Visible enjoyment (smiles, laughter, excitement) 7. Frustration when making errors 8. Motivation driven by instant feedback
	Learning Behaviors	9. Self-correction after feedback 10. Repeated attempts to improve the score
RQ2. What is the experience of EFL learners with traditional web-based grammar practice sites?	Engagement	11. Attentiveness while reading explanations 12. Passive engagement (minimal questions asked)
	Emotional Responses	13. Signs of boredom or distraction 14. Persistence in completing grammar drills
	Learning Behaviors	15. Note-taking or highlighting grammar rules
RQ3. What are the students' perceived similarities and differences between gamified and traditional web-based grammar tools?	—	16. Synthesized from comparative observation of indicators 1–15 across both contexts.

Questionnaire

A semi-structured questionnaire was administered, consisting of open-ended questions and a small number of scaled items. While Likert-type scales are typically associated with quantitative research, in this study they served a supportive role by prompting reflection and facilitating richer open-ended responses. This combination provided insight into students' self-reported experiences, perceived challenges, and comparative judgments of the two platforms.

Data Analysis Procedure

Data were analyzed thematically following Miles, Matthew B., A., and Michael Huberman's (2014) interactive model, which involves data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The first is data reduction involving coding. Observation notes and questionnaire responses were coded deductively (based on the three research questions and indicator categories) and inductively (to capture emergent themes). Initial codes, such as *leaderboard excitement*, *visual boredom*, and *lack of feedback*, were refined into broader engagement themes, comprehension support, and learning effectiveness. The second is data display. Codes and themes were organized into matrices that mapped

students' experiences across the three research questions, enabling systematic comparison between gamified and traditional platforms. The last step is conclusion drawing. Patterns were interpreted holistically through iterative memo writing and cross-case analysis. Contradictions and exceptions (e.g., students who reported fatigue yet still enjoyed gamified practice) were critically examined to ensure robust interpretation.

The study employed methodological triangulation (comparing data from observations and questionnaires) and data source triangulation (observations across multiple class sessions and diverse student participants) to enhance credibility. In addition, member checking was conducted by sharing preliminary findings with selected participants to confirm accuracy, while peer debriefing with a fellow researcher ensured reflexivity in interpretation. A thick description was used to provide contextual detail, allowing readers to assess the transferability of the information to other EFL contexts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Experiences of EFL Learners with Gamified Platform (Quizizz)

Classroom observations revealed that Quizizz consistently generated visible enthusiasm. Students often smiled, clapped, or exclaimed phrases such as "Yes!" and "I won!" when their names appeared on the leaderboard. They leaned forward toward the screen, quickly clicked their answers, and occasionally whispered strategies to peers such as "Don't wait too long, just click!"—indicating both focus and collaborative spirit. The leaderboard was a central source of motivation, with several students checking their ranks after each round and reacting strongly when their positions changed.

Questionnaire responses confirmed this energetic atmosphere. A majority of participants rated Quizizz as *very engaging* or *quite engaging*. Students consistently highlighted the leaderboard, instant feedback, and colorful interface as motivating factors. As one participant explained, "The leaderboard makes me want to try harder, because I want to see my name move up." (Student 3). Others emphasized the value of immediate feedback: "When I make a mistake, I can see it right away. That makes me remember it better than when the teacher explains later (Student 5)." For many learners, Quizizz supported quick recall and memorization. One respondent noted, "It helps me memorize grammar through repetition," while another remarked, "I feel more motivated because I can see my progress instantly."

However, the gamified features were not universally positive. The countdown timer caused stress for some students. Observation captured visible tension—sighing, murmurs like "Aduh, telat lagi," and hurried clicking when time was almost up. Questionnaire responses echoed this: "Sometimes the timer make me panic. I know the answer, but I click wrong because I feel rushed (Student 8)." A smaller group also complained that the

competitive environment shifted focus away from learning: *"I concentrate more on the game than the grammar."*

Experiences of EFL Learners with Traditional Web-Based Grammar Practice Websites

In contrast, sessions with traditional grammar websites produced quieter, more subdued engagement. Observations noted that most students worked silently and independently, reading detailed explanations or completing exercises with minimal peer interaction. Several showed signs of reduced enthusiasm, such as yawning, slouching, or occasionally shifting attention to their phones. However, despite lower outward enthusiasm, students persisted and generally completed all assigned tasks. Significantly, many raised their hands to ask the teacher for clarification, showing that interaction occurred more with the instructor than with peers.

Students' written responses highlighted the strengths of traditional platforms. They appreciated the detailed explanations of grammar and the opportunity to work at their own pace. One explained, "I can take my time and review the rules carefully. It helps me understand more deeply (Student 2)." Another associated the website with exam preparation: "When I study for tests, I prefer this method. I can go step by step and write down the rules." (Student 6) However, students also identified limitations. The most common complaint was excessive text: "There is too much reading, and sometimes I lose focus (Student 4)." Others mentioned the lack of immediate feedback: *"I have to wait until the teacher checks or until I see the key. It feels slower."* For some, the calmness was seen as a positive contrast to Quizizz, but the slower pace led to disengagement for others. Thus, while less affectively stimulating, traditional grammar websites were valued for accuracy, clarity, and flexibility, making them useful for independent study and exam-oriented learning.

Perceived Similarities and Differences between Gamified and Traditional Grammar Tools

The findings illustrate that students perceived the two platforms as serving complementary purposes. Quizizz was associated with enjoyment, competition, and fast-paced recall, whereas traditional websites were linked to structured explanation, autonomy, and deeper comprehension. One participant summarized this balance: "Quizizz is fun for practice, but the website helps me really understand the rules (Student 7)."

Another emphasized context: "When I want to study seriously, I use the website. When I just want to test myself, Quizizz is better" (Student 10). These perceptions were also seen in the way students behaved in class: Quizizz sessions resulted in active participation, peer discussion, and repeated attempts to improve grades, whereas traditional website sessions encouraged focused attention, taking notes, and teacher-centered questions.

Table 3.
Cross-Case Thematic Comparison of Student Perceptions

Theme	Quizizz (Gamified)	Traditional Websites
Engagement	Visible enthusiasm, peer interaction, competition	Quiet focus, individual work, limited interaction
Emotional responses	Excitement, enjoyment, and occasional stress from time limits	Calm persistence, occasional boredom from extended reading
Learning behaviors	Rapid recall, repeated attempts, self-correction	Note-taking, reviewing explanations, and self-paced practice
Reported strengths	Immediate feedback, leaderboard, colorful interface	Detailed explanations, flexibility, and no time pressure
Reported weaknesses	Time pressure, distracting game elements	Excessive reading, delayed feedback

This comparison is a reflection of more extensive instructional design research. At the same time, traditional platforms guarantee structured knowledge development, gamified tools promote affective engagement and quick recall. Students generally saw the two platforms as having complementary functions: traditional websites were valued for more thorough review and preparation, while Quizizz was preferred for quick, interesting practice.

DISCUSSION

Student Experiences with Gamified Platforms (Quizizz)

The findings indicate that Quizizz effectively enhanced students' engagement and motivation in grammar learning. Observable behaviors such as leaning forward, smiling, clapping, and checking ranks on the leaderboard demonstrate the platform's ability to foster active participation. These patterns support earlier studies highlighting Quizizz as more attractive and enjoyable than conventional media (Noveen Javed, Ruqayya Rehmat, 2024; Rahmadani et al., 2022). Students' written responses in this study—such as “The leaderboard makes me want to try harder” and “I can see my mistake immediately, so I remember it better”—also align with the argument that immediate feedback sustains learner motivation and autonomy by making progress visible in real time. Similarly, Wijayanti & Prasadja (2022) reported that tools like Quizizz and Kahoot! can foster a fun and conducive classroom atmosphere, which resonates with the positive emotional responses observed here.

Nevertheless, the data also showed that the gamified environment introduced challenges. Several students described feeling stressed by the countdown timer (“Sometimes the timer makes me panic. I know the answer, but I click wrong because I feel rushed”) or distracted by competition (“I concentrate more on the game than the grammar”). These mixed responses confirm the double-edged nature of gamification noted in the literature. Chen (2023) emphasized that extrinsic rewards can sometimes shift learners' focus from intrinsic learning goals toward performance outcomes. In this context,

gamified tools should be viewed as supplementary resources that enhance engagement but require careful integration to avoid overshadowing conceptual learning.

Student Experiences with Traditional Web-Based Grammar Practice Websites

Compared to Quizizz, traditional grammar websites encouraged more independent and self-paced work. Classroom observations showed muted enthusiasm—yawning, silent reading, and minimal peer interaction—yet students remained persistent and often sought clarification from the teacher. This finding reflects prior research showing that text-based platforms, while pedagogically rich, often result in fatigue and lower classroom interaction (Febriana et al., 2022).

At the same time, students' written responses highlighted their appreciation for detailed explanations and flexibility. Statements such as "I can take my time and review the rules carefully" and "When I study for tests, I prefer this method" illustrate how traditional websites support exam preparation and deeper comprehension. These reflections reinforce the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989), particularly the role of perceived usefulness in shaping acceptance of digital tools.

While some learners criticized the long reading passages ("There is too much reading, and sometimes I lose focus") and delayed feedback, others valued the opportunity to control their pace and study systematically. This duality suggests that traditional platforms remain valuable for fostering cognitive clarity and conceptual understanding, even if they are less stimulating in affective engagement.

Similarities and Differences in Student Perceptions

The comparison between platforms illustrates distinct instructional affordances. Quizizz was linked with excitement, competition, and rapid recall, whereas traditional websites were associated with calm persistence, note-taking, and conceptual clarity. This contrast reflects broader findings on instructional design: gamified environments emphasize social interaction and motivation, while traditional platforms emphasize academic rigor and individualized pacing (Alaa Jasim Alsadaji, Sadeq Al-Fayyadh, Saeb Fadhil Al-Saadi, 2023; Sudarso et al., 2024).

Students' recognition of these complementary roles parallels arguments in blended learning research that advocate integrating fast-paced, interactive tools with more structured, content-heavy resources (Daskan & Yildiz, 2020). The present study shows that learners themselves differentiated the functions of each platform—Quizizz for drill and reinforcement, traditional websites for detailed understanding—underscoring the pedagogical value of combining both.

Factors Influencing Student Preferences

Students' preferences were shaped by three main factors: interface design, feedback system, and control over learning pace. The appeal of gamified competition and instant correction observed in Quizizz sessions supports Davis' (1989) claim that perceived enjoyment and ease of use predict acceptance of digital tools. Questionnaire responses such as "When I make a mistake, I see it immediately" illustrate the value of instant correction. At the same time, the preference for traditional websites reflects students' need for time management and conceptual clarity, which can be compromised in fast-paced environments.

Therefore, each platform should not be viewed as superior to the other but as serving distinct purposes in grammar instruction. Gamified platforms can stimulate engagement and repetition, while traditional sites ensure depth of comprehension and learner autonomy. These findings suggest that intentionally blending gamification with structured content may provide a more inclusive grammar learning experience. Future digital learning environments could enhance effectiveness by offering customizable modes, allowing students to shift between interactive and explanatory formats according to their needs.

The findings of this study indicate that each platform plays a distinctive role in supporting grammar learning. Gamified platforms such as Quizizz offer immediate feedback, interactive challenges, and a competitive yet enjoyable environment that increases students' motivation and engagement. When these two approaches are combined, learners benefit from clarity and depth of structured instruction and the sustained interest and active participation fostered by gamification. Therefore, integrating gamification into English grammar teaching does not replace traditional methods but complements them, resulting in a more comprehensive and effective learning. On the other hand, a non-gamified platform provides structured and systematic content delivery, which is essential for accuracy, rule explanation, and long-term reference.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrated that gamified and traditional grammar platforms play distinct yet complementary roles in EFL learning. Quizizz fostered enthusiasm, engagement, and rapid recall through competition and instant feedback, while traditional grammar websites supported systematic review, self-paced study, and conceptual clarity. Students' differentiated use of these tools suggests that effective grammar instruction benefits from balancing affective engagement with cognitive depth. The pedagogical implication is that platform integration should be purposeful. Quizizz is particularly effective for stimulating motivation, sustaining attention, and reinforcing rules through repeated practice, whereas traditional websites are more suitable for consolidating understanding and preparing for assessments. By intentionally sequencing these tools, instructors can design grammar learning environments that respond to diverse learner needs and preferences.

Several directions are recommended for future research. Longitudinal studies could examine how sustained use of these platforms influences grammar acquisition and performance over time. Comparative investigations across proficiency levels and learning contexts may reveal how learner characteristics mediate platform preference and effectiveness. Moreover, employing mixed-method or experimental designs could complement the present qualitative findings with measurable outcomes.

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