THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ONLINE GAMES TO EMBRACE STUDENTS' VOCABULARY FOR EFL LEARNERS

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Abstract

This research tells the readers about the effectiveness of online games for EFL students. The aim of this research is to identify whether the online games are effective to embrace the EFL students learning vocabulary enrichment or not. This research will use qualitative research and the forms and interview sessions are held for EFL students in ELESP major in Sanata Dharma University which will be used as the methods to collect the data for this research. On the basis of the result and findings, the students who were using online games as various media in learning English vocabulary had an effective impact to embrace the students' vocabulary enrichment.

Keywords: effectiveness, games, online, students, vocabulary

Introduction

Language has a very important role in everyday life. By having good language skills, a person can more easily communicate with others. In other words, mastery of a language is very important, especially English because this language is an international language, meaning that someone who has good English skills can communicate more easily with the international community. In this era of increasingly sophisticated technology, English is expected to be interpreted well, especially among students. In accordance with one of the goals of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education, namely community service, Sanata Dharma University as one of the higher education institutions has a responsibility to develop community capabilities, starting with developing the abilities of students studying on this campus.

This is why students use various strategies for learning, especially for ELESP students. Many of them use online games as a learning space but still fun and interesting. Playing online games is often said to improve the user's ability to apply foreign languages that they encounter in the online game. According to Chen and Johnson (2011) the effects resulting from playing online games is to motivate students to learn languages outside the classroom. Therefore, this study is aimed at observing the effectiveness of playing online games to increase English vocabulary for EFL students at Sanata Dharma.

This activity was carried out in August 2021 by involving several students of the English Education study program at Sanata Dharma. During the activity, students were given several questions about the vocabulary they often encountered in a game, how often they used online games, compared to conventional whether playing games was more effective in increasing their vocabulary in English, and mentioned the number of game applications they used and the time of use. application in a day. After the question session is over, the students will conduct an interview with their consent.

In the interview conducted, the researcher asked 3 questions about the most influential application to increase their vocabulary, can online games replace the application of conventional learning, and in a percentage of students gave responses about the effectiveness of online games as their learning medium in their lectures.

Chen and Johnson, (2011) in Reinders and Wattana, the effect of playing online games is to motivate students to learn languages outside the classroom. Hadfield (1987: 7) also makes a statement by giving some suggestions, namely:

1) a game must be more than just fun;
2) a game should involve 'friendly' competition;
3) a game should keep all the students involved and interested;
4) a game should encourage students to focus on the use of language rather than on the language itself; and
5) a game should give students a chance to learn, practice, or review specific language material.

Based on these theories, the researcher made this research to understand the effectiveness of online games for EFL students in boosting their knowledge of vocabulary (based on students' perspective).

Method

The researcher carried out a pre-test in the form of question and answer and continued with interviews as a post-test to obtain data from participants. The interview technique used by the author is a semi-structured interview technique. For participants, 20 people were asked to be the sample of this research.

In the pre-test, the researcher used four questions such as:

1) Are online games very influential in helping you learn vocabulary?
2) How often do you use online games?
3) Can online game applications replace conventional learning?
4) Do you get at least 3 new vocabulary words in every game play?

In the post test, the researcher used one question:

1) How can playing online game can affect your improvement to learn vocabulary in daily life?

Based on those questions, the researcher will conclude how effective games online were for college students to embrace their vocabulary as the EFL learners in Sanata Dharma University.

Data collection

The researcher carried out a pre-test in the form of question and answer and continued with interviews as a post-test to obtain data from participants. The interview technique used by the author is a semi-structured interview technique.

In analyzing the data, the author uses several stages according to Creswell's theory, namely:
- Writing Data Transcript
- Data Classification

Findings and Discussion

Table 1. Pre-test (Google forms)

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Are online games very influential in helping	7	10	3	0
how often do you use online games?	8	11	1	0
Can online game applications replace conventional learning?	0	0	7	13
Do you get at least 3 new vocabulary words in every game play?	2	3	15	0

Post-test (Interview Session)
Question: How can playing online games affect your ability to learn vocabulary in daily life?
Answer:
1) in online games they usually use English when playing. The game terms played by those who are in English also mostly come from their daily lives which cannot be separated from the basic use of English vocabulary. (P. St, 17 July 2022)
2) Most Online Games present the game in English. This is one of the learning tools for children because they will play while learning English even though it is only the basic level and terms of the online game. (S. Kl, 17 July 2022)
3) Online games also provide vocabulary or vocabulary that is easy to digest and can be used in everyday life depending on the type of game being played. Online games are certainly one of the choices and learning motivations for children or teenagers who still don't have the enthusiasm to learn, of course in English subjects" (Sh. As, 20 July 2022)
4) "Because I often use the chat feature in online games, I can simultaneously practice my reading skills to read the automatic chat provided by a game to interact with my friends, therefore, my vocabulary is continuously updated since we use English most of the time" (S. T, 19 July 2022).

Conclusion

Based on the pre-test and the post-test given by the researcher, we can conclude that the use of online games for one of the learning mediums for ELESP students in Sanata Dharma is able to embrace the students' vocabulary enrichment and at the same time can support student success in English courses. However, the use of games online is just to boost their knowledge, not to replace the use of conventional learning mediums such as reading articles, writing journals, etc.

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