

Improving Students Motivation in Learning English Vocabulary Using Online Games

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Abstract: This article is a product of a research study conducted and aimed to demonstrate the effect of online games to motivate students in learning English vocabulary, with participants of 5 senior high school students from various schools and using qualitative approach as the method. The result on improving students motivation in learning English vocabulary using online games had quiet effective not only it helps students, it also make learning vocabulary more interesting, fun and also relaxing, as for online games itself in this internet era helps students connect and play, they have been proved in the educational field as a possible learning mediation, so in the future online games will not only be considered as hindrance for students to study, but an alternative place for students to learn more.

Keyword: *Vocabulary, Online Games*

INTRODUCTION

English as the world language has been dynamically rising through out this technology advancement era, many teachers are trying to seek out a new fun way to help students get to learn English more. English language learning will be more motivating and enjoyable where the students can just focus more on new word and its contextual usage. Such as using illustrations, games, drawings, etc.

In these days where globalization rising and the era of technology is advancing, a net-based technologies or internet can grant access to many sources of information and materials that people need. Most young students can easily connect and participate in playing games on the internet actively. Internet now is becoming a necessity because of the pandemic, even the use of computer, smartphone and other multimedia device is natural for people. This is why schools need to consider using online games as a tool to improve students' motivation in learning English vocabulary.

Literature Review

Online Games Vocabulary Acquisition

Many scholars such as Prensky (2004), Shaffer (2006), Gee (2007), and Musa (2015) still argue that online games can be a powerful activities for students' education. But in fact, according to Prensky (2004) when someone plays, learning happens constantly, even if the players are aware of it or not. So based on that fact, many studies around the world are encouraged to prove that online games can be a tools and activities for students in language learning, especially in vocabulary acquisition.

Vocabulary acquisition in online games itself can be obtained while playing, Gee (2007) says that good video games not only set situations and problems for the entire gameplay, but they also present several basic tools to navigate properly in the game. These aids include the vocabulary that gamers will use during the actions they take on the video game. He compares this process to creating a foreign language classroom when teachers set the basis for their further practice of vocabulary and grammar. Indeed, he argues that video games are surrounded by different means of written texts such as instructions, dialogues, hints, and descriptions that may enable the development of autonomy.

Many studies were developed using online video games as its instrument, such as Musa (2015), developed a case study using games like Minecraft (Mojang) and Candy Crush (King.com) and he concluded that the participants developed new groups of vocabulary when they played these games and

that vocabulary acquisition occurs if the words are directly exposed to the player. Vahdat and Behbahani (2013) used a video game called *Runaway: A Road Adventure* to develop vocabulary in two groups of male and female learners. They concluded that there is not a strong relationship between gender and vocabulary learning, as vocabulary learning occurred eventually in both groups; however, there were some minimal differences in the acquired words throughout the students. Howard and Ting-Yu (2013) investigated how an adventure game called *Bone* could improve listening, reading, and vocabulary skills of a group of college students. This study indicated students acquired certain vocabulary after playing *Bone*. Also, Ranalli (2008) used a computer simulation game called *The Sims* in students and guided the process. All this study is evidence that online video games with a proper management and guidance can be used to improve vocabulary acquisition of students.

Not only that, but online video games can also improve and change the attitude of students towards language learning. For example, Yip & Kwan, (2006) expressed their students' motivation and attitudes change while using videogames; data which was obtained through surveys and interviews. They also affirm that their pupils' attention was easier to retain while using videogame-based activities. Camacho & Ovalle, (2019) non-linguistic variables, like motivation and confidence, may have influence on learning. Video games, and games in general, seem to low the affective filter, and a result enable students' language acquisition since in the virtual environment students work in a context without pressure.

Type Of Vocabulary in Online Games

Two groups of vocabulary that gamers might acquire during the gameplay, according to Musa (2015): "general meaning or situated meaning words. General Meaning is composed of the lexicon that has a purpose apart from the actual gameplay. That means, a player does not need to know them in order to play but these words are present in other functions" Situated Meaning words belong all the words included during the game that users are supposed to understand to succeed in a certain game.

And (Camacho & Ovalle, 2019) add two subcategories of situated meaning vocabulary: Direct Vocabulary and Reference Vocabulary. Direct vocabulary is all the words that are visually materialized on the gameplay and the player can interact with them. Reference Vocabulary is all the words that are necessary for the completion of the game. It is important to consider these two categories as it helps to understand that students tend to learn direct vocabulary more than Reference vocabulary.

Online Games Used

In this study 2 online video games are used, number one is a MOBA (multiplayer online battle arena) games called *Dota 2*, and number two is a strategy, real time tactics games called *Total War: Warhammer 2*. On the first day the participants were asked to play *Dota 2*, in the game the player need to choose from 119 heroes to play and defend their ancient, players will need to work together in order to destroy the enemy ancient before the enemy destroy theirs.

The second game used, is *Total War: Warhammer 2*, in this game players get to choose a faction from human, dwarf, elf, vampire, or even pirate vampire, they take controls of all the faction troops and kingdom, players will need to complete a certain campaign victory objectives in order to win. These two games were chosen because their vast amount of vocabulary and their capability to engage the participant.

METHOD

This report uses qualitative approach as the method of the research and using an observation and interview as instrument in collecting the data. The participants of the research were 5 senior highschool students and they were a little bit familiar with the English language. The selection of these participants

was random. The researcher act as an observer while the participants were playing and learning, then conduct the interview afterwards.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research procedures consist of three steps. pre – activity, main activity, and post – activity. After performing all the steps above, using online games can be quite effective to improving students' motivation in learning English vocabulary.

In the pre – activity step, the researcher starts by introducing the games, asking them what they feel about the games, and what kind of vocabulary they know, at first, they only know everyday vocabulary like table, cup, etc. and then the researcher explained the objective of the research.

The main activity starts by the participants playing the games, the researcher observer them playing with excitement and relaxing environment, on the first day while playing Dota 2 the participants tend to communicate with each other frequently regarding on how they should win the game together and learning a difficult vocabulary such as blacksmith, armour, padded armour, dagger and many more.

On the second day the participants act differently because they not on a team-based game but a more kingdom management, so they just playing it calmer, but still acquire new vocabulary such as heritage, dogma, conviction, and others.

In post – activity the researcher conduct an interview with each participants so that a more focused data can be collected, and when asked about the method, they tend to give exciting results, while playing they can find a lot more unique and hard vocabulary that their never heard before, and the more relaxed environment to study is the best way to acquire new knowledge, and also the participants seem more motivated in learning and playing more of different but similar games.

Even though this research didn't focus on grammar or other English skills of the participants, but their motivation in learning English vocabulary using online games is improving.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research results, the researcher concluded that using online games can improve students' motivation in learning English vocabulary; it also increases students' confidence. Using online games to motivate students in learning language can be a new alternative in this era education. Learning while playing give off a more fun and relaxing environment to study, students can acquire a lot of information while adventuring with the games every path has it own unique way to play, because of that video games offer many opportunities to practice and acquire vocabulary in contexts, and a teacher can use this resource to refine the skills acquired during the gameplay.

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