



BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA

Facultad de Lenguas

The use of video games to promote oral production at a basic English level

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**And is considered worthy of approval in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of**

LICENCIATURA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS

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This is a very important space for me since I am given the opportunity of mentioning those who have been part of this project from the beginning to the end of it.

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Abstract

Oral production is a critical competence in foreign language learning, enabling students to communicate effectively in real-world contexts. Despite traditional classroom practices involving numerous speaking activities, many students struggle with confidence and practical communication at the elementary level. This study explores the potential of video games as a gamification tool to enhance oral production in English among first-year students of the English teaching program at the Faculty of Languages, BUAP.

The research employed a quantitative methodology, analyzing linguistic, digital, and socio-affective competencies through three selected video games: Valorant, League of Legends, and Among Us. Data collected via surveys and statistical tools revealed that video games foster engagement, motivation, and collaborative interaction, contributing positively to students' oral production considering the CEFR.

The findings highlight the potential of gamification to make language learning both enjoyable and effective by offering a practical, innovative approach to fostering oral communication in virtual and face-to-face modalities. This research establishes the groundwork for future studies on integrating video games into language education to address challenges in learning and teaching an L2.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The oral production in the learning process of L2 can be considered the most important skill that must be developed since it allows students to communicate inside and outside a classroom. Nevertheless, many students from basic levels do not get to achieve the desired proficiency at the end of the course or do not feel confident when talking even though they had been practicing at the target language classes with a vast number of speaking activities instructed by the teachers and in some cases, getting scored with approbatory results even though, they are not able to establish a simple everyday life conversation.

For that, it is necessary to find a different strategy to improve their oral production, one where students do not feel the pressure of not making mistakes when talking in class. Consequently, it is thought that video games periodically by the students in their free time would significantly improve their performance in their communicative competencies in L2.

Unfortunately, not all games are feasible. The interaction of students with video games requires certain actions and development of skills that they would not use at least in the same way as in other types of activities. A video game contains the existence of rules that are able to guide and limit the players, make them confront others, compete, or work in teams for the same objective (Souca & Costa, 2018).

Therefore, to develop this study, the collaboration of students from Target Language 1 is essential so they can practice their English while playing video games. Then, three options of strategy video games (Valorant, League of Legends, and Among Us) will be selected so students can choose the most suitable option for them according to their capabilities and the support of their equipment.

1.2 Research setting

This study will be carried out in groups of incoming students to the English teaching degree from the Faculty of Languages at the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (BUAP) since they are committed to learning the English Language in the best way possible, so in the future, they can be well-prepared-English teachers, and they can help their students promote their speaking with different tools as well.

Therefore, in the first term, all students share the same characteristics. They must take the same subjects (including the subject of Target Language) and have the same schedule. It makes the study more accessible and functional.

1.3 Aims of the study

Four important aims are meant to be achieved with this study. The first one is the identification of competencies to develop English oral production in students using video games.

For that, the second aim would be to find the means to achieve and foster the student's oral productions with the help of gamification. Most of the time, speaking in a different language at the beginning can be a tedious and frustrating process that sometimes cannot be reached by participating in unattractive activities. Moreover, playing video games is a funny and attractive activity that enhances oral production.

Since gamification uses augmented virtual reality, video games can be a useful tool in times of a pandemic like the one the world experienced because they allow students to practice their communicative competence and have an autoregulated, autonomous, and reflexive learning process.

Another aim is to determine to what extent video games can help students foster their oral production. Not all students are likely to enjoy playing video games and prefer to practice with different strategies. Finally, the last aim of this study is to contribute to theory and practical situations regarding the use of video games as an alternative for learning English.

1.4 Research questions

Three research questions will lead the study.

RQ1: What competencies develop oral production at a basic level of English?

RQ2: Do video games promote the necessary competencies to foster oral production at an English basic level?

RQ3: What is the association between the use of video games and the level of oral production based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CERF)?

1.5 Justification

There is research on the use of gamification for foreign language learning. Many research papers support the idea of integrating video games for learning purposes to improve skills like decision-making, perception assessment, attention to detail, and memory (Kurt Squire and Constance Steinkuehler, 2005; Eichenbaum et al., 2014). Nevertheless, with this change to a virtual modality caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, at the faculty of languages from BUAP, there are no existent studies that identify whether, in a context where global contingency takes place, the use of videogames can create a positive impact in the student's oral production or not.

For that, it is necessary to carry out this study to obtain enough theoretical background regarding the use of gamification for oral production in the faculty of languages to contribute practical information, considering that video games are virtual online reality spaces that can train students in certain areas (Vargas-Macias, Rodriguez-Hernandez, and Sanchez-Saenz, 2020).

Students can interact with them and play with their partners without being inside a classroom. In that case, video games in education can be a ludic strategy to foster new skills and obtain new knowledge during classes or in their free time. Besides, it prevents students from participating in repetitive and non-attractive activities. Instead, it invites them to work on those that entertain them (Ortiz-Colón et al., 2018). That is where its practicality relies because this study can be conducted in face-to-face classes or at a distance. In any case, the main objective is to improve the student's oral production with gamification.

Finally, this study will contribute to society with information that can help to solve a similar problem related to the student's language learning process. The main objective of many students is to learn a language and to communicate with it. Hence, the information obtained from gamification to improve the learners' oral production can provide a different perspective of what learning an L2 is. Then, it could change the form the English language is taught and the way students face the language by giving them a path to use video games with the principal goal of promoting their skills in L2.

1.6 Key terms

In this section, the key terms that are central to this thesis will be defined. These terms have been carefully selected based on their relevance to the research questions and the theoretical framework of the study.

Furthermore, the definitions provided will support understanding of the ideas presented throughout the thesis. It is important to mention that these definitions are not exhaustive, but instead, they provide the basis for readers to obtain a deeper understanding of the concepts discussed.

Competence. The concept of competence is relevant in the field of education, and even more when talking about learning a second language where it is used to describe the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students need to acquire to be successful in their academic subject of study (European Commission, 2018).

In this context, competence is considered as the combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are relevant and transferable across different contexts and domains. Overall, competence is a complex concept that is essential for having success in different domains and contexts, including the workplace and education.

Oral production. It refers to the ability to communicate effectively using spoken language. It involves the use of appropriate vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and intonation to convey meaning and interact with others in various contexts (Kormos & Dénes, 2004). Oral production is an essential component of language proficiency and is often assessed in language learning and teaching.

Video games. The Entertainment Software Association describes video games as a type of electronic game that requires users to interact with a user interface to produce visual feedback on a device such as a TV or computer screen (Entertainment Software Association, 2022). Also, The International Journal of Computer Games Technology defines video games as "a type of computer program that simulates an interactive environment in which the player controls virtual objects, characters, or avatars, and engages in a variety of activities such as exploration, combat, puzzles, or sports" (Nakatsu, 2007, p. 32)

In other words, video games are a form of entertainment that allows players to engage with digital environments and characters through interactive gameplay.

English basic level. English basic level typically determines a beginner level of proficiency in the English language, often used in language learning programs or courses. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) defines basic-level proficiency, as the ability to "communicate using learned words, phrases, and memorized expressions on very familiar topics" (ACTFL, 2022). In other words, in beginner level of proficiency in the English language, the learner can understand and use basic phrases and expressions for everyday communication.

CEFR. There is a definition for CEFR coming from the European Commission, which describes it as "a common tool for the development of language policies that defines levels of language proficiency in a comprehensive and transparent manner and provides a basis for the recognition of language qualifications" (European Commission, 2019, p. 13). It is to say that the CEFR is a widely recognized framework for describing language proficiency levels and is used in various contexts to promote language learning, teaching, and assessment.

Gamification. Werbach and Hunter (2012, p. 5) describe gamification as "the use of game elements and game design techniques in non-game contexts". According to these authors, gamification is about employing the motivational power of games to engage people in activities that are not inherently enjoyable. In general, gamification is a strategy that aims to increase engagement and motivation by incorporating game-like elements into non-game contexts.

1.7 Conclusion

To develop oral production, it is necessary to have the fundamental communicative competencies to understand, express and interpret thoughts, ideas, or feelings. Unfortunately, it was perceived that on repeated occasions students from first levels of English do not manage to develop those communicative skills or competencies because of the lack of contexts or means to practice since classes are not usually enough.

As a manner of conclusion for this chapter, it can be said that through the use of video games as a gamification strategy to develop oral production in English is perceived as an innovative approach, since it contributes to the development of communication skills. Due to that, it is necessary to identify if the implementation of video games and their simulated virtual environments as a new strategy to improve the oral production of English language learners in early stages does benefit the learning of a foreign language or not.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This literature review seeks to cover a variety of main concepts and studies related to the use of gamification to foster oral production in order to provide the reader with the necessary background information and support for this project research. This chapter provides an overview of the significant literature published on this topic. Therefore, this information has been organized into seven subtitles that go from the definition of fundamental concepts to the clarification of more complex information.

2.2 Learning English as a Foreign Language

In a non-native context, learning English is influenced by local languages and cultures. According to Ortega (2020), students must face the barrier of learning a language that is not part of their everyday environment. It can lead to a dependence on more structured teaching methods, such as a grammar approach or formal classes.

In learning English in a non-native context, oral practice is essential. English as a foreign language (EFL) refers to acquiring it in a non-native environment. In contrast to native English speakers, EFL learners interact with the language in an environment where several native languages, which impacts the teaching methods and challenges they face.

According to Brown (2021), an emphasis on oral production can help overcome psychological and cultural barriers. However, informal conversational practice with native or advanced speakers is not easily accessible. Moreover, learning English as a foreign language is often motivated by practical reasons, such as access to better job opportunities, international education, or the need to

communicate in a globalized world (Sert, 2021). That is why English is considered a lingua franca in many fields, from business to technology.

One of the most meaningful challenges for learners is the lack of immersion in the language since being in a classroom is like learning artificially. Indeed, learning English in a non-native environment can hinder fluency, accuracy and cultural components (Smith and East, 2022).

English instruction techniques in non-native environments are generally more academic and formal. Abadi (2021) indicates that educational institutions in non-native environments often emphasize grammar and vocabulary through conventional techniques, such as deduction and translation, rather than promoting natural and spontaneous communication.

In addition, students' native language plays an essential role in English acquisition. Some research, such as that conducted by Garcia and Ochoa (2023), proposes that the linguistic and phonological structures of the native language can affect the pronunciation and grammatical structure of English, generating linguistic interference.

English as a foreign language also entails learning communicative skills that transcend grammar and vocabulary. According to Liu and Wang (2020), intercultural skills adapt to diverse communication environments, which is especially relevant in academic and professional contexts. Furthermore, technology plays a crucial role in teaching English in non-native environments. According to research by Xu (2021), virtual education platforms, mobile applications, and multimedia resources let students interact with native speakers and other students globally, enhancing their understanding and fluency.

With globalization and the evolution of innovative educational technologies, English will continue to play an essential role in global communication. Undoubtedly, future studies must focus on

improving teaching tactics and the means available to students learning English outside of English-speaking countries to address the obstacles (Richards, 2022).

English is an international language, and most people are determined to learn it because of its influence on communication. It is mainly a consequence of globalization. It is relevant to express that in the same way that English is now a fundamental item to develop in the modern world, it is also generating concerns in English as a foreign language (EFL). Consequently, it needs to be continuously revised and updated according to its functions (Mansfield & Poppi, 2012).

Then, it is essential that teachers respond appropriately (and pragmatically) to equipping their students with the skills needed in the face of cultural and linguistic differences emerging between interactants in an international context (Mansfield & Poppi, 2012; Mauranen, 2006).

There have been several perspectives on learning English as a foreign language over the last decades, especially in the approaches used for learners. When referring to a foreign language, this is not necessarily associated with a regular classroom environment, but it is developed through the input that learners have access to and the encounters with the language (Dakowska, 2018).

In this line, El-Koumy (2004) states that an approach that incorporates language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) with semantic meaning could be a holistic approach suitable and necessary when learning English.

In other words, despite the fact that there are plenty of approaches, methodologies, and points of view about learning English as a foreign language, it can be noticed that the input, the integration of language skills, and the exposure that learners experience can be meaningful to this matter. The main objective of learning a foreign language such as English is to carry out communicative acts that allow students to express their ideas, emotions, and opinions. Consequently, the objective of

learning a language is to develop a means of communication and generation of ideas and knowledge in different contexts (Corrales, 2009).

2.3 The oral skill

Oral proficiency is one of the essential skills for learning a foreign language and refers to an individual's ability to generate and understand speech in a language other than their own, using both verbal production and listening comprehension. This skill is essential for interacting effectively in communication environments, and its development significantly influences language learning.

Verbal proficiency refers to understanding and generating language naturally in communication contexts. According to Goh (2021), oral skills include speech generation and listening, process, and reacting effectively in interactive contexts.

Verbal proficiency is essential for learning a foreign language, as it makes it easier for students to express themselves in real-time. According to Richards (2019), oral skills mean speaking fluently to negotiate meanings, ask questions, and understand subtleties of dialogue.

This competence comprises several elements: pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammatical structure, and the ability to understand the speech of others (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2020). In other words, it is an active process that involves both the generation and reception of verbal data.

One of the difficulties when learning a foreign language is pronunciation, which is essential in a dialogue to be fluent and accomplish message transmission (Goh, 2021).

Auditory perception is an essential element of verbal skills. According to Nation and Newton (2020), it is crucial to understand what others express in a foreign language in order to actively engage in a dialogue. In addition, auditory perception impacts the ability to react correctly.

Mastering vocabulary and grammar are crucial to communicating appropriately. Swan and Smith (2018) indicate that vocabulary must be diverse and appropriate to cover different conversation contexts. Regarding grammar, understanding the fundamental structures of the language makes speech logical and understandable.

Elements such as anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence play a crucial role in the progress of verbal skills. In this line, Dornyei (2019) argues that motivation affects students' willingness to engage in oral tasks, while anxiety can limit their performance.

Interaction is one of the fundamental features of verbal skills. According to Ellis (2020), speakers should negotiate meanings and modify their speech to understand each other and sustain a dialogue.

The social environment where verbal skills take place is also essential. According to Pérez and Rodríguez (2021), interactions in informal settings with friends are less rigorous considering grammatical accuracy but more relevant in fluency and understanding.

Constant practice is essential to perfect verbal skills in a foreign language. This trial-and-error procedure helps students improve their fluency and accuracy. In this line, Richards (2019) highlights that constant exposure to authentic or fictional conversational contexts significantly enhances speaking skills.

In addition, technology has revolutionized the process of learning oral skills. According to Tuan (2020), language exchange applications, such as Tandem or HelloTalk, and video platforms through Skype or Zoom allow students to practice with native speakers or fellow students.

Moreover, it is not easy to assess verbal ability in a foreign language. As Brown (2018) indicates, oral exams must be interactive enough to evaluate all elements of oral ability: pronunciation, fluency, ability to interact, and grammatical accuracy.

Besides, teachers need to create environments that promote oral expression. Ellis (2020) proposes that debates, role-playing games, and group discussions are appropriate for fostering active participation and enhancing students' verbal skills.

The teacher also plays an essential role in the progress of this skill. According to Borg and Al-Busaidi (2020), teachers must provide constructive feedback, encourage students to express themselves without fear of making mistakes, and provide opportunities for interaction.

In this point, self-directed learning is a methodology that encourages independent practice. Nation and Newton (2020) emphasize that students who practice independently, using tools such as voice or interactive recordings, significantly enhance their speaking ability.

Students' native language can impact their verbal skills, too. According to Tuan (2020), students often adopt pronunciation patterns and grammatical structures from their native language, which can lead to speech failures. Such failures are common in acquiring verbal skills. Richards (2019) indicates that although problems with pronunciation, structure, and vocabulary are common, they are part of the educational process.

There are ongoing discussions about the connection between fluency and accuracy. According to Swan and Smith (2018), students must find a balance between speaking fluently and being accurate in their use of language. While fluency can simplify communication, accuracy ensures that the message is understandable.

Confidence is essential for verbal skills. Dornyei (2019) proposes that such a skill is fostered through a positive educational environment and activities that make students practice without fear of making mistakes.

In summary, verbal skills are essential for effective communication in a foreign language. Its development depends on various elements, such as continuous practice, the social environment,

and teacher support. Thus, it is necessary to encourage students to practice and interact in oral contexts to enhance their foreign language skills (Goh, 2021).

The oral skill is one of the most crucial skills to be developed when learning a second language and one of the most overlooked. Most teachers and students do not realize its importance after practicing other skills like writing or reading (Luque & Camino, 2017; Abu & Maarof, 2011). Nowadays, English has become the language spoken between different countries and that is why, the use and improvement of oral skills in students need to be prioritized, especially in a university environment (Rintaningrum and Aldous, 2018).

According to Aymerich (1971, as cited in Cantón & Barrioluengo, 2017), oral skill allows learners to express all the ideas a person can think of by using the necessary vocabulary, knowledge regarding the correct construction of phrases, and the way the ideas are expressed by keeping in mind to whom the ideas are addressed.

In other words, a competent speaker uses his oral skills in different circumstances in a real-time scenario where thinking and planning what is desired to express may not be an option. In this case, the speaker relies on his background experience and knowledge to emit a message by considering social and affective factors (Goh & Burns, 2012; Burns, 2016).

In addition, Ramírez (2002) argues that the oral skill allows users to listen to an integrated language (attentive and receptive to all the signs that can help interpret the message) and to express and speak the same type of language (emitting all kinds of signs that favor the communicative richness of the message).

To sum up, language is very important to perform different communicative acts that people normally do in their everyday lives. It is something that must be reminded of students who are looking forward to learning a second language since they need to know that making use of their

oral skills will allow them to achieve social interaction effectively. Therefore, they will discuss topics, negotiate with information, support their arguments, or merely express feelings and comments (Gutiérrez, 2005).

2.4 Competencies to develop oral production

Interactive competence and communicative competence are the main important concepts to promote oral production since they work as means for continuous communication with people. In this case, students need to be able to interact in situations where they can experience authentic communication by using a foreign language.

When performing interactions, learners need to be able to apply and practice with all the essential elements (skills) to carry out effective communication. These are discursive skills at grammar, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic levels (Brown, 1994; Gutiérrez, 2005; Khan, 2010). All are involved in everyday life conversations of any kind. As a result, they need to work by hand to be verbally competent.

Therefore, teachers or mediators play an important role in providing students with the necessary tools to develop oral production because they are responsible for designing activities or settings where students can use the language. Nevertheless, low proficiency and knowledge regarding vocabulary and lack of appropriate pronunciation might limit students' interaction when communicating during the activities (Ramírez & Artunduaga, 2018).

Oral interaction between the teacher and the students is also an elemental factor that contributes to the feedback students can constantly receive from the teacher regarding the correct use of language use (Mckay, 2006). This will result in the constant improvement of oral production since the

teacher will have the opportunity to know how to address students' necessities according to their progress.

To sum up, oral production development relies on the communicative and interactive competencies since it is a progressive and addressed process (Nishanthi, 2018) where students can interact and communicate with others by using the language in a real context, immersed in arguments, conversations or any other settings that can motivate them to express their ideas, opinion, wishes or arguments. However, it is worth considering that they need to possess some background knowledge, expressions, and vocabulary (Hedge, 2002; Torres & Gamboa, 2019; Lozada, 2021). Communicative competence in a foreign language is a key issue in teaching and learning, where interactive competence has a role in oral production. Interactive competence refers to the speaker's ability to participate effectively in oral interactions by negotiating meanings to maintain discourse fluency. This competence is crucial in teaching English because it reflects the ability to use the language practically and functionally.

Considering Celce-Murcia (2019), interactive competence involves speaking correctly and adapting to communicative situations to respond appropriately to interlocutors. It includes managing speaking turns, negotiating meanings, and interpreting messages in conversational contexts.

Furthermore, oral production is fundamental in language learning. For Richards (2020), speaking is a technical skill and a social activity that depends on interaction with others. The ability to produce effectively allows students to communicate, negotiate, and interpret meanings in real-time.

This interpretation is when speakers negotiate meanings during conversations. In this sense, Ellis (2018) points out that the negotiation of meanings is a process by which interlocutors clarify doubts, reaffirm information, and adjust their speech to reach a common understanding.

Trying to analyze this negotiation in EFL classrooms, the interaction contexts can vary between formal and informal situations, determined by the type of language used since the ability of students to adapt to different contexts is essential for their communicative development. Littlewood (2019) highlights the importance of creating opportunities for students to participate in meaningful interactions in situations outside the classroom.

However, planning for this competence depends on the teacher's role. According to Cameron (2021), teachers must facilitate the use of language in authentic contexts, promoting interactive tasks that encourage the negotiation of meanings and the spontaneous use of language.

Such communicative tasks, such as those proposed by Nunan (2020), are activities designed to simulate real-world situations and encourage genuine interaction. These tasks help students improve their interactive competence by engaging in meaningful conversations, such as interviews, discussions, or simulations.

Moreover, it is worth analyzing the types of interactions between students.

Foster and Ohta (2021) argue that collaborative work between students, such as activities in pairs or groups, favors the negotiation of meanings and improves oral production. Peer interaction allows students to practice conversational skills in a safe environment.

Moreover, technology is another aspect that plays a crucial role in fostering interactive competence. According to Godwin-Jones (2021), online communication platforms, such as forums or video calling applications, allow students to interact with native speakers and other learners, improving their fluency and oral comprehension.

In addition to the teacher's role, other factors that directly influence competence interactive development are:

- Feedback. This element, whether explicit or implicit, is essential for oral production. According to Lyster and Saito (2020), corrective feedback helps students identify and correct errors, promoting the continuous improvement of their linguistic and communicative competence.

- Motivation directly influences the learning of a foreign language. Indeed, Dörnyei (2021) argues that motivated students are more willing to participate in oral interactions, which improves their ability to negotiate meanings and produce effectively.

- Interaction that plays a crucial role in expanding the vocabulary essential for communicative competence. According to Nation (2020), during interactions, students learn new words and expressions through exposure to language in meaningful contexts.

- Fluency. Developing fluency in oral production is facilitated when students engage in authentic interactions. Thornbury (2020) explains that fluency involves speaking naturally, achieved through continuous practice in communicative situations.

- The pragmatic component. Pragmatic competence is another fundamental aspect of interactive competence because it deals with the appropriate use of language in different surroundings regarding factors such as social conventions, registers, and the expectations of the interlocutor (Kasper, 2022).

- Active listening. Interactive competence also involves the ability to listen actively. Vandergrift (2022) points out that active listening allows students to understand the interlocutors' responses, favoring a more fluid and natural interaction.

- Error. Error management is a challenge in teaching oral production. According to Ur (2021), it is fundamental that students feel comfortable making mistakes during interactions, as these errors can serve as learning opportunities.

- Administration of scenarios. In academic settings, interactive skills are essential for participating in debates, presentations, and discussions. According to Swain and Lapkin (2020), students must state their views, support their perspectives, and respond to questions in a logical and appropriate manner.

- Self-assessment and self-evaluation methods. Interactive assessment of this skill can be through oral examinations, in which the student is measured by his interaction, or through self-assessment. According to Bachman (2020), these assessments must be genuine and represent everyday life scenarios.

As noted, fostering interactive competence in the oral expression of English as a foreign language is crucial to ensure that students develop language skills and use the language effectively in real communication situations. It demands an approach that fuses theory and practice, encouraging authentic interaction and negotiation of meanings.

2.5 How to develop oral competencies with technology

Having appropriate speaking skills involves an act of communication exchange where words are generated by speakers and comprehended by listeners (Bahadorfar & Omidvar, 2014). In the modern world, digital tools or applications for practicing oral competencies are available on the Web. However, teachers encounter difficulty in selecting learning activities that are not excessive or cause frustration in students (Peña & Onatra 2009).

Besides, Task-Based Learning (TBL) is an effective method or strategy for oral competencies since it provides students with activities to interact with real-life contexts in the English language. When students find themselves in these contexts, they complete a specific task while establishing communication orally (Hashemi and Darvish, 2012). Moreover, Lackman (2022) states that TBL can encourage students to use authentic language, generating a connection to the real world at the same time.

In this case, students can analyze, improve, and choose their language usage through tasks like reporting, describing, and negotiating. Besides, the tasks motivate learners to participate and get involved in their own learning.

Technology resources are now the most essential tools for learning English. This is because learning English through these resources offers multiple advantages in the communication skills. In the case of pronunciation, this can be developed through the use of testing applications. Just as in this example, it is expected that the other communication skills will improve when using technology apps or platforms (Van et al., 2021; Rio, 2020; Flores, 2023; Flores-González, 2024). Teachers can choose and select the digital tools that are most suitable for them, divided into synchronous or asynchronous communication tools. Synchronous tools provide access to students and teachers so they can be present simultaneously and communicate at a current time, even if they are located in different places because the distance is not an issue in these types of tools. Contrarily, asynchronous communication does not happen in real-time since the subjects that participate in the communication process may take time to send and receive information. In this sense, email is one of the most recognized asynchronous tools (Dzięcioł-Pędich & Dudzik, 2021).

In closing, virtual environments or digital platforms allow teachers and students to interact and communicate with each other in an effective way. There, moderators can design tasks that students

must complete by communicating with their partners verbally. In this point, video games represent an attractive digital tool through which English learning takes place because they offer the necessary gadgets for students to interact and communicate with each other in a comfortable environment (Souca & Costa, 2018).

2.6 Gamification for promoting oral production

Gamification involves the use of game components and dynamics in non-recreational settings, such as teaching, in order to increase motivation and enhance student engagement. According to Deterding et al. (2011), this method uses playful elements such as rewards, skills, grades, and challenges to promote a more engaging educational experience. Within the framework of learning a foreign language, such as English, gamification aims to generate a more dynamic and motivating environment for students, which could increase their willingness to engage and enhance their performance.

A fundamental element of gamification in language learning is the inherent motivation that games can produce. According to Gee (2003), video games are a powerful resource for learning as they offer instant feedback and enable players to make decisions in an organized context. For learners, this feedback can be essential to enhance language comprehension, pronunciation, and fluency, as it allows them to try out the language in a more relaxed and enjoyable environment.

Additionally, the interaction of games allows learners to encounter authentic communication situations in a foreign language, which, according to Chapelle (2001), can be an effective method of fostering communication skills. Participation in video games or interactive platforms provides learners with various opportunities to practice the language in an environment that mimics real-life circumstances.

Gamification also has the potential to address learner anxiety, which is often associated with learning a new language. Indeed, it can be a significant impediment to success in foreign language learning (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994). In contrast, a relaxed and pressure-free environment is created by including playful activities where students can make mistakes without feeling embarrassed, and in this way, they promote language exploration and constant improvement.

One benefit of gamification for English language learning is the ability to personalize since its systems generally allow students to progress at their own pace and select the challenges they want to tackle, which promotes more independent learning. It is particularly significant in language instruction, where variations in skill levels and learning pace between students can be meaningful. Regarding Anderson (2017), personalization makes it easier for students to perform in areas that require more practice.

Achievements and rewards are another crucial element of gamification in foreign language learning. According to Surendeleg et al. (2019), incentive systems such as points, medals, or leaderboards are appropriate for keeping learners' attention.

These achievements not only help to motivate learners to continue their learning but also facilitate the evaluation of their progress and the visualization of their progress in language skills, which can become a significant source of satisfaction and positive reinforcement.

Role-playing games in ludic environments provide advantages for learning English. In these games, learners adopt different identities and contexts, allowing them to exercise the language in varied and non-traditional contexts. This action promotes the growth of linguistic capacities in practical and real situations, which is crucial for communication skills. In this regard, Thorne (2003) points out that online role-playing games facilitate the formation of a community of practice that promotes the use of the language in interaction with other learners.

Regarding online platforms, technology plays an essential role in the implementation of gamification. Instruments such as Duolingo, Kahoot, and Quizlet use gamification fundamentals to generate an interactive and captivating learning environment. These materials offer interactive activities, immediate feedback, and motivation through rewards and challenges, which increases engagement and fidelity to the content. According to Anderson and Rainie (2020), incorporating these platforms into the educational environment can modify the English learning experience, making it more active and accessible to students.

Collaboration is another element of gamification that influences language learning. Virtual and playful activities often promote and encourage collaborative work. According to Zheng et al. (2016), interactive platforms can foster interactions between students, encouraging cooperative learning and communication in English in a social environment, which enhances language assimilation in authentic interaction situations.

Finally, gamification enhances the long-term assimilation. Through recreational repetition and continuous practice, students can consolidate their learning because gamification also encourages autonomous practice, an essential aspect of mastering a second language (Boulton, 2015). Finally, students can maintain their interest in language skills beyond the conventional educational environment by constantly incorporating games and challenges.

It has been perceived on repeated occasions that students from the first levels of the target language do not manage to develop their oral production or competencies due to a lack of contexts or means to practice. Therefore, it was essential to seek strategies and means to encourage oral communication, especially during global emergency situations such as the one experienced due to the worldwide spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which has kept students at home for more than a year and has avoided them to get immersed to interact in face-to-face contexts.

According to Ríos (2021), the number of video game users has increased since the pandemic due to the lack of face-to-face and physical interaction with people. According to the free global report by NewZoo (2020), the number of players of mobile devices, computers, and video game consoles has been increasing exponentially since the beginning of the pandemic, reaching more than 2.8 billion players by the end of 2021. Regarding this, video games and their simulated virtual environments can work as a strategy to improve the oral production of English language learners. Many research papers support the idea of integrating video games for learning purposes to decision-making, perception assessment, attention to detail, and memory (Eichenbaum et al., 2014). It is important to mention that other research has published results that indicate favorable opinions regarding the use of gamification to improve cognitive aspects, which are fundamental to the learning process (Ashinoff, 2014).

Nevertheless, the integration of video games in didactic and educational contexts relies totally on the perceptions of academic personnel according to their educational purposes. Nonetheless, previous studies indicate that constructive opinions consider video games for pedagogical purposes inside education institutes (Sáez-López et al., 2015; Sousa et al., 2017).

Moreover, thanks to the implementation of games in the process of learning a foreign language, activities that can be naturally boring and complicated for students in learning contexts (classroom, traditional classes) can be re-designed to obtain fun tasks that achieve a state of fluency enabling students' concentration and motivating them to participate.

Therefore, if there is a more dynamic learning process, it is possible to get more autonomous learning, less monotonous, and much more effective than traditional methodologies (Rodríguez & Sánchez, 2020).

2.7 How to develop oral production with videogames.

Video games are usually associated with virtual platforms that allow students to interact in a space and register their progress (Tenório et al., 2018). Considering the time invested in playful activities, video games as a strategy focuses on the design and video game usage to learn content that is not very interesting or funny for people in regular contexts (Deterding, 2012). In other words, its use as a tool or strategy allows students to work under an attractive approach to English language learning (Vizco & O'Reilly, 2007).

In addition, videogames are presented as an alternative for those with knowledge of digital tools, allowing them to create a positive relationship between video games and the user, obtaining numerous gains that benefit the student in the construction and development of knowledge about the English language (Estevam & Kalinke, 2013).

Besides, video games influence the learner's behavior by engaging and motivating them to achieve different challenges confidently (Rooney & Whitton, 2016). Countless studies record positive aspects of its use as performance and active participation in task completion, autonomous learning development by assuming a responsible role in learning process, and a sense of belonging to a learning community.

Fabricatore (2000) and Willis (1996, as cited in Lozada, 2021) describe in their studies activities that students perform while playing and interacting with their partners, creating a synergy between video games and learning. Some examples are the following:

Listing. The processes involved are brainstorming (where learners draw on their knowledge and experience in pairs or groups) and fact-finding (where students deduct conclusions from given events).

Information gathering. Here, players use intuition, visual-spatial skills, logic, and strategic thinking to decide what information is needed and what is not.

Information analysis. Players analyze and interpret available data and identify relationships with previously acquired information to conclude the situation in the virtual game world.

Decision making. Players use critical and strategic thinking to make decisions individually or with their team.

Interactions with video games in a virtual scenario. Once a decision has been made, players carry it out to find out whether their decision was correct or not and rethink a new strategy through a dialogue.

Sharing personal experiences. Students express themselves spontaneously and share experiences with others. It involves conversation interaction.

Comparing. It consists of comparing similar information obtained from different resources and then finding the points of similarity between them. The process involves matching, finding similarities, and finding differences.

In summary, it can be said that all of these activities and skills help students develop their oral production since they have to make use of them to communicate and interact with their partners in a virtual world to achieve a common goal. In the end, all of these skills and activities can be applied or practiced immersed in video games, as well as some determined rules connected to what is being seen in class. For instance: using imperative forms, yes/ no questions, brief descriptions, and giving directions.

Most of the time, students will be divided into groups or teams to win. Therefore, they have to establish a strategy before the game starts. Fact-finding would be fundamental during the first

seconds of the round since they would have to speak to each other to make some rearrangements to the previously established plan.

Next, when already playing, tons of situations will be happening almost simultaneously, and with this, more information will be shared among the players. In other words, students would have to gather information (extracting what they consider essential for the team or themselves according to their context and pre-set strategy) and then analyze that information (which refers to understanding what is received and what can be done with it. Players can ask questions to confirm the given information and create their conclusions).

Finally, students would have to decide individually or collectively (this will generate an interaction with the whole game, context and themselves to determine if what they have done turned out to be the best for the team or if they would have to set back). It is fundamental to mention that everything previously mentioned happens in seconds or minutes, and this will enhance a rapid exchange of ideas between the players.

It is well known that after each game, in the end, people are used to talking, sharing, comparing, and analyzing previous events or experiences. It is to say then that players would have self-provided feedback where they would have to discuss what was lived. Therefore, the teacher would have to be conscious of this when assigning the game-activity schedule for this to happen.

2.8 Conclusion

The final purpose of learning English as a second language is to communicate and interact with others in different contexts and situations. Nevertheless, many students do not achieve a suitable proficiency level regarding their oral production. Unfortunately, the arrival of the virus Covid-19 to the world limited its practice.

Moreover, the interactive and communicative competencies are the most important ones regarding the development of oral production. That is why new technological strategies are suggested. Previous studies have reported that gamification can be used for educational purposes, in this case, to promote oral production by completing different tasks while playing. It will help them develop and practice their communicative skills since video games provide them with the necessary tools to communicate and interact with each other by playing in a virtual world.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the methodology and type of research will be discussed in detail.

Additionally, the selected sample and its context will be presented since they are fundamental to the study. To conclude, information about the instrument to carry out this work and all the processes involved in the data collection and analysis will be explained.

3.2 Research design

The most suitable approach to carry out this research is the quantitative approach since this kind of method extracts results from several variables by quantifying, analyzing, and interpreting. It also entails data numerical analysis for answering questions not based on a yes or a no, but instead, they ask for specific information (Apukep, 2017). In other words, it intends to obtain answers to specific and more detailed questions when these require analyzing variables and statistics, and there is a need to use data processes for other methods.

It is essential to contrast these approaches. Quantitative research aims to enable connections among the variables that the study deals with to obtain answers about the causes. In contrast, qualitative research tries to analyze and comprehend the phenomena that are happening from the perspective of the individuals involved.

Furthermore, according to Cohen et al., “Reliability in quantitative research is essentially a synonym for dependability, consistency, and replicability over time, over instruments and over groups of respondents” (2007: p. 149). In other words, the quantitative methods are reliable since they can be applied and replicated in further studies no matter the time, the instruments used, and

the selected sample of the study due to its consistency. In this sense, this research follows a quantitative design.

Regarding scope, there are exploratory, descriptive, correlational, and explanatory types. Thus, exploratory research helps us find the problem. It provides information for studies on a large scale. It also guides the development of future investigations considering the results found in the studies. Therefore, this type of research design is based on developing a hypothesis instead of proving it, unlike other research methods (Sakyi et al., 2020).

The descriptive aims to accurately describe phenomena as they occur without intervening or altering the variables. Descriptive research offers a representation of a situation or phenomenon, facilitating the identification of its most significant features. According to Hernández et al. (2020), this type of research details the properties, attributes, and profiles of individuals, groups, objects, events, or circumstances without clarifying their reasons or establishing causal links. Its relevance is significant in the early stages of an investigation to understand the phenomenon before moving on to more detailed analyses.

The correlational study tries to discover the connection between two or more variables without the researcher altering them. This type of study makes it possible to determine the level and direction of the correlation between the variables analyzed, but it cannot determine the cause. According to Muñoz & Delgado (2021), correlation studies are beneficial for anticipating behaviors or understanding connections between different factors, restricted by the impossibility of obtaining causal conclusions. The scope of this study focuses on detecting patterns or trends in the data, which could propose fields for more detailed future studies.

Moreover, explanatory research determines the causes of the observed phenomena, going beyond the mere relationship between variables. This type aims to determine the causes and consequences

between variables, clarifying why and how phenomena occur. According to López and Romero (2022), explanatory research manages variables and orientation toward identifying causal relationships, which makes it a perfect approach for carrying out hypothesis tests. Its breadth surpasses descriptive or correlational research since it facilitates the creation of controlled experiments and the study of complex elements that affect the results.

In this case, the study will be correlational to identify the association between the use of video games and the level of oral production based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

In addition, this is also a cross-sectional study since all the necessary information for the research project can be obtained by just one intervention at a specific time (Cvetkovic-Vega et al., 2021).

3.3 Context

This research study was carried out at the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (BUAP), where the participants were studying the first levels of English in the Target Language class from the Licenciatura en Enseñanza de Inglés (LEI). However, it is important to mention that this is an extracurricular activity. Thus, it does not take part in the class.

In addition, pointing out the importance of the first years of this bachelor's degree is essential since it relies on the students being able to get involved and immersed in the English language as much as possible so they use that knowledge along with their teaching skills.

3.4 Subjects

The technique used for selecting the participants was convenience sampling since it helps to overcome those situations that limit the research project negatively. For instance, applying a study

to people who spend time together or find themselves in similar contexts (Taherdoost, 2016). In other words, the closeness and availability that subjects had were relevant for choosing this sampling method (Cohen et al., 2007).

For those reasons, the subjects of the study were 64 incoming students for the English teaching degree from the Faculty of Languages at the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (BUAP), all of them between the ages of 18 – 21 years old, and 30 males and 34 females. Moreover, the selected sample of students had the same schedule so that the study could be more accessible and functional for them. Indeed, they attended their English online classes where communication was practiced (not only in the video games outside school).

3.5 Instrument

The instrument used for obtaining the results was a questionnaire with a Likert scale format (five available options). This was the most suitable option for obtaining the needed data since it allowed the researchers to apply the instruments online or face-to-face.

Besides, this type of instrument was chosen due to its design that can be re-adapted for future investigations or collect large quantities of data directly from the participants or different virtual digital spaces (Young, 2016). Lastly, the Likert scale format used by the subjects provided opportunities to select the most suitable option according to their feelings and thoughts about the topics discussed in the questions (Frankel & Wallen, 2009). A 30-item questionnaire was classified into three categories to answer the three research questions (all with the Likert Scale format).

3.6 Data collection

Three video game options were presented to the students (Valorant, League of Legends, and Among Us), and they chose one according to their equipment.

Then, a username and password were created for each participant in the Moodle platform to track their participation, monitor their progress in the English language, and be able to know the time they spent in each game. Subsequently, students created their teams (6 to 10 members) to play with the selected video game for 3 months and 3 weeks.

The questionnaire was designed, piloted, and validated. Then, it was applied via the Google Forms platform to find out the answers to the three research questions. It was made in just one intervention, and there was not any kind of manipulation from the researcher since this first and final intervention was made through an online platform.

Finally, the data were analyzed according to the research questions and the three categories. The first category was Fluency and Accuracy in Linguistic competencies: Morphology (accuracy), Grammar (accuracy), Pragmatic (Fluency), and sociolinguistics (accuracy) and questions 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, 22, 25, and 28. This part answers the first research question: What competencies develop oral production at a basic English level?

The second category refers to the necessary general, specific, and linguistic competencies to promote oral production through video games. Items 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23, 26, and 29 answered the second research question: Do video games promote the necessary competencies to foster oral production at a basic English level?

Finally, the third category would answer the third research question: What is the association between the use of video games and the level of oral production based on the CEFR? With SPSS software, descriptive statistics were accomplished to answer the previous question (items 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, and 30).

3.7 Data analysis

The table below presents the analysis model.

Variable	Questions	Dimensions
Competencies that develop oral production at an English basic level	1,4,7, 10, 13,16, 19, 22, 25,28	Linguistic competencias
Video games promote the necessary competencies to foster oral production at an English basic level	2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20,23,26,29	-General competencies -Specific competencies -Linguistic competencies
The association between the use of video games and the level of oral production according to the CEFR.	3, 6, 9,12, 15,18, 21, 24,27,30	Descriptive statistics with SPSS

Table 1. Analysis model.

3.8 Conclusion

The chapter provides the methodology, design of this study, and the context in which this research was conducted, describing the subjects participating in the project. Subsequently, all the information about the instrument, the data collection, and the data analysis were also mentioned and explained.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

In the following chapter, data gathered from the instrument will be presented based on three categories to answer the three research questions. It is important to keep in mind that each category was answered with specific questions. Thus, each one intends to contribute the necessary data to obtain a complete answer.

4.2 Answers to research questions

According to the data analyzed previously, the following findings are presented considering the first research question: What competencies develop oral production at a basic English level?

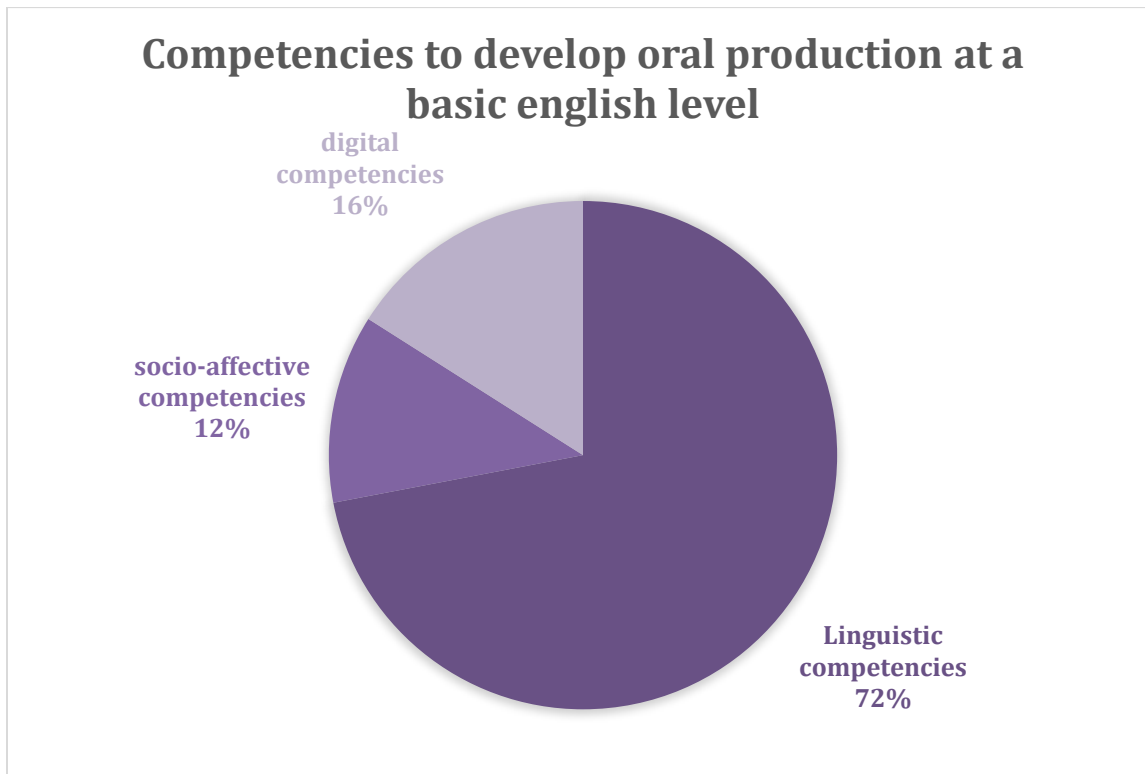


Figure 1. Competencies.

Three competencies were identified in this first category. In this case, 72% of the students mention that linguistic competencies will provide them with more tools to perform when speaking. It is important to remember that this group of competencies contains elements that significantly improve the students' oral production performance.

Nevertheless, 16% of the sample considered digital competencies fundamental for developing oral production in a given context, especially in the academic population of BUAP. Lastly, the remaining 12% of the participants believe that socio-affective competencies are also relevant to achieving proficiency.

Moreover, the majority of the participants concluded that linguistic competencies were essential to be proficient when speaking since these competencies detonate a domain in the use of vocabulary, pronunciation, syntax, practice oral production, and communicative strategies to keep a conversation (hesitation, topic control, topic shifting, repair, nomination).

These competencies incorporated with semantic interpretation are fundamental for language learning (Brown, 1994; El-Koumy, 2004; Gutiérrez, 2005; Khan, 2010).

Nonetheless, as presented before, 16% of the sample considers that the main competencies to work on when trying to be competent and orally productive can be found in the digital area. Given this new digital and modern world, there exists a vast number of virtual and online tools that teachers and students can make use of to practice their oral production (Peña & Onatra 2009).

Therefore, these new modern tools provide their users with different means of online communication which requires them to make use of the language the participants are learning to emit and receive messages (Rio, 2020; Van et al, 2021; Dziecioł-Pędich & Dudzik, 2021). Also, when engaging in virtual communication, it is necessary to have previous knowledge of the basic linguistic competencies to exchange, edit, and authentically share information.

Furthermore, socio-affective competencies should be developed along with the previous set of competencies since it encourages the oral interaction between the teacher, the students, and all of those immersed in a group or a virtual environment (Hedge, 2002; Nishanthi, 2018; Torres & Gamboa, 2019; Lozada, 2021). For all of that, the lowest amount of the sample (12%) contemplates the socio-affective competencies as elemental due to the social relations and interactions that the participants create, so this allows for constant feedback and improvement (Mckay, 2006).

Regarding the second research question, the following figure illustrates the results.

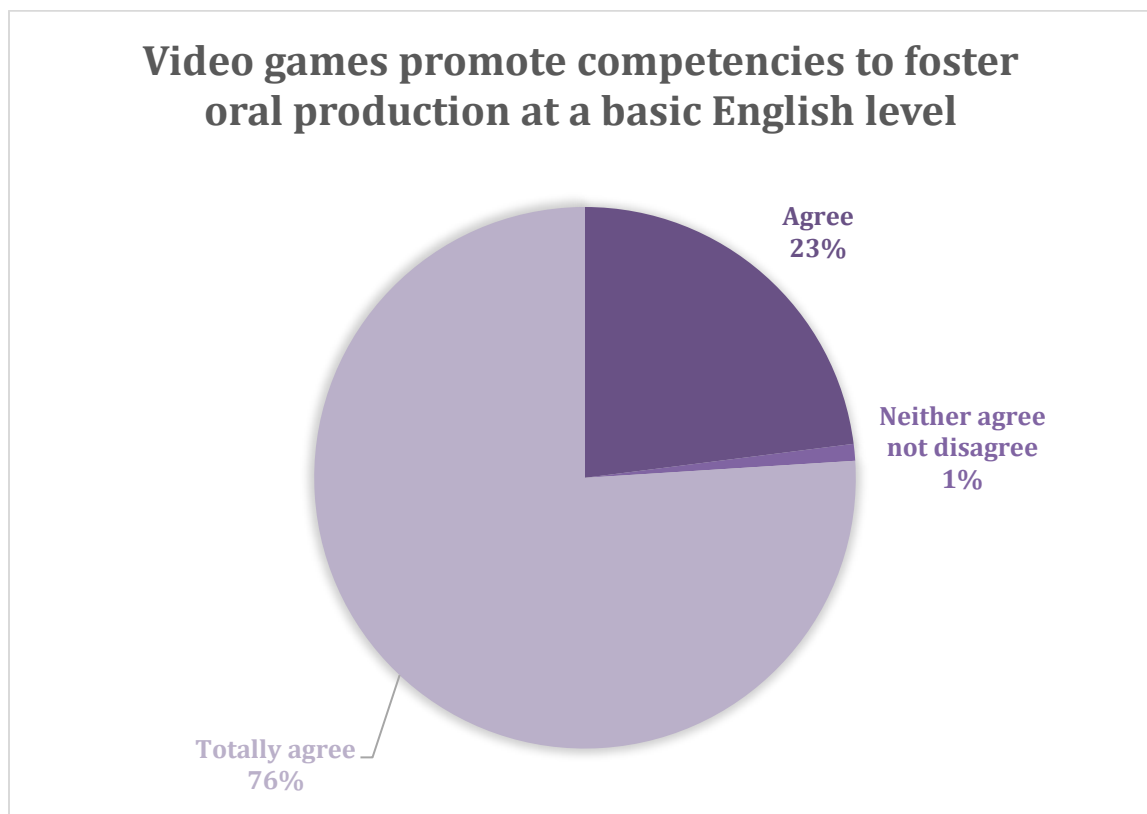


Figure 2. Video games are a promotor of competencies to foster oral production.

Most of the sample agreed that video games promote the necessary competencies to foster oral production at a basic English level (76%). However, 23% were more identified with the option to

agree, which is still a notable percentage. Finally, a few students (1%) found video games neither important nor valuable.

The results from this category reflected a positive perspective from the participants since almost 100% of the sample concluded to use video games for developing new and previous competencies to foster oral production.

Video game users and the release of new video games have increased since the pandemic (Ríos, 2002; NewZoo, 2020). Consequently, this detonated a need for teachers to find new strategies for their learners to motivate or encourage them to achieve different goals during lockdown (Rooney & Whitton, 2016). Therefore, integrating video games as an autonomous resource to learn a second or foreign language and become competent when speaking seemed promising.

In fact, as mentioned before, Fabricatore (2000) and Willis (1996, as cited in Lozada, 2021) support this idea since they stated in their studies that there was a relationship or synergy between the videogames and the student's learning process because of the constant interaction learners performed while playing with each other.

Besides, they all performed different activities that contributed to the development of linguistic, digital, and socio-affective competencies. Activities such as listening, gathering, and analyzing information, making decisions, interacting with the virtual world of the video game, sharing personal experiences, and comparing theirs with others.

To sum up, from all the skills and activities mentioned above, communicating and collaborative working promoted the achievement of a common goal in a virtual space like the one they were interacting.

Regarding the third question, the table shows the association between the use of video games and the level of oral production based on the CEFR.

Below is a table illustrating the relationship between video game use and oral production level at the basic level of English, based on a group of 64 students. The association between the two variables is positive.

Variable	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	p-Value	Pearson coefficient (r)
Use of video games	3.75	4	1.25	0.001	0.85
Oral production	4.20	4	1.10	0.001	0.85

Table 2. Association between video games and oral competence.

Regarding video game usage, the mean is 3.75, which indicates that students play video games to a moderate degree. The median is 4, indicating that most students exceed level 3 in the use of video games. The standard deviation of 1.25 suggests a moderate use of video games among students.

In addition, considering the level of oral production, 4.20 means that students have a medium-high oral production level in English, and the median (4) shows that most students exceed level 3 of verbal production. The standard deviation (1.10) highlights a moderate variability in the degree of oral competence. Moreover, the p-value (0.001) reports a statistically significant relationship between video game use and oral production level.

Finally, the Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.85 indicates a strong positive correlation between video game use and oral production. In other words, when students spend more time playing video games, they tend to show better oral competence in English (Vizco & O’O’Reilly2007).

The correlation between video game usage and oral production in English is significant and positive. In other words, students who spend more time playing video games tend to show higher oral performance, indicating that video games can be a valuable resource to enhance linguistic skills in this setting.

4.3 Conclusions

This fourth chapter of the study discussed and explained the results from the gathered data. This was accomplished through the categorization of the information.

In broad terms, these results showed positive and promising results for the study. In this case, through video game implementation, students improve their oral proficiency since they promote

constant interaction, gathering of information, and sharing of it. However, a final and more detailed conclusion of the research will be presented in the following lines of the fifth chapter.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Introduction

The present chapter aims to explain the findings obtained from three research questions stated in the first chapter of the thesis and their significance for this matter. Then, the limitations of the study and the directions for further research are presented. Next, the conclusions from an academic perspective, an opinion about this study, and the final comments of this last chapter are mentioned.

5.2 Summary of the findings

The data and the instrument used for this process were very beneficial in quantifying participants' answers and determining similarities or constants in the competencies that they worked on or developed when they played the video game and talked with each other for a specific period of time. In addition, mentioning the three research questions that were pillars for this study will be necessary to compose the answers to those questions.

It is also fundamental to mention that regarding the competencies to develop oral production at an English basic level, it is possible to conclude that there were three groups of competencies that L2 learners need to an adequate oral production.

The first group is linguistic competencies. It has to do with the ability to use vocabulary, pronunciation, syntax, and different communicative strategies to keep up with a conversation.

Next, digital competencies were found relevant, highlighting the necessary knowledge to manage the wide number of technological resources. These competencies proved to be strong when building effective communication among the participants in virtual environments.

Finally, yet importantly, socio-affective competencies were another group identified. This set of competencies generated a confident environment for all the participants in the communicative act, where oral communication was naturally promoted in the specific virtual context with constant feedback or self-correction.

Considering video games to promote the necessary competencies to foster oral production at a basic English level, the selected sample states that video games encourage the promotion of the required competencies to foster oral performance at the basic level of English.

Moreover, they enhance motivation in students and encourage them to practice and actively interact with each other to achieve their goals in a collaborative, autonomous, entertaining, and attractive way.

To conclude this section, thanks to the approbatory selected answers by the participants and the SPSS descriptive statistics program, the association between the use of video games and the level of oral production based on the CEFR was positive and high.

When playing video games, the participants perform several activities corresponding to the abilities developed in a basic level of English proficiency according to the CEFR. Some of the activities that a basic language user performs include making use of everyday words, that is to say, easy to remember, and announcing; being able to describe surroundings; participating in a conversation with personal experiences that are related to a familiar or known context and being able to provide a solution for an unexpected problem by discussing possibilities with others.

5.3 Accomplishments of the aims

The study aimed to explore and identify the competencies that students from the first levels of the target language subject developed while playing video games, as well as to distinguish the benefits and the relationship between video games and oral production according to the CEFR.

Thus, to provide the reader with an adequate explanation of the objectives achieved with this study, the aims were the following:

- To identify the fundamental competencies to develop oral production.
- To find a means with the help of gamification to foster oral production.
- To determine to what extent video games, help students foster oral production.
- To contribute with theory and practical situations regarding video games as an alternative to learning English.

Once the results obtained from this project were analyzed and interpreted, it can be confirmed that the four aims were accomplished since it was identified that video games are a strategy to detonate and work on the student's oral production. This was based on the previously necessary detected competencies that a language learner needs to develop when working from an online modality. Of course, students will not be able to be fully proficient after playing and talking with each other for some time since they are beginners in the language. However, thanks to constant practice, they communicate efficiently and autonomously, with few words, what they want to tell, describe, instruct, or express.

Besides, there were positive findings when implementing video games to foster oral production in the English language. Students found this resource very attractive, innovative, and even motivating, and they were able to develop multiple competencies individually and collaboratively.

5.4 Limitations of the study

Even though the positive results from this research project, some limitations made a difference according to the expected outcomes.

One of them was the methodology since it was quantitative. Therefore, if it had been a mixed methodology, more complete and contributing results would have been obtained. This would have combined elements of both approaches in order to provide a wider picture of the study.

Another limitation was the research design chosen for this project since it was cross-sectional. Thus, there was only one data collection in the study after a determined period. A longitudinal design could have gathered more information regarding the necessary competencies a basic L2 user needs for proficient oral production and changes in the subjects' behaviors or attitudes when playing video games for a long time. That type of research design requires the same intervention conducted over an extended period. Therefore, it could have been a more substantial approach.

An extra limitation that was identified was the sample size.

Even though the number of participants was enough to obtain the most accurate results, a higher number would have increased the ability to detect significant differences, changes, or relationships in the data. Besides, a bigger population would have provided a clearer generalization of the discoveries beyond the selected group, and the specific cases that could not adapt to the game strategy could have been isolated for further research.

Finally, some of the video games selected to carry out this study could not be feasible for all the students since some of them required more sophisticated and modern smart devices to participate. Nonetheless, all the subjects contributed to this paper since students had to choose just one video game to work with.

It is important to mention that despite the limitations; this study provides a starting point for more researchers who consider investigating the use of video games to foster the English language in virtual environments.

5.5 Further research

In this research project, three video games were used to conduct the study, so it could be interesting to explore other interactive video games for students to practice their oral production. In that line, probably more types of competencies to promote oral production in English could be identified in video games, and this is an opportunity that is worth taking advantage of learning.

Another area of research that could be approached is the cultural benefits of a video game. It is important to remember that L2 learners need to be immersed and aware of a different culture because they need to know how to interact with it. Consequently, the relationship between video game cultural immersion and language proficiency must be followed for further research.

Another suggestion to consider could be the mixing of online and face-to-face modalities in upcoming years and studies.

A final recommendation for future studies related to video games when learning a foreign language is the use of different methodologies like mixed-method research with a longitudinal design.

5.6 Personal reflection

This part of the chapter will try to represent my personal opinion about the development of this thesis.

First of all, noticing the contribution to the faculty of languages community with new theoretical information for future generations is something quite astonishing.

This study means that I was able to develop a huge project that will benefit many students, professors, and other researchers who are looking to explore this topic of gamification in depth.

This study also meant a huge challenge to overcome. To be honest, this is not an easy task. I had been able to participate in the writing of some academic articles before, but those are nothing compared to writing a thesis. Researching is something everybody should do in order to become more professional and lectured in the studied major.

Finally, this study left me with a feeling of satisfaction as a future professor and researcher. This project means that I am capable of anything I want to achieve and work on. Even though you can get or feel lost on the way to your goal, you will always be able to create a new path to reach it.

5.7 Final comments

Once all the chapters from this thesis were over, there was a feeling of completeness for seeing the whole significance of the study and the outcomes that emerged from it. The findings would contribute new and innovative theoretical information to the English teaching major. In other words, this would provide teachers and students a way to explore different strategies to obtain favorable results when learning a foreign language in or outside a classroom.

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