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Enhancing Maritime Vocabulary Acquisition for Ratings at Akademi Laut Malaysia Through Gamification

Normaizura binti Mat Rom[a], Nurshuhada binti Ali[a], Muhammad Qhairul Zikri bin Hisham[b]

[a] Centre for Liberal Studies/Education, Akademi Laut Malaysia

[b] Faculty of Marine Engineering, Akademi Laut Malaysia

Abstract - The integration of gamification in education has emerged as a transformative approach to enhance learning outcomes, particularly in specialized fields such as maritime training. This review explores the effectiveness of gamification in maritime vocabulary acquisition among ratings at Akademi Laut Malaysia. Traditional methods of vocabulary instruction often fail to engage students and meet their diverse learning needs. By applying game design elements in non-game contexts, gamification offers interactive and immersive learning experiences that significantly improve motivation, engagement, and retention of maritime terminology. This study synthesizes existing research on gamification in education, with a particular focus on its application in maritime training. Key strategies discussed include the use of digital flashcards, narrative-driven quests, and simulations that create competitive yet collaborative learning environments. The findings underscore the potential of gamification to bridge the gap between theoretical learning and real-world application, making vocabulary acquisition more effective and enjoyable. However, successful implementation requires careful alignment with educational objectives, inclusivity, and adequate resource allocation. Challenges such as ensuring intrinsic motivation and addressing inequalities among students are also considered. By providing a comprehensive analysis, this review contributes to understanding how gamification can revolutionize maritime education and better prepare ratings at Akademi Laut Malaysia for their professional roles. Future research directions are suggested further to explore the long-term impacts of gamification on learning outcomes and to develop best practices for its effective implementation in maritime training programs.

Keywords: Gamification, Maritime Vocabulary, Ratings, Akademi Laut Malaysia, Educational Technology

*Corresponding Author. Email address: normaizura@alam.edu.my

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The integration of gamification in education has gained significant attention as a means to enhance learning outcomes. Gamification, defined as applying game design elements in non-game contexts, has increased motivation and engagement in various educational settings (Deterding et al., 2011). This review examines its application in maritime vocabulary acquisition for ratings at Akademi Laut Malaysia, an essential aspect of maritime training (Hamari et al., 2014).

Maritime education, particularly for ratings, necessitates a robust vocabulary to ensure effective communication and operational efficiency. Traditional methods of vocabulary acquisition often need more engagement and cater to the diverse learning needs of students (Landers, 2014). Gamification presents an innovative solution, offering interactive and immersive learning experiences that can significantly enhance vocabulary retention and application (Domínguez et al., 2013).

The theoretical foundation for gamification in education is rooted in constructivist theories, emphasising active and experiential learning. Gamification can create a competitive yet collaborative learning environment by incorporating elements such as points, badges, and leaderboards (Werbach & Hunter, 2020). This approach aligns with the needs of maritime training, where practical application and teamwork are crucial (Buckley & Doyle, 2016).

This review aims to synthesise existing research on gamification in maritime education, evaluate its effectiveness in vocabulary acquisition, and provide recommendations for implementation at Akademi Laut Malaysia. By doing so, it contributes to the broader discourse on educational technology and its potential to transform traditional learning paradigms (Huang & Soman, 2013). This review includes a Gamification framework for maritime vocabulary acquisition, illustrated in Figure 1 below.

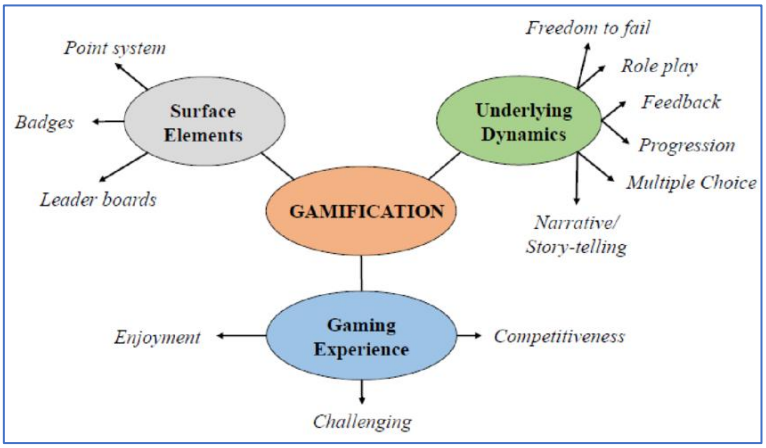

Figure 1: Gamification Framework: Surface Elements, Underlying Dynamics and Game Effects (Langendahl et al., 2016)

2.0 GAMIFICATION IN EDUCATION

The concept of gamification has evolved significantly, with a growing body of literature supporting its efficacy in various educational contexts. Research indicates that gamification can enhance student motivation, engagement, and academic performance by leveraging intrinsic and extrinsic rewards (Sailer et al., 2017). In maritime education, where practical skills and knowledge are paramount, gamification can bridge the gap between theoretical learning and real-world application (Iosup & Epema, 2014).

Studies have demonstrated that gamification can facilitate deeper learning by promoting active participation and fostering a sense of accomplishment. For instance, Li et al. (2012) found that students who engaged in gamified learning activities showed improved retention and understanding of complex concepts. Similarly, Su and Cheng (2015) reported that gamification enhanced students' willingness to participate and collaborate, leading to better learning outcomes. Table 1 provides a detailed comparison of traditional versus gamified learning outcomes, highlighting the differences in motivation, engagement, academic performance, retention, accommodation of learning styles, collaboration, and the potential impact on intrinsic motivation.

Table 1: Comparison Table of Traditional Training, Hands-On Training and Gamification Technique (Omar et al., 2021)

Features	Traditional training	Hands-On Training	Gamification-Technique
High engagement		X	X
User actively engaged		X	X
Fast response to user's mistakes		X	X
Cost effectiveness	X		X
Learning pace accommodate to individuals		X	X
Low physical risk	X		X
Standardized assessments allow users' comparison	X		X
User could apply learning in real world		X	X

The application of gamification in maritime vocabulary acquisition has explicitly shown promising results. Research by Glover (2013) highlighted that gamified learning environments can make vocabulary learning more enjoyable and less intimidating, thereby improving retention rates. Furthermore, gamification can cater to different learning styles and paces, offering personalised learning experiences that traditional methods often fail to provide (Dichev & Dicheva, 2017).

Despite its benefits, the implementation of gamification in education is challenging. Critics argue that over-reliance on extrinsic rewards may undermine intrinsic motivation and lead to superficial learning (Hanus & Fox, 2015). Additionally, the design and execution of gamified learning experiences require careful consideration to ensure they align with educational objectives and outcomes (Seaborn & Fels, 2015). These challenges underscore the need for a nuanced approach to gamification, particularly in specialised fields such as maritime education.

3.0 MARITIME VOCABULARY

3.1 Maritime Vocabulary Acquisition

Maritime vocabulary acquisition is a critical component of training for ratings at Akademi Laut Malaysia. Effective communication is essential for safety, efficiency, and coordination on board ships, and a strong command of maritime terminology is vital (Trenkner, 2009). Traditional methods of vocabulary instruction, often rote memorisation and repetitive drills, may not be sufficient to meet the needs of today's learners (Gregory & Shanahan, 2010).

The dynamic nature of maritime operations requires a vocabulary that is comprehensive and adaptable to different contexts and scenarios. Research indicates that contextualised learning, where vocabulary is taught in relation to specific tasks and situations, can significantly enhance retention and application (Stahl & Nagy, 2007). Gamification, emphasising interactive and immersive learning, can provide contextualised experiences, making vocabulary acquisition more relevant and engaging (Gee, 2008).

Studies have shown that gamified learning can improve both the acquisition and retention of specialised vocabulary. For example, Perry (2015) found that students who used gamified vocabulary learning tools outperformed their peers in traditional learning environments. Using game mechanics such as challenges, quests, and immediate feedback can create a more engaging and effective learning experience (Gee, 2005).

In maritime education, gamification can simulate real-world scenarios where vocabulary is used, reinforcing learning through practice and application. For instance, a gamified module might involve a simulated ship navigation task where students must use appropriate maritime terms to communicate instructions and resolve issues (Reiners & Wood, 2015). Such practical applications can enhance understanding and retention, preparing students for real-life situations (Schwienhorst, 2002).

3.1 Gamification Strategies for Maritime Vocabulary

Implementing gamification in maritime vocabulary acquisition requires a strategic approach that aligns with educational objectives and student needs. Key strategies include using game elements such as points, badges, leaderboards, and narrative-driven quests to enhance motivation and engagement (Zichermann & Cunningham, 2011). Additionally, incorporating collaborative and competitive elements can foster teamwork and peer learning, essential skills in maritime operations (Nah et al., 2014).

One effective strategy is the use of digital flashcards and vocabulary games that provide instant feedback and allow for repeated practice. These tools can be integrated into a larger gamified learning platform that tracks progress and rewards achievements (Wang & Lieberoth, 2016). For example, a digital flashcard app with a points system and leaderboards can motivate students to practice regularly and compete with their peers, enhancing engagement and retention (Hwang & Wu, 2012).

Another strategy is the incorporation of narrative-driven quests that contextualise vocabulary learning within maritime scenarios. These quests can involve tasks such as navigating a virtual ship, communicating with crew members, and responding to emergencies, all of which require the use of specific maritime terms (Correia et al., 2017). By embedding vocabulary learning within meaningful and engaging contexts, students are more likely to retain and apply what they have learned (Gee, 2008).

Additionally, simulations and serious games can provide immersive learning experiences that mimic real-life maritime operations. For instance, a serious game might simulate a ship's bridge, where students must use correct maritime vocabulary to perform tasks and communicate with virtual crew members (Aldrich, 2009). These simulations can offer a safe and controlled environment for practice, enhancing both vocabulary acquisition and operational competence (Prensky, 2005).

4.0 CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

While gamification offers significant potential for enhancing maritime vocabulary acquisition, it also presents several challenges and considerations. One major challenge is ensuring that gamified learning experiences are aligned with educational objectives and standards (Plass et al., 2015). With careful design and implementation, gamification may prioritise entertainment over learning, leading to superficial engagement rather than deep understanding (Nicholson, 2012).

Another consideration is the potential for gamification to exacerbate inequalities among students. Not all students may respond equally to gamified learning experiences, and some may feel excluded or demotivated by competitive elements such as leaderboards (Kapp, 2012). It is essential to design gamified activities that are inclusive and accessible to all students, providing multiple pathways to success and recognising diverse forms of achievement (Morschheuser et al., 2018).

Furthermore, the implementation of gamification requires adequate resources and support, including technology infrastructure, training for educators, and ongoing evaluation and refinement (Pereira et al., 2017; Alhammad, M., & Moreno, A. (2018). Institutions must be willing to invest in these resources and provide continuous support to ensure the success of gamified learning initiatives (Deterding, 2012). This includes training educators to effectively design and facilitate gamified learning experiences and using data and feedback to continuously improve these experiences (Kuo & Chuang, 2016).

Finally, there is a need for ongoing research to explore the long-term impacts of gamification on learning outcomes and student motivation. While existing studies provide promising evidence of the benefits of gamification, more research is needed to understand how different game elements and strategies affect learning in diverse contexts and over extended periods (Hamari et al., 2014). This research can inform the development of best practices and guidelines for the effective use of gamification in maritime education (Huang & Soman, 2013).

5.0 CONCLUSION

Gamification presents a promising approach to enhancing maritime vocabulary acquisition for ratings at Akademi Laut Malaysia. By integrating game mechanics into the educational process, gamification can increase motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes, making vocabulary learning more interactive and effective. However, successful implementation requires careful consideration of educational objectives, inclusivity, resource allocation, and ongoing evaluation. With these considerations in mind, gamification can transform maritime education and better prepare students for the challenges of their profession.

Moreover, gamification can address students' diverse learning needs, offering personalised and adaptive learning experiences that traditional methods often fail to provide. The interactive nature of gamified learning environments can make vocabulary acquisition more enjoyable, thus reducing the intimidation often associated with learning complex maritime terminology. By fostering a more engaging and supportive learning atmosphere, gamification can enhance students' confidence and competence in using maritime vocabulary in real-life scenarios.

Future research should continue exploring gamification's long-term impacts on learning outcomes and student motivation in maritime education. Studies should investigate how different game elements and strategies can be optimised to maximise their educational benefits. Additionally, it is essential to develop best practices and guidelines to help educators effectively implement gamification in their teaching. By doing so, we can ensure that gamification enhances vocabulary acquisition and contributes to the overall quality and effectiveness of maritime training programs at Akademi Laut Malaysia.

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