

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This section discusses the research's background, research question, the purposes of the research, research scope, the significance of the research, the conceptual framework, and previous studies.

#### **A. Research Background**

This research seeks to discover two different generational perspectives of Millennial and Gen Z teachers regarding the use and implementation of gamification for EFL lessons. Millennials and Gen Z differ in their proficiency in using technology and teaching techniques, and they are open to innovative adoption in integrating digital media, especially gamification. The Millennial generation was born between 1981 and 1996, and Generation Z was born from 1997 to 2012 (Dimock, 2019). Teachers belonging to the Millennial group typically have a comprehensive understanding of various technologies and are adept at incorporating digital resources into their pedagogical practices (Prensky, 2001 in Kim, 2020). Involving teacher perceptions of gamification in the learning process helps to identify the challenges and barriers faced in its implementation.

One of goal of the Merdeka curriculum in current education emphasizes student-centered. This learning model focuses on the active role of students in the learning process so that the role of the teacher is only as a facilitator in the learning process (Riadi, 2022). This condition demands learning that is responsive to students' needs, interests, and learning styles. Thus, implementing gamification is one method to increase student motivation and engagement through game elements such as rewards, leaderboards, competitions, and achievements (Aini et al., 2021).

Gamification is generally viewed positively, with educators recognizing its potential in increasing students' engagement, motivation, and language skills (Boudour, 2024). Gamification can be implemented through digital and non-digital methods (Taghizadeh, 2022). Digital gamification uses technology-based tools or

platforms, including Quizzes, Kahoot, Wordwall, and other digital platforms. These platforms allow teachers to include elements such as points, levels, badges, and leaderboards to increase student participation and effectively review their progress. Meanwhile, non-digital gamification involves traditional classroom activities that apply game mechanics without the use of technology, such as board games, role-playing activities, flashcard competitions, and storytelling challenges, which encourage student interaction in active learning.

Therefore, gamification is becoming popular in EFL education (Zhang & Hasim, 2023). Integrating games into learning has a strong appeal, making learning more interactive and fun. Gamification in education aims to increase student motivation and engagement through game elements such as rewards, competition, and achievements. Brown (2000) states that the most powerful rewards intrinsically motivate the learner because the behavior is motivated by internal needs, wants, or desires. In this case, gamification is not only adopted to change the learning process but also to change student behavior and improve the learning outcome (Sakti et al., 2021). In other words, rewards from themselves make them feel satisfied, so they do not need an external push to motivate them. Nevertheless, the use of gamification in EFL learning depends on teachers' readiness and skills, especially in terms of the effectiveness of integrating technology in learning.

Consequently, it is important to know how generational differences in teachers can affect the way teachers adopt digital gamification media, especially for Millennials and Gen Z teachers. In addition, gamification is not only adopted to change the learning process but also to change student behavior and improve the learning outcome (Sakti et al., 2021). This shows that gamification is not only an interactive learning medium but also has the potential to increase students' enthusiasm and motivation in the learning process. However, gamification is not always practical if teachers cannot manage learning effectively. For some students, competition can lead to a lack of self-confidence and reduced enjoyment of learning activities (Zhang & Hasim, 2023).

Therefore, this is one of the challenges faced by teachers to be more conservative in applying gamification to EFL lessons.

Each generation is different in terms of the world events and advancements that influence their individual development (Zemke et al., 2013 in Lissitsa & Laor, 2021 in Mikuskova, 2023). Especially in the context of education, the Millennial generation is already familiar with new and innovative digital technologies; they can be called digital natives (Prensky, 2001 in Mikuskova, 2023). Millennials are characteristically dissatisfied and try to push for change and demand benefits from their jobs (Miskuskova, 2023). On the other hand, Generation Z has been familiar with technology since they were born (Dimock, 2019). They have a character that tends to criticize often (Miskuskova, 2023). Therefore, the different characteristics of these two generations can affect the application of learning styles, especially for teachers in the use of technology as a learning medium.

Based on the preliminary observation during the researcher's Teaching Practicum Practices, English teachers from different generational backgrounds, specifically Millennials and Generation Z show differences in teaching styles towards integrating technology into classroom learning. Millennial teachers tend to be conservative in implementing digital tools, including gamification platforms. In contrast, Generation Z teachers show tremendous enthusiasm in integrating gamification elements into learning, with a more proficient understanding of technology and readiness to adapt to new technologies. However, in the specific context of junior high schools in Sumedang, teachers from both generations face real obstacles when trying to use mobile-based platforms for gamification. One of the main obstacles is school regulations that prohibit students from bringing cell phones to class, which limits the use of gamification techniques that rely on applications or devices by teachers. These restrictions have influenced teachers' choices in using alternative media that are in line with school policies or non-digital gamification techniques.

Meanwhile, Demirbilek et al. (2022) show that there are barriers for teachers to adopt gamification in their EFL teaching, such as creating a negative competitive

learning environment. Therefore, implementing gamification for learning has challenges that teachers must face. Teachers must organize learning to be effective when the learning process uses a gamification approach. By maintaining the goals to be achieved in learning, students do not only compete to get rewards but also have to understand what they are learning.

Several studies related to the current research regarding generational perspectives on gamification in EFL lessons have been conducted by many researchers. The first study conducted by Taghizadeh (2022), examines a comparison of the effects of digital and non-digital gamification on EFL learners' collocation knowledge, perceptions, and sense of flow. This study provides insights into how different gamification strategies can be utilized effectively in language learning environments. Likewise, Mohandas et al. (2020) investigate language gamification in the ESL Classroom from a teaching perspective. This study focuses on gamification's implementation and impact on English as a Second Language (ESL) education. Furthermore, several studies investigate the generational differences among teachers. Geeraerts et al. (2018) examine the inter-generational learning of teachers and what and how teachers learn from older and younger colleagues.

This current research has the same goal as previous research but with a different approach. Previous research concentrated on the teachers' perspective on gamification strategies and implementation in a general context. Then, the current research looks specifically at the generational differences in teaching technique and technology adoption with the comparison of Millennial and Gen Z teachers' perspectives on gamification implementation.

## **B. Research Question**

The following questions are derived from the research concern:

- 1) How do Millennial and Gen Z English teachers perceive the implementation of Gamification in EFL lessons?
- 2) What are the key differences between the techniques used by Millennial and Gen Z English teachers when applying Gamification?

## **C. Research Purposes**

From the research questions above, this study aimed to obtain the following purposes:

- 1) This research examines the perceptions of Millennial and Gen Z English teachers regarding the implementation of Gamification in EFL lessons.
- 2) To identify differences in the techniques used by Millennial and Gen Z EFL teachers when applying Gamification in EFL lessons.

## **D. Research Significances**

This research explores the perspectives of Millennial and Generation Z teachers on using gamification in EFL lessons among junior high school students in Sumedang. By comparing the perspectives of both generations, this study bridges generational theories and pedagogical approaches. It highlights the interplay between technology use and teaching techniques. It provides insights into the application of second language acquisition and explores in-depth perspectives on how generational differences shape the effectiveness of learning through gamification.

The study "Generational Perspectives on Gamification in EFL Lesson: Millennial vs. Gen Z Teachers" has practical significance for the following reasons:

### **a. Teachers**

This research offers practical insights into how gamification can be effectively integrated into EFL lessons and create interactive learning environments that foster student motivation and improve their language ability.

b. Future Researchers

This research can be a reference for further research related to the use of gamification in language learning for EFL students.

**E. Research Scope**

This study examines the perceptions of Millennial and Gen Z teachers regarding the application of gamification in digital and non-digital contexts as a learning medium among junior high school students in Sumedang. The research focuses on Millennial teachers who teach seventh-grade students and Gen Z teachers who teach ninth-grade students. The selection of different grade levels is not intended to compare students' abilities or learning outcomes but to highlight the real-world contexts in which each generation of teachers practices. Thus, the primary focus of the research remains on generational differences among teachers in perceiving opportunities, challenges, and implementation strategies for gamification, both in digital and non-digital forms, and how they integrate these strategies into EFL lessons. By understanding these perceptions, this research aims to enhance the effectiveness of techniques used by teachers in foreign language education.

**F. Conceptual Framework**

The object of the current study is to investigate the perceptions of teachers from the Millennials and Gen Z regarding their experiences in implementing gamification for EFL lessons. Gamification refers to game elements in a learning context to increase student engagement and motivation through a system of points, badges, and rewards (Lee & Hammer, 2011). Other researchers also state that gamification can improve students' motivation and ambition toward success in the learning process and produce a more effective learning process (Redjeki & Muhajir, 2021). This refers to how teachers implement gamification to increase student motivation. Further, in EFL classes, many teachers integrate digital gamification into language learning, including quizzes (Hardianti, 2024). In addition, the use of gamification is often in the spotlight, as it strongly appeals to students' learning motivation. In this case, student motivation



is important to create effective English learning and teaching, and teachers should focus on this aspect with communicative learning to stimulate student learning effectively (Long et al., 2013 in Hardianti, 2024 ). This approach not only increases student motivation but also builds positive attitudes toward learning, which can ultimately lead to better learning outcomes.

The current trend is structural gamification, and this type applies game elements in digital form to encourage learners to access learning material without changing the form of the material itself (Ariani, 2020). The structural gamification has elements of points, levels, achievements, badges and leaderboards. The main focus of this type of gamification is to encourage learners to actively participate in learning with rewards as a form of appreciation for understanding the material learned (Ariani, 2020). Games elements applied in a lesson can increase motivation for students because it has a challenge that must be completed.

Generations are groupings of persons who share common social experiences and historical events throughout their lives (Mannheim, 1952 in Geeraerts et al., 2018). The Millennial generation was born between 1981 and 1996, and Generation Z was born from 1997 to 2012 (Dimock, 2019). Millennial teachers are digital immigrants who experienced the early development of the internet (Prensky, 2001 in Kim, 2020). They emphasize the importance of meaningful learning experiences, collaboration, and critical thinking, trying to maintain a balance between learning pleasure and learning outcomes (Howe & Strauss, 2000; Oblinger, 2005 in Patridge et al., 2006). Meanwhile, Gen Z teachers who grew up in the era of digitalization are highly proficient with digital tools, viewing technology as an integral part of their teaching (Hernández et al., 2020).

Perception is an individual process of providing responses or opinions through the five senses (Maba & Wayan, 2017). Teachers' perceptions exhibited considerable selectivity in their modeling of the persons (Ross, 1987). This refers to the tendency in how one views one's characteristics and behavior. In the context of using gamification in EFL lessons, teachers' perceptions are the main focus of this current

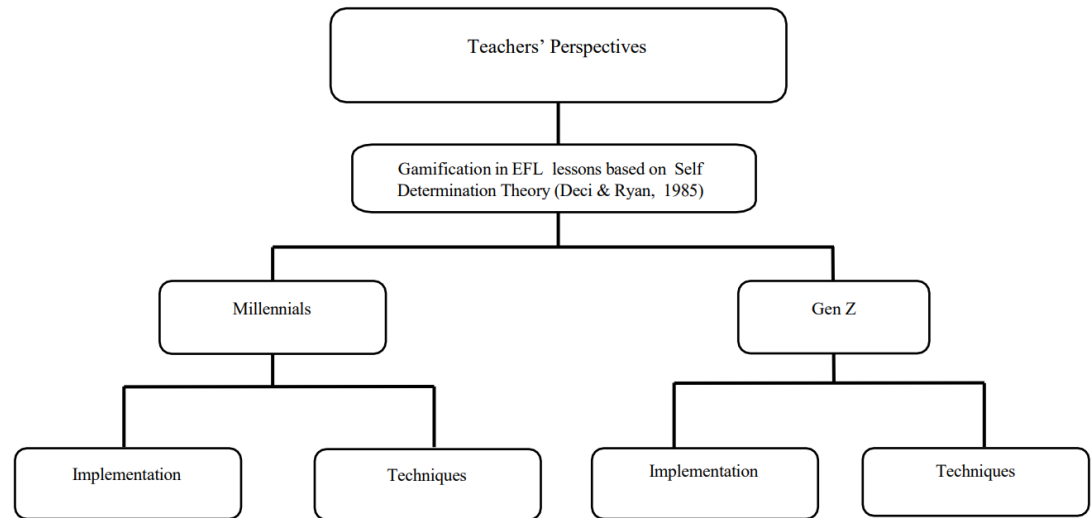
study. It aims to get different perceptions from teachers with different generational criteria.

Even many teachers believe that gamification can provide a fun learning experience and can increase motivation and student engagement in the learning process, but they are often at a loss when it comes to designing gamification activities to make them more effective (Mårell-Olsson & Eva, 2022). In the context of perception, the challenges faced by teachers, as well as the benefits of gamification to learning when implementing gamification, are the main focus of the research. Gamification significantly boosts student motivation and engagement (Batlle Rodríguez & Argüello, 2022). The activities in gamification create a sense of challenge and excitement, which leads to increased student participation. In this case, gamification can increase students' learning motivation with the challenges created. However, teachers also face challenges in implementing the gamification process. Successful implementation is often hindered by challenges related to complexity, varying student attitudes, and the need for ongoing training and support (Batlle Rodríguez & Argüello, 2022). Therefore, the implementation of gamification must be prepared with a well-planned strategy to ensure its effectiveness and success, which has an impact on increasing student motivation.

Teaching techniques include all tasks and activities that are planned according to the objectives to be achieved, referring to pedagogical components of a classroom session (Brown, 2000). The implementation of techniques in gamification involves elements of the point system, level system, badges system, and leaderboards system (Fitria, 2022). In the context of EFL lessons, the implementation of gamification from two generations has different perceptions. Millennial and Generation Z teachers, the dominant group in education today, have different attitudes, technology skills, and teaching styles that can influence how they apply gamification in the context of learning (Lee & Hammer, 2011). Hence, by understanding how Millennial and Gen Z teachers apply gamification, the current research considers whether certain generations still need training in applying gamification in the teaching process, especially for EFL



students. Millennial teachers tend to be conservative in integrating digital gamification media compared to Gen Z teachers. In other words, millennials can effectively combine digital and non-digital gamification in EFL lessons.



## G. Previous Study

Several studies have explored the generational perspective on gamification in EFL lessons from Millennial and Gen Z teachers. The first study was conducted by Boudour (2024), exploring the perspectives of middle school teachers towards gamification in the EFL context. This study investigates the potential of incorporating digital gamification in EFL teaching and teachers' implementation of gamification. The study used qualitative research and involved 11 middle school teachers in Mostaganem, Algeria, who were randomly selected after completing the survey on Facebook. The instrument used in this study is a semi-structured interview. The result of this study highlighted the need for additional training and support for teachers to overcome barriers and maximize the use of gamification in learning.

The second study conducted by Nurlaila (2024) explored gamification in spoken language pedagogy in Indonesian EFL teachers' perspectives. This study provides teachers' understanding of gamification, their views, and their actions in implementing

gamification elements in their speaking instruction activities with students. This study uses mixed-method approach involving questionnaires and semi-structured interviews as an instruments of the research. The participants in this study involved 45 speaking instructors. The teachers showed a positive view towards gamification in teaching speaking by implementing role-playing, competition, and rewards as the most frequently used elements.

Lastly, Taghizadeh (2022) compare the effects of digital and non-digital gamification on EFL learners' collocation knowledge, perceptions, and sense of flow. This study focuses on investigating how different gamifications can influence learners' engagement, satisfaction, and perceived learning outcomes in the context of vocabulary acquisition, specifically collocations. A quasi-experimental design was used, utilizing a mixed methods approach, and the study involved 75 Iranian EFL students. The research was conducted at Jihad-Daneshgahi Language Institute in Isfahan, Iran. Data collection instruments include pretest and posttest to assess collocation knowledge by using questionnaires, open-ended questions, and semi-structured interviews for qualitative feedback. The result of this study indicated a significant increase in collocation knowledge for both gamification groups compared to the non-gamification group, with participants expressing high satisfaction and positive perceptions towards gamification, as well as experiencing strong feelings during the activity.

The previous research are different from this current study. Previous research tends not to differentiate between generations of teachers in applying gamification, thus not providing insights into how teaching perspectives and strategies differ between Millennials and Gen Z generations. Meanwhile, the current study specifically focuses on the comparison between these two generations, which allows for a more in-depth understanding of the differences in their approaches to gamification in EFL lessons.