



THE EFFECT OF ONLINE GAMES ON ENGLISH VOCABULARY ACQUISITION

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Abstract

Using online games for teaching English has become popular recently, especially among English Foreign Learners. Since the online games use English as the instruction, it allows vocabulary to be acquired. Mastering vocabulary is needed because students' language skills will improve as their vocabulary increases. The aim of this study is to present the impact of online games in acquiring students' English vocabulary. The researchers conducted this study using library research by reviewing 18 journal articles with a qualitative description approach. The result of this study showed that online games can help students expand their English vocabulary. It is found that games make lessons more enjoyable to students, minimize students' anxiety, help students recall vocabulary easily and naturally, and bring context to the classroom. Moreover, using online games for teaching English can help in acquiring English vocabulary. In conclusion, online games have a good impact on students' vocabulary acquisition.

Abstrak

Penggunaan game online dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris akhir-akhir ini menjadi populer, terutama di kalangan pelajar bahasa asing. Beberapa instruksi dalam game online yang menggunakan bahasa Inggris, memungkinkan pelajar untuk mempelajari kosakata baru. Memahami banyak kosakata menjadi penting karena kemampuan berbahasa akan meningkat seiring dengan bertambahnya kosakata. Oleh karena itu, game online dapat membantu memperkaya kosakata Bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menunjukkan bagaimana game

online mempengaruhi peningkatan kosakata Bahasa Inggris siswa. Penulis menggunakan studi Pustaka dari 18 artikel jurnal dengan menggunakan pendekatan deskripsi kualitatif. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa game online dapat membantu siswa memperluas kosakata Bahasa Inggris mereka. Menariknya, game ini juga membuat pembelajaran menjadi lebih menyenangkan, mengurangi kecemasan, membantu siswa mengingat kosakata dengan mudah dan alami, serta memberikan konteks dalam pembelajaran di kelas. Dengan menggunakan game online untuk pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris, siswa dapat lebih mudah memperoleh kosakata Bahasa Inggris.

Keywords: EFL, Online Games, English Vocabulary Acquisition

A. INTRODUCTION

The way we learn and acquire knowledge has changed significantly in this era. One of these changes is rapidly impacted by the development of technology and digital media. The digital revolution has brought a significant change in a variety of academic sectors, such as language learning, especially in the foreign language acquisition. Online games are a proof of technological development that is impacted to the student's learning process. The dynamic interaction between online gaming and vocabulary acquisition that is examined in this research is "*The Effect of Online Games on English Vocabulary Acquisition*,".

According to Ashraf, Mothlage, and Salami (2014: 286) states that vocabulary is the foundation of any language. Numerous research has focused specifically on vocabulary, and various academics have investigated a range of approaches and tactics in an effort to suggest a suitable strategy for promoting vocabulary development. It implies that one important instrument for mastering the English language is vocabulary.

Grammar exercises, vocabulary lists, and classroom environments have long been linked to language learning. But the use of online games in language acquisition has created an approach that is catching the interest of experts, teachers, and students alike. People, especially those learning a foreign language, can find themselves in a rich digital setting full of opportunities to connect with language in a genuine and amusing way by playing online games, which provide an interactive and engaging environment.

However, choosing appropriate games is essential for getting the most enjoyment out of vocabulary games. When choosing a game to utilize in the classroom, teachers should consider the students' cultural background and language competency as well as the game's usefulness for students with limited language skills. Numerous experienced researchers of methodological guidelines and textbooks have maintained that games have significant instructional value in addition to being entertaining (Riahipour & Saba, 2012).

Darvenkumar & Devi (2022) suppose that online games appear to be the most effective technique for stimulating interactions in the language learning process. It found that using E-games can be effective in language acquisition, cognitive ability, and social development. However, Kazu & Kuvvetli (2023) states that online games were highly

successful in enhancing students' vocabularies. Besides, it grew up competing spirit among students, and receiving rapid feedback improved their motivation. Compare with the use of traditional methods in teaching vocabulary for foreign language that rely on textbooks and teacher centered approaches, students can acquire vocabularies by enjoyable instrument using online games as well as teacher's facilitation.

Based on the reason above, many researchers are focused on analyzing the role of online or digital games in acquiring English vocabulary as well as the benefits of online games in vocabulary acquisition. Therefore, this study wants to review some journal articles about the effect online games in expand vocabularies on students from previous studies in the five recent years.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Vocabulary

According to Huyen and Nga (2003), vocabulary is seen as the essential component tying together all communication-related skills. Enhancing one's lexical repertoire is essential for those learning a new language. Larger lexical resources help learners comprehend several levels of meaning. Tasks that include the target language and are more specialized can benefit from this understanding. The "input hypothesis," according to Krashen, holds that language is picked up through meaningful exchanges. Games with this kind of framework help students connect vocabulary and other linguistic "chunks" to actual situations.

Numerous studies have documented educators' concerns over students' low vocabulary recall. Most of the terminology they learnt the day before is lost on them (Chong & Kee, 2019). In general, students will only be able to recollect one word during the lesson the following day if they acquire four new terms in an hour-long lecture. Some students are also able to identify words in written or spoken form, but they are unable to understand the meaning of the words without assistance from the teacher. According to Afzal (2019), one of the contributing elements to students' low vocabulary mastery is the use of inappropriate teaching approaches in vocabulary instruction and learning.

2. Online Games

Games are a type of instructional method that involves learning. According to Liu and Chen (2013), a digital game can aid EFL kids in learning vocabulary by giving them engaging audio and animated pictures, which will encourage them to learn vocabulary in a foreign language. Digital games can be broadly divided into two categories by Noraddin and Kian (2014): First up, there are educational games. This type is used by educators to accomplish certain learning objectives while adding enjoyment. Participants in these games can improve their vocabulary in a foreign language by completing activities (Noraddin & Kian, 2014). One type of game that is educational is the serious game (Connolly et al., 2012; Guerrero, 2011).

Children in preschool or use educational games to aid in vocabulary memorization (Noraddin & Kian, 2014). But Noraddin and Kian (2014) emphasized that serious games can be used for preparation and instruction with kids of all ages. The commercial off-the-shelf games are the second category. Connolly and colleagues (2012) showed that teachers or educators play these games without any thought to the goals or considerations of

instruction. These games are only used for entertainment purposes. Nonetheless, some academics have suggested that all games (COTS) can serve both purposes of learning and entertainment.

Amirhossein Naderiheshi (2022) conducted a review of the literature on teaching young language learners' English vocabulary through games. The study's participants are young students enrolled in Iranian language programs. An in-depth review of the literature, comprising studies, books, and articles about the application of games to language learning—especially vocabulary instruction—was used to gather the results. His study aims to assess the efficacy of games as a teaching tool and to highlight the importance of teaching English vocabulary to young language learners in Iran. The results emphasize the advantages of game-based vocabulary instruction, such as improved student involvement, self-confidence, and motivation.

According to Andreani and Ying (2019), interactive online games have been successful in improving low proficiency EFL elementary learners' language learning processes. After using a mobile application to aid in vocabulary study, students' English vocabulary abilities were enhanced.

In addition, there is a case of some Year 5 students having low vocabulary repertoires (Wang & Yamat, 2019), which causes delays in the students' ability to comprehend reading texts effectively. Most schools still teach vocabulary using outdated approaches that are less engaging, ineffective, and demotivating. Students are also frequently asked to learn foreign words together with their related translations (Nejati et al., 2018). It results in low vocabulary acquisition among students in Malaysia. Their critical thinking and questioning abilities are not developed; only their writing and listening skills are (Chen & Lee 2018). Consequently, they grow into passive, uninterested learners who are inactive in their education. In keeping with the issues raised, the WordWall platform's World of Words (WOW) online game can support and enhance students' vocabulary acquisition of 200 words in the English language. Attractive visuals accompany this game to help players maintain their concentration, match words with pictures, improve their spelling memory, and both directly and indirectly boost their knowledge of word meaning. The WOW's design promotes the use of gamified and mobile learning as a teaching tool in the classroom, as well as offering additional materials to support pleasant and independent learning outside of the classroom.

C. RESEARCH METHOD

This study was conducted by using library research. Research that uses library sources to obtain data is known as library research," Zed (2004). The sources taken from secondary data in the form of national or international journal articles which are related to the implementation of games to improve vocabulary acquisition. The researcher analyzed a number of articles, journals and other sources. Additionally, the research is restricted to the library since the data is gathered from a range of references rather than the field. To arrive at a logical conclusion, the researcher integrates and pulls the researcher's ideas to produce a coherent conclusion. However, data can be collected, and will be analyzed by utilizing descriptive qualitative analysis.

D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings and discussion obtained to fill the gap of the research. Finding and discussion are explained.

1. Findings

The following data are the review and result of some research that has become a consideration towards the effectiveness of online games on English vocabulary acquisition. These journal articles are taken from many resources, some of them are google scholars and sci hub.

| No | Title | Writers | Result |
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| 1 | A Triangulation Method on The Effectiveness of Digital Game-Based Language Learning for Vocabulary Acquisition | İbrahim Yaşar Kazu & Murat Kuvvetli | This research is a quasi-experimental and metaphorical perception studies by taking a sample of eighth grade children to apply digital game-based English language learning as a foreign language (EFL) with a total of 69 participants. The application used is called quizziz. The experiment class practiced vocabulary using quizziz while the control group practiced their mother tongue. The results show the experimental groups gain higher scores than the control group. Moreover, the 95.6% students expressed positive views on digital game-based EFL, stating that it was highly successful and that in-game power-ups, competing with other students, and receiving rapid feedback improved their motivation (Kazu & Kuvvetli, 2023). |
| 2 | Comparative Study of Game-Based Learning on Preschoolers' English Vocabulary Acquisition in Taiwan | Joni Tzuchen Tang | This research explored whether Pre-schoolers' English vocabulary acquisition will occur in a variety of GBL. There are four instructional groups. Two groups were stimulated by "flashcard game" in learning 2 or 3 words per day while the other two groups stimulated by "driving games" in learning 2 or 3 words per day. The result showed that games can produce children's autonomous learning, and the numbers of children's vocabulary memory can be taken into consideration. Besides, the appropriate amount of information can train children to enter long-term memory (Tang, 2023). |

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| 3 | EFL Learning Gamification: Exploring High School Learners' Vocabulary Acquisition through Experimentation | Like Raskova Octaberlina | This research is a comparative study about the effectiveness of using Harvest Moon video games as a tool for vocabulary learning. The two groups were selected to be involved in the quasi-experimental design. One group learned vocabulary through traditional methods, and another group learned vocabulary through playing Harvest Moon. The findings showed that learners who used Harvest Moon demonstrated significantly higher vocabulary acquisition compared to the traditional learning group. They also suggest that the immersive and engaging nature of the game, as well as its contextualized vocabulary use, positively influenced the learners' motivation and engagement in the language learning process (Octaberlina, 2023). |
| 4 | A Quantitative Research on Gamifying Vocabulary Acquisition and Retention in Virtual Reality | Muleyke Sahinler Albayrak, Julian Chen, P John Williams | This study is to examine the effects of virtual reality (VR) games towards Six Year 9 Middle Eastern students from an independent school in Western Australia. By immersing players in a 3D world with a Google Cardboard headset, target vocabulary might be learned while playing VR games. Significant variations were seen between the pre- and post-test results, indicating that a gamified virtual reality environment may encourage the learning of language depending on content and improve retention. It also demonstrated the educational advantages of VR games for EAL students who struggle (Sahinler et.al. 2023). |
| 5 | A Review on the Impact of Using E-Games for Social Development and Language Acquisition in the English Classroom | T Darvenkumar and Anitha Dev | The research investigates the relationship between game-based language learning and social development in the context of ESD. The purpose of this study is to show E-games are a smart language learning environment. The result revealed that E-games appear to be the most effective technique for stimulating interactions in the language learning process. It found that using E-games can be effective in language acquisition, cognitive ability, and social development (Darvenkumar & Devi, |

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| | | | 2022). |
| 6 | Influence of Video Games on the Acquisition of the English Language | Muhammad Dhany Winaldo and Lulud Oktaviani | The researcher believes that media influence is more important in affecting students' ability to speak English fluently. This study conducted to examine the relationship between playing video games and English proficiency. The researchers concluded that video games have a significant effect towards students' language acquisition especially in Vocabulary and pronunciation (Winaldo & Oktaviani, 2022). |
| 7 | The Effect of Serious Mobile Games on Student English Vocabulary Acquisition and Attitude Toward English | Nuri Kara | The main purpose of this study was to explore the effect of the serious mobile game Jumo the Jumper on the vocabulary acquisition of primary school and their attitudes toward an EFL course. It is a quasi-experimental study. Twenty students played using the serious mobile game while other 20 students in the control group received traditional curriculum- based tuition. The result showed the use of the serious mobile game Jumo the Jumper in primary school classrooms had a significant effect on the vocabulary acquisition of the students compared to traditional instruction. On the other hand, the serious mobile game did not have a significant effect on the students' attitudes toward the EFL course (Kara, 2022). |
| 8 | Investigation the of Effect of Interactive Video Games on English Language Acquisition - The Case Study of Undergraduate Students of English at Kasdi Merbah University of Ouargla | Fouzia Guerroudj Mourad Boumaaza | Through video games students automatically discover and learn the language naturally in a virtual context that can enhance the listening skills and improve the reading skills. The purpose of this research is to examine whether students acquire more skills in learning English through video games. The results of the questionnaire show the positive impact that video games have on learners' language acquisition and attitudes towards learning English (Mourad, 2022). |

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| 9 | The Implementation Of Game Based Learning (GBL) Method to Improve EFL Students' Vocabulary Mastery | Nurul Hidayah, Sabarun, Hesty Widiastuty | The aim of this study is to evaluate the implementation of Game-Based Learning (GBL) method to improve EFL students' vocabulary mastery at SMPN Satu Atap 1 Katingan Hilir. The method was qualitative descriptive and used observation, questionnaires, and interviews to collect data in three phases: pre-teaching, while teaching, and post-teaching. The data analysis results demonstrated a substantial improvement in students' vocabulary mastery after they participated in learning sessions using the GBL method. The game usage also improves students' learning interests that motivate them to actively participate and interact within the learning environment. Therefore, method GBL could be regarded as an effective alternative in designing enjoyable and efficient teaching strategies to improve EFL students' vocabulary mastery (Hidayah, et. al, 2024). |
| 10 | Review of Literature on Teaching English Vocabularies Through Games to Young Language Learners | Amirhossein Naderiheshi | This study is conducted using literature review on teaching English younglearners' vocabulary through games. The study's participants are young students enrolled in Iranian language programs. This review, conducted by studies, books, and articles about the application of games to language learning—especially vocabulary instruction—was used to gather the results. The purpose is to assess the efficacy of games as a teaching tool and to highlight the importance of teaching English vocabulary to young language learners in Iran. The results emphasize the advantages of game-based vocabulary instruction, such as improved student involvement, self-confidence, and motivation. (Naderiheshi, 2022). |

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| 11 | A Literature Review on the Impact of Games on Learning English Vocabulary to Children | Lina Lafta Jassim | The author investigates the effect of digital games on children's vocabulary learning through a literature review. The participants were English Foreign Learners, and the data was gathered through a variety of experimental investigations, surveys, and case studies. The findings showed that digital games have both positive and negative impacts on children's vocabulary learning. The results of the literature review showed that children's vocabulary learning might be impacted by digital games in both positive and negative ways. The review's conclusion is that, although playing digital games can help students learn new words and have more fun, teachers need to be aware of how the games are made and which ones they choose. (Jassim, 2019). |
| 12 | The Students' Vocabulary Acquisition Addicted to Playing Online Games | Novia Alfitri, Arifmiboy, and Merry Prima Dewi | This study used a mixed methods approach to analyze the data and used causal-comparative design, which is aimed to determine how students' vocabulary acquisition was impacted by playing online games. The participants are 117 pupils and the data was gathered using tests, questionnaires, and interviews. The sample was chosen using the random quota sampling method. Thus, to compare the vocabulary acquisition of pupils who were attached to playing online games with those who weren't, the researchers used a Mann Whitney U-test. The results showed that the two student groups' approaches to learning vocabulary were comparable. The U-test findings showed that there were no significant differences in language learning between students who relied on online gaming and those who were not. This shows that pupils' acquisition of language was not significantly impacted by playing online games. The study's findings demonstrated how students with and without addictions acquired vocabulary in similar ways, suggesting that online game addiction had no appreciable impact on vocabulary acquisition (Alfitri et al., 2021). |

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| 13 | Using Online Game for Indonesian EFL Learners to Enrich Vocabulary | Like Raskova Octaberlina and Imam Rofiki | <p>The study explored how Indonesian EFL students could improve their vocabulary by using the online game Spelling City. The research design used in the study required students to play SpellingCity online before answering a survey about their opinions and experiences with using online games to acquire vocabulary. A Likert-scaled survey comprising eight statements was used as part of the data gathering process to determine the participants' opinions and experiences with SpellingCity. This study conducted from 22 people completed the questionnaire. They had to score their agreement on a scale of 1-4, where 1 means strongly disagree and four means strongly agree. The majority of participants found SpellingCity to be enjoyable, easy to use, and a useful tool for learning new words, according to the study's findings. The study also discovered that participants would like playing SpellingCity again if given the option and that online games like this one can be helpful for enhancing language skills. These findings show that playing online games to learn vocabulary is well-liked, indicating that it may be a useful method for EFL learners to acquire the language (Octaberlina & Rofiki, 2021).</p> |
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| 14 | The Role of Games in Enhancing EFL Students' Vocabulary Acquisition | Wagdi Rashad Ali Bin-Hady | The study investigated how digital games affected students learning English as a foreign language's (EFL) ability to acquire vocabulary. The study employed mixed methods, experimental designs, and pretest- posttest procedures to evaluate the efficacy of game-based learning activities, including online computer games, Duolingo, and Kahoot, in helping students expand their vocabulary. According to the results, the experimental groups who played digital games performed better on vocabulary-based examinations than the control groups. This suggests that technology and game-based learning have the potential to improve vocabulary acquisition. The study also emphasized the need of stress-free situations as well as authentic atmospheres for successful vocabulary acquisition, with games being found to be useful in fostering these kinds of settings. These results are consistent with earlier studies that showed the beneficial effects of digital games on EFL learners' vocabulary development (Hady, 2021). |
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| 15 | Influence of Video Games on The Acquisition of The English Language | M. Dhany Winaldo, Lulud Oktaviani | The research approach employed in this study was questionnaires to assess the impacts of video games on language learners. A significant modification was made to the questionnaire from a previous study that examined the influence of comics on foreign language learning. The fifteen items on the questionnaire were all about video game use and how it affects learning English. According to the results, 71.4% of respondents thought that playing video games may help them become more fluent in the language. This suggests that video games play a big part in helping people learn the language. The conclusion drawn from the study was that video games have a positive impact on English language acquisition, teaching English with a wider scope than traditional classroom settings, although they cannot yet be the primary means of learning due to the lack of supporting facilities and varying effectiveness across different games (Winaldo & Oktaviani, 2022). |
| 16 | The Effects of Word Wall Online Games (WOW) on English Language Vocabulary learning Among Year 5 Pupils | Hasram & Nasir | In order to improve students' vocabulary performance, Hasram and Nasir's (2021) study concentrated on integrating technology into English language instruction through the use of interactive educational games. Using an experimental study of 121 Year 5 students from a national primary school in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia, the research approach was quantitative. After adopting Word Wall (WOW) as an additional learning resource, the students, who represented three income categories, demonstrated a significant improvement in their vocabulary scores. The study emphasizes the necessity for educators to embrace technology-immersed classrooms and offers useful insights for primary school English teachers incorporating online games for English language learning. |

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| 17 | The Effect of Games on Vocabulary Retention | Yasmin Shabaneh & Mohammed Farrah | The study aims to investigate the research topics and evaluate the effect of game use in the classroom. Twenty people participated in the study, which was conducted during the first semester of 2018–2019. The researchers used class observation, pre- and posttests, and other methods to collect data. This two-month study was carried out. In it, pupils learned a new language through games. The effectiveness of using games in the teaching process was shown by the researcher's conclusions. Consequently, games help with vocabulary retention, language and communication skill development, and the associative learning of new information with surroundings (Shabaneh & Farrah, 2019). |
| 18 | Digital game-based vocabulary learning: where are we and where are we going? | Di Zoua, Yan Huangb and Haoran Xieb | The study focuses on the literature on digital games for vocabulary acquisition from five different perspectives: theoretical frameworks, vocabulary learning through digital games, a summary of the studies that are currently accessible, issues and conclusions from the research, and implications. Based on predefined criteria, twenty-one publications that were published in SSCI journals were selected for the systematic review. Based on the findings, ten types of digital games dominate the field and are generally beneficial in promoting both short- and long-term vocabulary learning, increasing motivation and engagement, and improving reading and listening comprehension among learners. Additionally, these findings have significant implications for language acquisition and game design (Di Zoua et al., 2019) |

Table 1. Findings of the Research

2. Discussion

This discussion is based on the results of the analysis of several journal articles above. This discussion is also designed to answer research questions.

a. Does the use of online games give effect on the English vocabulary acquisition?

From the review above, the researchers found there was significant effectiveness

and improvement towards vocabulary acquisition in using online games in learning English. Moreover, some benefits are also gained through the implementation of games in learning.

b. What are other benefits that can be gained from using online games as a learning media?

Beside the improvement of vocabulary acquisition, some benefits also appear at the same time while analyzing vocabulary acquisition. First, because playing game itself is fun, the game usage is boosting engagement and enthusiastic settings in the process of learning English (Octaberlina, 2023; Naderiheshi, 2022; Hady, 2021 and Di Zoua et. al., 2019). Second, because it engages them, it creates positive views, attitude and perception towards learning English through online games (Kazu & Kuvvetli, 2023; (Octaberlina & Rofiki, 2021) or even towards learning English in general (Mourad, 2022). Third, because the engagement and the happiness they gained from learning using online games, the feedback from the students also appears as the motivational improvement in learning English (Kazu & Kuvvetli, 2023; Octaberlina, 2023; Hidayah, et. al, 2024; Naderiheshi, 2022; Hady, 2021; and Di Zoua et. al., 2019).

Moreover, it also gives other impacts to the students. First impact is towards their development of language and communication skills because it makes them actively participate and interact within the learning environment that might erase their anxiety and improve their confidence in speaking English (Hidayah, et. al, 2024; Shabaneh & Farrah, 2019). Besides that, the online game usage also increases cognitive ability and social development (Darvenkumar & Devi, 2022). Moreover, the best thing the researcher can inform of these is that it was stress-free, (Hady, 2021).

E. CONCLUSION

The aim of this study is to present the impact of online games in increasing students' English vocabulary. The present study has given additional approval that online games have an impact in enhancing student's vocabulary acquisition, especially for English foreign learner (EFL). Reviewing the 18 journals above demonstrate that games can improve students' vocabulary in a number of ways, including by providing real-world context, which enables students to use the language naturally, and by encouraging students to acquire vocabulary faster. Moreover, this study also proves some other benefits of using online games as media. It creates positive views, attitude and perception; improve motivation; boosting engagement and enthusiastic in learning English. However, it also gives a positive impact to develop language and communication skill; increase cognitive ability and social development; and the most important is stress-free.

This review paper suggests more research to look into how online games relate to certain course material, such as reading comprehension or speaking skills, so that students might use these games to help them learn the English language. Subsequently, students can give their best to comprehend the reading texts or using oral English.

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