Мій практичний досвід яскраво доводить, що повна відмова від сухого викладання на користь живого інтерактивного навчання в початковій та середній школі приносить чудові плоди. Коли діти на моїх заняттях власноруч малюють розгалужені ментальні карти, наприклад, павутинні структури до теми про родину у молодших класах, чи разом працюють над мікропроєктами, мовний бар'єр зникає сам по собі. Парна робота, динамічні ігри з мікрофоном, театральні елементи та повага до темпу і можливостей кожного учня допомагають мені тримати клас у постійному тонусі. Завдяки такому підходу англійська мова стає для дітей не просто черговим нудним предметом із розкладу, а реальним, живим інструментом для пізнання світу, який допомагає їм розуміти інші народи й водночас по-справжньому пишатися своєю Батьківщиною.

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GAMIFIED VOCABULARY MICROLEARNING (QUIZLET, KAHOOT!, WORDWALL) AS A MEANS OF OVERCOMING STUDENTS' FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY IN WARTIME

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Abstract: The article is dedicated to the investigation of the potential of gamified vocabulary microlearning for reducing students' foreign language anxiety in wartime. Four mechanisms of this influence are identified, the strengths and risks of Quizlet, Kahoot! and Wordwall for highly anxious students are analysed, and a "from safe to public" sequence for using these tools is proposed.

Keywords: foreign language anxiety, gamification, microlearning, vocabulary, Quizlet, Kahoot!, Wordwall, martial law.

Relevance. Foreign language anxiety (FLA) is a situation-specific form of anxiety associated with classroom foreign language learning that comprises communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety [4, p. 128]. According to a meta-analysis, the mean correlation between FLA and language achievement is $r = -0.36$ [9, p. 363]. The war has increased the background emotional load: three months after the start of the full-scale invasion, 45% of 1,142 surveyed students of Ukrainian higher education institutions had moderate or severe anxiety symptoms, and 66% screened positive for PTSD symptoms [7, p. 121]. Among philology students at Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, a high level of general state anxiety on the Spielberger scale was found in 100% of respondents [8, p. 17]. Under such conditions, learning formats that not only convey knowledge but also lower the "affective filter" become particularly important [5].

Gamification, i.e. the use of game design elements in non-game contexts [2], and microlearning, the delivery of learning content in short, targeted units lasting from a few seconds to a few minutes [6], are widely used in vocabulary learning. However, they are considered mainly as a means of increasing motivation and performance, and much less often as a tool for reducing foreign language anxiety, especially in wartime.

The aim is to theoretically substantiate the potential of gamified vocabulary microlearning for reducing students' foreign language anxiety in wartime and to formulate principles for using Quizlet, Kahoot! and Wordwall that take into account the needs of students with high levels of anxiety.

Materials and methods. Theoretical analysis, comparison and synthesis of Ukrainian and international publications from 1982 to 2025: meta-analyses and systematic reviews on foreign language anxiety, gamification, microlearning and spaced repetition, as well as studies of Ukrainian students' mental health during the war.

Results. The analysis made it possible to identify four mechanisms through which gamified vocabulary microlearning can reduce FLA.

Reduced evaluative threat. Vocabulary exercises are a relatively "safe" entry point into language activity, since they do not require spontaneous speech in front of the group. Anonymous nicknames, the non-evaluative nature of the game and the perception of mistakes as part of play directly weaken the fear of negative evaluation, one of the key components of FLA [4].

Positive emotions. Foreign language enjoyment is a resource relatively independent of anxiety [3]. Game elements deliberately evoke such emotions, which is consistent with the idea of lowering the "affective filter" [5].

Manageability and flexibility of the micro-format. Short 5–10-minute units carry a moderate cognitive load and have a positive effect on cognitive, behavioural and affective learning outcomes, including motivation and self-efficacy [6]. During air-raid alerts and power outages, this format is easy to interrupt and resume, and can also be moved to asynchronous mode.

Sense of competence. Repetition distributed over time ensures better long-term retention than massed repetition [1]. Steady progress in learning words strengthens students' confidence and reduces anxiety before using the vocabulary orally.

At the same time, gamification is not universally "calming". A review of 93 studies on Kahoot! showed that the tool generally has a positive effect on anxiety and learning outcomes; however, some students experienced stress due to time limits, fear of losing and difficulty getting back into the game after a mistake [10]. For highly anxious students, competitive elements need adjustment. A comparative description of the tools is given in Table 1.

Table 1. Potential and risks of gamified vocabulary microlearning tools for students with foreign language anxiety

Tool	Strengths	Risks	Recommendations
Quizlet	• self-paced learning; • flashcards and Learn mode; • convenient spaced repetition	• lack of social support; • monotony with prolonged use	• daily 5–10-minute sets; • pre-teaching vocabulary before class; • asynchronous mode
Kahoot!	• high engagement; • shared positive emotions; • instant feedback	• time pressure; • leaderboard and fear of losing; • hard to catch up after a mistake	• team mode; • longer time limits; • nicknames instead of names; • focus on reviewing mistakes rather than on ranking
Wordwall	• varied templates (matching, anagrams, group sort); • printable versions	• timers and leaderboards in some templates	• non-competitive templates; • pair work; • printed versions in case of power outages

Based on the analysis, a "from safe to public" sequence is proposed in which the degree of social exposure increases gradually: independent revision in Quizlet at home → Wordwall exercises in pairs → a team Kahoot! quiz → oral use of the acquired vocabulary in communicative tasks. This sequence enables highly anxious students to start speaking already confident in their vocabulary.

Conclusions. Gamified vocabulary microlearning has the potential to reduce foreign language anxiety through four mechanisms: reducing evaluative threat, creating positive emotions, the manageability of the micro-format and strengthening the sense of competence. Competitive elements (timers, leaderboards) may increase anxiety; therefore, team and non-competitive modes are advisable for highly anxious students. Quizlet, Kahoot! and Wordwall complement each other and are most effective in a "from safe to public" sequence, while the flexibility of the micro-format makes it particularly suitable for learning in wartime. A prospect for further research is the experimental verification of the proposed sequence, measuring foreign language anxiety (FLCAS) before and after the intervention and including a delayed vocabulary test.

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SÜNİ İNTELLEKT VƏ İKT TEXNOLOGIYALARININ TƏDRİSƏ TƏTBİQİ

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