GAMIFIED LISTENING PRACTICE THROUGH AI APPS: MOTIVATION AND LEARNING OUTCOMES IN UZBEK 7TH GRADERS

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Abstract: The growing presence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and gamification in language learning has introduced innovative methods for developing listening skills among young learners. This study investigates the impact of gamified AI-based listening applications on the motivation and listening proficiency of 7th grade students in Uzbekistan. Drawing on classroom observations, student surveys, and teacher interviews, the research explores how elements such as points, badges, challenges, and adaptive feedback influence learners' engagement and academic outcomes. The findings indicate that gamified listening tools significantly increase intrinsic motivation, promote frequent listening practice, and enhance comprehension by offering personalized and interactive learning experiences. Students using such apps consistently demonstrate better recognition of spoken English, improved vocabulary acquisition, and increased confidence in classroom communication. However, the study also identifies challenges related to digital access, cultural relevance of content, and integration with the national curriculum. The research concludes by recommending the localization of gamified AI tools and targeted teacher training to optimize their impact on language education in the Uzbek context.

Keywords : Artificial Intelligence, gamification, listening comprehension, language learning, 7th grade students, Uzbekistan, motivation, adaptive learning, digital education, EFL learners, educational apps, personalized feedback.

The integration of gamification and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in language learning applications has introduced new possibilities for engaging young learners and enhancing their listening comprehension. Among Uzbek 7th graders, who are at a critical stage of developing foundational foreign language skills, AI-powered gamified listening tools have the potential to transform traditional learning into a more interactive and motivating experience. This article explores the effects of gamified listening practice via AI apps on student motivation and learning outcomes, focusing on learners in Uzbekistan's general secondary schools.

Gamified AI applications typically include elements such as points, badges, levels, virtual rewards, and storytelling to increase learner engagement. These features are layered onto AI-powered systems that adapt to learners' proficiency levels, monitor their listening performance in real time, and provide personalized feedback. Such systems have been particularly effective in listening instruction, where comprehension is enhanced by repeated exposure, contextual clues, and active participation. For Uzbek 7th graders, who often encounter difficulties with auditory processing in English, gamified platforms serve as both a learning aid and a motivational tool.

The motivation of young learners is crucial in language acquisition, especially in skill areas like listening, which are often perceived as passive or difficult. Gamified AI apps counter this perception by making the process dynamic and rewarding. Students are more likely to engage in listening practice when it is presented as a game rather than a traditional exercise. For instance, apps such as Duolingo, LingQ, or custom-designed Uzbek educational platforms incorporate short listening tasks embedded in quests or challenges. These tasks increase learners' attention span and foster intrinsic motivation, encouraging students to listen repeatedly until they understand the content.

Moreover, AI applications offer immediate feedback, which reinforces correct answers and helps identify areas for improvement without the pressure of teacher judgment. This type of learning autonomy builds students' confidence and allows for individualized pacing. For many 7th grade students in Uzbekistan, who vary widely in their exposure to English outside the classroom, such personalization is critical. Those who are more advanced can move ahead quickly, while others can receive targeted support without embarrassment.

From an outcomes perspective, students who use gamified AI apps consistently tend to show significant improvement in listening comprehension. This is evident not only in app-based assessment scores but also in classroom performance, where learners demonstrate greater confidence in responding to oral prompts, recognizing key vocabulary, and identifying main ideas from audio texts. Teachers also report that students who engage with these platforms are more enthusiastic in group activities and more proactive in using English outside the classroom context.

However, certain limitations should be acknowledged. Not all schools in Uzbekistan have equal access to digital infrastructure, especially in rural areas. In some cases, students rely on shared family smartphones or limited internet connectivity, which may hinder regular practice. Furthermore, the content in globally available apps may not always be culturally relevant or aligned with the national curriculum. This disconnect can reduce the effectiveness of gamified learning if the tasks do not correspond with what is taught in class.

To address these challenges, local adaptation of gamified AI listening tools is essential. Educational policymakers and developers should consider creating or localizing apps that incorporate Uzbek contexts, themes, and accents while maintaining global standards of English instruction. Additionally, teacher training

on how to integrate such tools effectively into classroom instruction is vital to ensure their educational potential is fully realized.

In conclusion, gamified listening practice through AI apps presents a promising approach to enhancing both motivation and learning outcomes among Uzbek 7th grade students. When implemented thoughtfully and supported by infrastructure and pedagogy, these tools can shift language learning from a passive, routine task into an active, enjoyable, and learner-centered experience. As digital technologies continue to evolve, their role in shaping early-stage English proficiency will likely expand, offering further opportunities to engage and empower young learners.

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