

PLAYFUL STRATEGIES FOR LEARNING ENGLISH IN BASIC PRIMARY EDUCATION: A THEORETICAL REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

This article focuses on the review of the impact generated by the implementation of playful strategies in teaching English to primary school students. It seeks to recognize how these strategies impact the educational field through the teaching processes; In addition, the adaptability of these strategies to different learning styles and socioeconomic contexts is considered, as well as their ability to improve student inclusion and engagement in the classroom. Through the review of previous studies and research, we examine how strategies have been successfully implemented in other educational contexts aimed at promoting the teaching and learning of a second language.

Key Word: recreational strategies, teaching English, academic performance, comprehensive training.

Introduction

The environment in which we live is marked by continuous changes and a constant process of evolution. This evolution has given rise to new problems and has generated new interests that are fundamental for each individual to adapt and develop in a constantly changing society, where communication and interaction with others are key aspects to learn a new language.

English stands out as a universal language without barriers and has become a fundamental communication tool worldwide. For this reason, many schools around the world include this language in their curriculum, with the aim of providing their students with better opportunities in the future. Most institutions offer teaching in English in order to increase their presence in the international arena, attract foreign students and teachers and obtain better results in higher education rankings (Fernández & Lasagabaster, 2024). However, there are certain challenges in the learning process, especially in Latin American countries, due to the differences between their writing and pronunciation, as well as variations in grammatical, lexical and phonetic structures. For its part, the incorporation of active methodologies and technology in the educational context entails changes in the way of teaching and in the way of learning (de la Peña & Chaves 2024).

In Colombia, Law 115 of 1994 establishes the need for citizens to acquire skills in at least one foreign language, covering aspects such as conversation, reading, comprehension and

expression (p.7). The main objective of this legal provision is to train individuals capable of communicating and understanding English, thus contributing to the development of communicative skills that improve their job opportunities.

However, regarding data collected from 2021, almost half of those evaluated in Saber 11, 49.8%, were classified in the lowest level of performance in English. This statistic reflects a significant challenge in terms of learning and mastery of this language.

In addition, it contributes to improving the country's competitiveness in the international arena, facilitating participation in research and development projects at a global level. However, despite the growing importance of English in the labor and academic market, significant gaps persist in the performance of this language, especially between the public and private sectors.

In summary, the current situation of English proficiency in Colombia presents important challenges that require concrete and coordinated actions between the educational, business, and government sectors. Improving English proficiency will not only benefit individuals in terms of employability and personal development, but will also contribute to the country's progress and competitiveness in an increasingly globalized and connected world.

Methodology

This study focuses on the analysis of the results of socialized research in scientific articles, which addressed the study variables, such as the impact of playful strategies on English learning, specifically in basic primary education. The main objective was to critically analyze the existing literature to understand how this approach has been addressed and to obtain a comprehensive view of its effectiveness.

In methodological terms, a qualitative approach was used to deepen the understanding of the data collected. This approach recognizes the complexity of the learning process and seeks to interpret and understand data critically and thoughtfully to identify emerging patterns, themes, and relationships in the student experience.

The systematic review was carried out through an exhaustive search and selection of relevant research found in specialized databases such as Redalyc, Dialnet, Scielo and Scopus; developed in the years from 2019 to 2024, therefore, their choice obeyed a first criterion which was update of the source consulted. The second criterion was its relevance and correspondence with the categories under study. Once the publications were selected, they were analyzed and critically evaluated, and the pertinent information was extracted in relation to the research categories. This process made it possible to identify trends, common points and knowledge gaps that require greater attention to improve educational practices in this area.

Result and discussion

The systematic review carried out corresponding to the effects of the use of playful strategies on the learning of English in elementary school shows significant results that highlight their positive impact on the emotional and motivational state of students. The analysis of the selected research showed how these strategies not only improve language learning, but also have positive effects on the emotional well-being of students.

It was found that the use of playful strategies in the classroom can motivate students, increase their interest in learning English, and improve their mood. These strategies create a more dynamic, participatory, and fun learning environment, which helps reduce the stress and anxiety associated with learning a new language. The interest aroused by play in learning a

second language is verified, which benefits academic performance and the development of communication and comprehension skills.

In addition, the importance of implementing educational interventions that promote the use of playful strategies, as well as teacher training in this pedagogical approach, was identified. This not only benefits the students' learning process, but also improves teacher satisfaction and well-being by experiencing a more dynamic and effective teaching environment. Likewise, the need to diversify the pedagogical methodologies used in order to impact comprehensive education is evident.

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Author</i> | <i>Title</i> | <i>Analysis Category</i> | <i>Argumentative Position</i> |
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| 2024 | De la Peña, Georgina Cristina Chaves Yuste Beatriz | Active and digitized methodology in L2 Effect in academic performance | Academic performance active methodologies. | This research analyzes the effect on academic performance that has an active methodology digitized for two months in Compulsory Secondary Education. The results in the final exam show significantly better academic performance in the experimental group. This findings indicate that the use of an active digitized methodology such as the Gamification better prepares Secondary Education students for the exam final. This exploratory study proposes a methodology for teaching L2 with positive effect on learning and academic performance foreseeably generalizable to other courses. |
| 2024 | Fernandez A., Lasagabaster D. | English-Medium Instruction in Spanish Universities: A Systematic Review. | Teaching English | It provides an overview of the research carried out in this field in the Spanish context and the results obtained, while identifying the themes and lines that have been less explored |
| 2024 | Guillermo Morales, L | The Effect of the Flipped Classroom on English Learning: A Systematic Review | Effect of the flipped classroom on English learning | The aim of the study was to analyze the effect of the flipped classroom on English learning. A systematic review was carried out using the PRISMA method. |
| 2023 | Soledispa Morán, Tatiana; Jessica Saona Villamar. | Educational management strategies to stimulate the learning of the English language in students of the Gloria Gorelik institution | Stimulation of English learning | The main purpose of this research is to develop and design educational management strategies that are effective in motivating and promoting the learning of the English language in students. It seeks to understand the importance of implementing appropriate measures that stimulate the interest and active participation of students in the process of learning English as a foreign language. |
| 2023 | Morán, D; Soberanes Martín, A | Open Educational Resource for the teaching of the present simple tense in English: a proposal that integrates | Pedagogical and technological components in the development of English | The project consisted of creating an Open Educational Resource to teach the structure of the first person affirmative of the present simple tense in English to students in the first grades. An experimental methodology was used and positive results were obtained both in |

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| | | pedagogical and technological components in its development | | usability (96.5 for teachers and 90.3 for students) and in the learning of the subject studied. |
| 2023 | Hidalgo López, M; Rocío Loor, M; Banguera Díaz, C | Analysis of playful strategies to enhance English language learning in higher education institutions in Guayaquil in the year 2020-2022 | Analysis of play strategies | In this study, playful strategies were implemented to improve English learning, evaluating them qualitatively and quantitatively. The results show significant improvements in academic performance, knowledge retention, participation, linguistic confidence and student motivation. The importance of these strategies to strengthen the processes of teaching and learning English is highlighted. Its positive impact supports the diversification of educational methodologies to improve the comprehensive education of students. |
| 2023 | Hidalgo López, M; Rocío Loor, M; | Impact of the application of gamification in English language teaching in times of COVID-19 | Gamification in language teaching | The pedagogical intention of the study was to determine how gamification affects the teaching of English during situations such as the pandemic. The results showed that gamification had a significant impact on improving English language skills, suggesting that this methodology can be effective in disruptive educational contexts such as the one we experienced during the pandemic. |
| 2022 | Cock Martínez, J | Didactic strategies used by English teachers for the use and enjoyment of learning in English | Teaching strategies | The findings of this research show that there is a loss of the link of motivation for learning English, because the school context tends to become the only place where the child can build and practice an idea of English, which is linked to the classroom experience that is not transversal with other social environments and therefore the teaching and learning of English, they are limited by the didactic strategies that are implemented in the school context. |
| 2022 | Cevallos Triguero, L. J., & Palma | Playful strategies for learning the English language in basic education students | Playful strategies for learning the English language | This research on "Playful Strategies for Learning English in Basic Education Students" analyzes how playful activities influence students' motivation and interest, |

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| | Villavicencio, M. M. | | | promoting the construction of significant knowledge in the teaching-learning process. The results highlight the importance of playfulness as a methodological strategy to improve English learning and promote meaningful learning in students. |
| 2022 | Moreira Bailón, D | Playful games and their contribution to the teaching-learning of the English language in basic education | Contribution of play to the teaching-learning of English | The purpose of this article is to determine the impact of playful play on the teaching-learning process of the language. The results revealed that the frequent use of games by the teacher facilitates the participation of all students. It is concluded that play games are an innovative tool and a key component of new pedagogical approaches in educational environments. |
| 2022 | Tigua-Anzules, J; Sanlucas-Marcillo, M; Játiva Acebo, E; Parrales Calderón, T | Gamification as a teaching strategy applied to the English language | Gamification as a teaching strategy | This work seeks to demonstrate the importance of gamification as a teaching technique due to the lack of interest of students in English, caused by activities that are not very motivating and poorly adapted to their needs. |
| 2021 | M. Tardy | The potential power of play in second language academic writing | Play as an academic tool for writing a second language | Research in applied linguistics has demonstrated the potential of language play to have a facilitating role in second language development, with numerous studies exploring how and why language learners play with language in and out of the classroom, as well as the effects of such play. Despite a growing recognition of the value of play in language learning, play has received little attention in second-language writing. This article explores the potential value of play in the context of second-language academic writing, with a specific interest in its implications for instruction. |
| 2021 | Vergara-Pareja, C; Nielsen-Niño, J; Niño-Vega, J | Gamification and strengthening oral skills in English for early childhood children | Gamification-oral production | The research sought to measure the impact of gamified educational material on the development of oral English skills in young children. A quantitative approach was used with initial and final tests in 50 students aged 4 to 6 years in Colombia. The results showed a significant improvement in grammar, pronunciation, |

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| | | | | fluency, and vocabulary, indicating that the gamified material strengthened oral English skill and contributed to children's cognitive development. |
| 2021 | Molina-García, P; Molina-García, A; Gentry-Jones, J | Gamification as a didactic strategy for learning the English language | Gamification as a strategy for learning a second language | The aim of the study was to analyze gamification as a didactic strategy for learning the English language. A documentary review of works related to this topic was carried out, using methodological and scientific quality criteria, as well as the year of publication between 2015 and 2020, although previous works considered relevant were also included. The results indicated that gamification is an effective strategy to enhance English learning by using playful elements to capture students' interest. |
| 2021 | Lara-Alcívar, D; González-Giler, B; Giler-Alcívar, M; Alcívar-Solorzano, D | Gamification as a teaching strategy for English teachers to promote the development of oral and written skills in students aged 9 to 12 years at a language institute in Lima | Gamification as a strategy | This research focuses on describing gamification as a teaching strategy aimed at English teachers to stimulate the development of oral and written skills in students aged 9 to 12 years. |
| 2020 | Navarro-Brito, J | Teaching English in the first cycle of primary education | Teaching English | This article highlights the importance of providing resources and methodologies for collaboration among educational agents, in order to improve the teaching of English to first and second grade students in Cienfuegos. It presents a method that encourages active and collaborative participation among educational actors to strengthen students' language skills. |
| 2020 | Jaime Romero, B; Castillejos López, W., & Reyes Toxqui, A. | Intentionalities and resistances in learning English: references for designing effective didactic strategies | Intentions and resistances in learning English | The article seeks to highlight the importance of understanding intentions and resistances in the school environment in order to design effective strategies in the teaching of English as a foreign language. It is based on a theoretical model and a study at CBTA No. 35 in Texcoco, State of Mexico, which revealed |

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| | | | | that English lacks meaning for students and is seen as something alien to their worldview. |
| 2020 | Ortiz López, J; Hernández Vásquez, M Claudio Díaz, C; Sanhueza Campos, D; Carrasco Parra, V; Olguín, M; Machuca-Contreras, F | A look at the strategies for teaching English as a foreign language deployed by Chilean practising teachers | Strategies for teaching English as a foreign language | It focuses on implementing gamification as an English classroom teaching strategy to improve student motivation and learning. This initiative contributes to pedagogy by creating a stimulating and participatory educational environment, where students are actively involved in learning activities, develop key skills such as critical thinking and problem-solving, and experience a higher level of motivation and commitment to learning the English language. |
| 2020 | Prado-Huarcaya, Diana L.; Escalante-López, María E | Learning strategies and comprehension of written texts of the English language | Learning strategies | The study seeks to establish the relationship between learning strategies and the comprehension of texts written in English in students of the Language Center. It used a non-experimental, descriptive and correlational approach, with a sample of 20 students. Data were collected through a previously validated test questionnaire. The results showed a significant correlation between learning strategies and reading comprehension in English, concluding that there is a significant relationship between these variables. |
| 2019 | Mora, M; Camacho, J | Classcraft: English and role-playing in the primary school classroom | Role-playing in the classroom | The aforementioned project refers to Classcraft, an online educational tool designed to gamify the classroom and give role-playing elements to the learning experience. Its pedagogical intention is to create a playful environment that motivates students and immerses them in an alternative learning reality. |
| 2019 | Chaves Yuste, B | Review of gamification experiences in foreign language teaching | Gamification experiences – foreign language teaching | In recent decades, motivational tools have been developed for foreign language teaching, including gamification with the use of technologies such as mobile apps and video games. This approach has been effective in engaging students at all levels in their learning. The aim of the analysis |

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| | | | | <p>was to review the scientific literature on gamification in language teaching, finding 30 relevant publications, of which 14 are Spanish in the last five years.</p> <p>Gamification has established itself as a method that promotes motivating and meaningful learning environments, encouraging cooperative and collaborative learning to improve students' linguistic competence.</p> |
| 2021 | Lara-Alcívar, D; González-Giler, B; Giler-Alcívar, M; Alcívar-Solorzano, D | Gamification as a teaching strategy for English teachers to promote the development of oral and written skills in students aged 9 to 12 years at a language institute in Lima | Gamification as a strategy | <p>This research focuses on describing gamification as a teaching strategy aimed at English teachers to stimulate the development of oral and written skills in students aged 9 to 12 years.</p> |

Conclusion

The implementation of playful strategies in the teaching of English for elementary school students according to the systematic review carried out represents a significant pedagogical innovation with the potential to positively transform the learning process. The study shows that these strategies not only facilitate language acquisition, but also promote a more pleasant and motivating learning environment, which has a direct impact on students' emotional well-being and interest. The adaptability of playful strategies to diverse learning styles and socioeconomic contexts expands their applicability and effectiveness, contributing to the inclusion and active engagement of students in the educational process.

The results obtained underline the need to incorporate these strategies into the curricula, as well as to provide the necessary training to teachers for their effective implementation. The playful approach, by reducing the stress and anxiety that often accompanies learning a second language, facilitates a more positive and enriching learning experience. In addition, this methodology is aligned with contemporary educational challenges, offering innovative responses to the demands of a globalized world where mastery of English opens doors to countless opportunities.

Finally, it is essential to highlight the importance of continuing with research in the area, which delves into the long-term impact of these playful strategies on the learning of English. It will be essential to evaluate its sustainability and effectiveness over time in order to constantly adjust and optimize pedagogical practices. Thus, the implementation of playful strategies in the teaching of English not only meets an immediate educational need, but also lays the foundations for a future where learning a second language is an inclusive, effective and, above all, quality experience that promotes the learning of all students.

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