

EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF VOCABULARY MASTERY THROUGH VIDEO GAMES AND ITS IMPACT ON ENGLISH SKILLS

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Abstrak

Today's technological development is extremely rapid and highly beneficial to human civilization. One of the ways technology impacts humans is through the learning process. Due to technology, the learning process has improved. An example of technology influencing learning is video games, entertainment for the player, but also potential educational benefits. Thus, the purpose of this study was to investigate how vocabulary learning through video games enhances English skills and vocabulary. Video games provide a fun environment that helps players understand the instructions and interact with others. The implementation of video games in the classroom can be rewarding in many ways, including academically, in terms of achievement, motivation, and classroom dynamics. This study used a qualitative single-case study design. The research focused on one female student from a private senior high school in Malang, East Java, Indonesia. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and supported by documentation in the form of photos. Based on the participant explanation, Genshin Impact and Valorant play a meaningful role in enhancing English language comprehension. The game is set to English. Games in the open-world adventure genre with rich narratives expand players' vocabulary, which can improve writing and grammar comprehension in academic contexts. At the same time, multiplayer interactions provide opportunities for speaking practice. The findings of this study suggest that video games have a positive impact on students' English performance. However, effectiveness depends on the type of game played. Monotonous games are less beneficial for language learning. This study suggests that teachers can use video games as learning tools by combining game content with classroom activities. Future researchers should involve more participants and use additional instruments, like documentation, to enhance study results. Based on the findings and discussion presented in this study, it can be concluded that video games can serve as an effective supplementary tool for improving senior high school students' English vocabulary and language skills. The study shows that vocabulary learned through video games can positively impact English skills. The data suggest that the vocabulary and language input gained from video games can have a positive impact on students' academic English performance. Despite the positive impact of video games on students, monotonous games are less effective for learning English.

Keywords: Technology, Video Games, Vocabulary, English Skills.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, technology has grown significantly, opening up new opportunities for innovative ways of teaching and learning. Technology has a better impact on learning, it makes the learning process easier. A lot of sources can be from technology. Implementing technology into the classroom is essential for making the learning process more effective and engaging, as it can turn learning into a fun experience. Thus, the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK)

framework illustrates how a teacher's understanding of educational technology and pedagogical content knowledge interacts to create effective technology-based teaching (Koehler & Mishra, 2006).

The combination of digital gaming and education, known as gamification, attracts and helps students to learn actively (Chen & Hsu, 2020). Known as "gamification. This idea is generating intense public debate and a wide range of applications in productivity, finance, health, education, sustainability, and in the news and entertainment media (Deterding et al., 2011). Good video games can help the player to learn and develop creativity. Moreover, in the educational context, video games produce sentences that contain words, phrases, and meanings (Saputra, 2018). Umamah and Saukah (2022) stated that game-based learning supported by advanced technology could enable learners to interact and collaborate with peers, promote learning motivation, competition, entertainment, and help learners acquire knowledge to achieve their learning goals.

Video games provide a fun environment that helps players understand the instructions and interact with other players. According to Lee (2004) the implementation of video games in the classroom can be rewarding in many ways, including academically, in terms of achievement, motivation, and classroom dynamics. However, there is still resistance to the idea that educational video games can be useful classroom tools.

The combination of entertainment and education has sparked a growing interest in the power of video games to facilitate language learning, particularly when it comes to mastering vocabulary. According to Crystal (1995), a person who wants to be able to communicate in a certain language has to master the vocabulary of the language for the first time. Vocabulary mastery is important for English students (Mahmudah, 2014). Vocabulary helps students understand the texts and their meanings. Vocabulary plays an important role in the foreign language teaching-learning process. It links the four skills of speaking, reading, listening, and writing (Castillo-Cuesta, 2020). For some students, learning vocabulary is hard. Because of the lack of vocabulary, the students can't communicate with others clearly (Saputra, 2018). Integration of digital games in the classroom improved student performance and enhanced the classroom atmosphere (Umamah & Saukah, 2022). Rasti-Behbahani & Shahbazi (2022) believe that language learners must recall different aspects like receptiveness, productivity, form, meaning, and usage for each word. Students can make errors, gain knowledge from them, and improve their language skills without worrying about criticism or shame.

However, most learning strategies used in that study only focus on grammar and vocabulary mastery, the research that examines vocabulary mastery and skill improvement from vocabulary mastery is still limited. Most of the previous studies used a quantitative approach, and the application of vocabulary to other skills is still limited. This research was carried out more deeply in qualitative research to see how vocabulary gained through video games is based on the students' perceptions and experiences, and on improving skills.

METHOD

Research Design

This study examines the use of video games as a medium for mastering vocabulary and their impact on English skills. This study applies a qualitative approach, and the method used in this study

is a single case study. The use of a case study as the research design allows for deeper information and focuses on the use of video games. The students were tasked with responding to a series of needs analysis interviews about the effectiveness of video games in enhancing vocabulary.

Settings and Participant

This research was conducted in a private senior high school in Malang, East Java, Indonesia. Due to the limited number of participants who met the criteria for this study, the participant were selected using purposive sampling to prove that they meet the criteria of this study, which are studying at a senior high school, often playing video games, scoring on the final exam is 80, and having a good comprehension of English in the aspects of vocabulary and skills. Coincidentally, those who often play video games, have a good understanding of English, and fulfill the criteria for this study are only 1 female student from 12th grade. This study is only on 1 female student from a social science major.

Data Source

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect the data. The interview questions were adapted from (Castillo-Cuesta, 2020). There are eleven main questions in total about the student perceptions of the use of digital games to enhance vocabulary knowledge and skills, nine self-made questions by the researcher, and three questions adapted from Castillo-Cuesta, (2020), and documentation in the form of photos.

Data Analysis

Data from questionnaires and interviews were analyzed thematically, following the stages outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). This process includes familiarizing yourself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and compiling the report. This study ensures trustworthiness by addressing credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability (Lincoln et al., 1985). The researcher shows the result transcripts of the interviews to the participants to verify that the information gathered was accurate. Dependability was ensured by maintaining and documenting each phase of data collection and analysis. Transferability, the interviewee should be given a chance to offer comments about the interview data, which includes the option to add or remove data points. Through this approach, the researcher may guarantee the validity and veracity of the interview and establish the credibility of the study findings.

FINDINGS

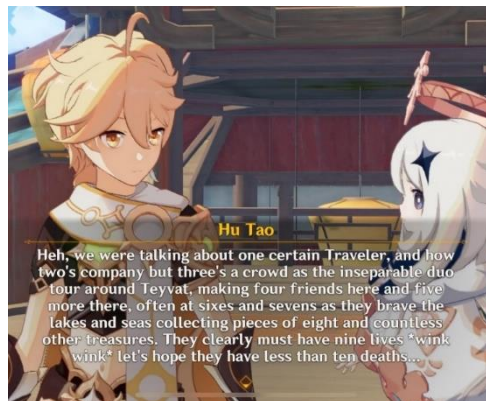
The results of this study showed how video games enhance vocabulary and how senior high school students improve their English skills through the vocabulary acquired from gaming.

Improving Vocabulary Through Video Games

The findings revealed that video games play a significant role in helping Lizz enhance her English vocabulary. She expressed that playing video games in her leisure time allows her to encounter new words and phrases she had never known before. Lizz stated that the English setting in the games exposes her to various vocabulary through dialogues, missions, and voice acting, all of which require her to comprehend the meaning to progress in the game.

“Kalau saya pribadi sih game-game yang open world gitu atau petualangan pak kayak Genshin Impact karena lebih banyak teks dalam bahasa Inggrisnya. Apalagi game yang

kayak gitu tuh besar banget mapnya kan juga banyak banget misinya gitu. Jadi pastilah nemu vocab yang baru pak dari game tersebut.”



Lizz's experience with *Genshin Impact*, an open-world action role-playing game, demonstrated that the game provides rich linguistic input through narrative texts, quests, and character interactions. The dialogues and storylines are presented entirely in English, giving her opportunities to practice reading comprehension and listening. Similarly, *Valorant*, a team-based tactical shooter game, fosters the development of communication and listening skills, as players must coordinate with teammates using English voice or text chat. These interactions create a natural environment for language learning, reinforcing vocabulary retention through the use of context.

Learning Process of Vocabulary

Lizz explained that the learning process occurs naturally as she interacts with the games. When she encounters unfamiliar vocabulary, she translates it using Google Translate to understand its meaning. She also memorizes new words by repeating them several times, alternating between English and Indonesian. This repetition strategy helps her internalize vocabulary effectively, even though her primary goal in playing games is not to study English. Her experience illustrates *serendipity learning*—a form of incidental learning that occurs through engaging and enjoyable activities.

“Nah, itu tuh gini, jadi di dalam game itu saya setting jadi bahasa Inggris. Jadi semuanya full Inggris kan dari teks di game, terus suara karakternya juga jadi bahasa Inggris semua. Nah, dari situ biasanya saya dapat vocab baru.”

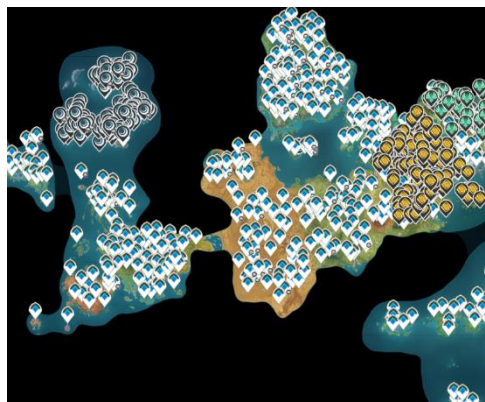
“Kalau saya sih biasanya diomongin berulang-ulang kali kayak jadi pertamanya bahasa Inggris. Habis tuh terus bahasa Indonesianya jadi kayak circle-lingkaran circle-lingkaran terus sampai sepuluh kali. Nah baru saya bisa inget.”

She memorizes new vocabulary by repeating it. Rather than writing it, she mentions the new vocabulary 10 times. First, she says the English word, followed by its Indonesian meaning.

Effective Game Types for Vocabulary Improvement

According to Lizz, open-world and adventure games are the most effective genres for vocabulary acquisition. These games, such as *Genshin Impact*, contain extensive dialogues, missions, and interactive narratives that expose players to diverse language input. In contrast, she observed that games with repetitive gameplay and minimal dialogue, such as *Mobile Legends*, offer limited opportunities for learning new vocabulary. This supports the view that not all video games are equally effective for language learning; those with rich storylines and meaningful text input are more beneficial.

“Game yang kayak Mobile Legend gitu pak, soalnya kan gameplay nya monoton, jadi alur gemenya gitu-gitu terus dari teksnya ataupun suara karakternya, mungkin bisa dapet vocab baru tapi terbatas.”



The image above shows one of the dialogues in the game, and each of those points is a mission. It can be concluded that the video game contains a rich narrative text and spoken dialogue, as well as menus and missions. Many players encounter a lot of English input while playing.

Improving Language Skills Through Vocabulary From Video Games

The vocabulary Lizz gained from video games contributed to the improvement of her overall English language proficiency, particularly in writing, reading, listening, and speaking skills.

“Menurut saya bisa Pak. Karena di dalam game kan full Inggris ya. Jadi menurut saya bisa buat melatih skill. Contohnya kayak baca teks dalam game itu tadi, terus saya dapat vocab baru kan. jadi suatu saat nanti karena saya udah ngerti apa artinya dan juga udah terbiasa sama vocab itu saya bisa pakai buat di terapin ke empat skill itu pak.”

- **Writing Skills:** Lizz reported that she could apply new vocabulary learned from video games in her school writing assignments. This demonstrates that vocabulary acquisition from games can transfer to productive language use.
- **Speaking Skills:** Although Lizz rarely communicates with teammates, she acknowledged that *Valorant* helps develop speaking skills because it requires real-time communication with players worldwide. Interacting with native speakers also exposes her to authentic pronunciation and speech patterns, though she finds it challenging to understand fast-paced conversations.

- **Reading Skills:** Repeated exposure to English text in games improves her reading comprehension. When encountering previously learned vocabulary, she can easily recognize and understand it in context.
- **Listening Skills:** Listening to English voice lines and dialogue in games enhances her ability to identify and comprehend familiar words, contributing to better listening proficiency.

Along the way, she encountered various forest creatures who offered help. After sharing information, they fell asleep. After days of travel, Anya finally got to the headquarters. There's a guardian wolf that emerges from the shadows, its eyes glowing fiercely. Anya remembered the advice given by the forest creatures and stood her ground. She spoke to the wolf in a calm and steady voice, expressing her respect for the forest and her intention to use



Additionally, Lizz mentioned that video games have positively impacted her academic performance. For example, when writing recount texts at school, she was able to recognize and correctly use past tense forms learned from the games' dialogues and narratives.

DISCUSSION

The findings suggest that video games, specifically Genshin Impact and Valorant, play a significant role in enhancing students' English language proficiency and certain academic aspects. As seen in Lizz's experience, playing video games is a great way to learn new vocabulary and English skills, such as dialogues, instructions, and character interactions. This supports Lee et al., (2004) Theory that video games can provide meaningful context and situated language learning, where learners acquire new language in context.

Lizz described that the language setting of her games is in English. Whenever she encounters unfamiliar words, she translates them using tools like Google Translate and memorizes them by repetition. Lizz's practice of repeating new words multiple times, switching between English and Indonesian, demonstrates a practical application of the rote learning technique. It is a technique she uses when discovering new vocabulary.

The type of game played also influences the learning outcomes. Lizz emphasized that open-world and adventure games, such as Genshin Impact, are more effective for learning vocabulary because they contain extensive dialogues, quests, and detailed narratives, are interactive, and have interesting gameplay, providing rich linguistic input. This is in line with the result of previous studies that the unique content of video games will assist students in quickly memorizing the new vocabulary (Sandi et al., 2023; Yudha & Mandasari, 2021). In contrast, she observed that games with repetitive or monotonous gameplay, like Mobile Legends, offer limited opportunities for encountering new vocabulary. This highlights that not all video games are equally beneficial for language learning. Video games with a rich storyline and extensive text input can better support vocabulary development, as highlighted by Chen & Hsu (2020).

Lizz's ability to use vocabulary learned from games in school tasks demonstrates the transfer of informal learning to academic contexts. She reported improvement in writing skills and greater

grammatical awareness, particularly in using past tense forms (Rasti-Behbahani & Shahbazi, 2022). Multiplayer games like *Valorant* also provided authentic speaking and listening practice with international players, although understanding native speakers remained challenging.

Overall, these results affirm that video games can serve as effective supplementary tools for English learning by creating engaging, contextual, and interactive environments that enhance vocabulary, grammar, and communication skills.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion presented in this study, it can be concluded that video games can serve as an effective supplementary tool for improving senior high school students' English vocabulary and language skills. The role of video games such as *Genshin Impact* and *Valorant* demonstrates that when students play games that are rich in narrative, dialogue, and interaction, they are exposed to a wide range of new vocabulary. New vocabulary can be learned by using tools such as translators and repetition of words. The study shows that vocabulary learned through video games can positively impact English skills. The data suggest that the vocabulary and language input gained from video games can have a positive impact on students' academic English performance. Despite the positive impact of video games on students, monotonous games are less effective for learning English. The researcher wants to provide several suggestions for future research. First, there is only one participant in this study. Therefore, to prevent the risk of failing to obtain the results, future research suggests recruiting more participants to improve the quality of the findings. This research also lacks the use of documentation as an instrument. It would be better if the next researcher expanded the documentation.

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