Improving Vocabulary Skills Using Video Games

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Research Highlights

As the world is embracing the 21st century, a new tool that could facilitate English as Second Language (ESL) classroom is imperative. In this case, video games seem to offer a promising positive impact toward ESL classroom. Video games is interactive, which at the same time is suitable for 21st century learner who are craving for technologies. Thus, this study was conducted. Data collection was done in a primary school in South of Malaysia which two class being sampled. The two classrooms were separated into control group and experimental group. Before any statistical test being conducted, the data was tested for its normality. For this research, the researchers had performed Shapiro-Wilk test. Based on the test, the data was found as normally distributed. To study the effectiveness of video games in facilitating ESL classroom, a Paired Sample T-Test was conducted to measure the different between the pretest and posttest score. A significant different was visible from the test. Further statistical test shows that experimental group perform better that their counterpart in control group.

Research Objectives

According to (Nyikos 2007), what is the most challenging task of being competence in foreign language is to master its vocabulary. (Morelli 2003) had suggested that vocabulary can be constructed either using traditional or contextual approach. Thus, a research on investigating how vocabulary can be improved is needed. The main purpose of this research is to identify the effectiveness of video games in enhancing the vocabulary of students in ESL classroom. In order to achieve this objective, the researcher had measure sample’s vocabulary ability before the treatment as well as after the treatment.

Methodology

This research implement quasi-experimental research design. Sample engagement with the video games is the treatment being used. A pure experimental research design is not really suitable in Malaysia as school students were seperated into intact group. This make random
sampling as not an easy task. Two group of samples were sampled in this research using purposive sampling technique. One group is assigned as control group and another one was assigned as experimental group. The instrument being used is developed by the researcher. The samples used the video games from three continuous weeks.

**Results**

Based on the statistical test conducted, the control group show decrement in their performance. Sample’s mean for pretest is 5.84, while their posttest mean is 5.08. For the experimental group, it is showing that a tremendous increment was recorded based on its posttest mean value. Experimental group mean for pretest was recorded at 4.24 and increased to staggering 9.36 after the treatment. Based on the paired sample t-test conducted, the posttest is significantly higher that the pretest with \( p = .000 \). The data was tested for its normality using Shapiro-Wilk test with \( p = .10 \) for the pretest and \( p = .80 \) for the posttest.

**Findings**

The paired sample t-test is being conducted and the result shown that there is a significant the pretest and posttest of the experimental group. This indicating that the treatment is giving positive impact toward the samples. (Gee 2003) convince that video games might be ideal in preparing workers for today’s workplace that traditional one. Yet, what is importance is the capability of video games to allow the re-creation of user in new world and achieve deep learning at the same time. The question either video game is effective in enhancing sample’s vocabulary was answered by the t-test conducted as stated above. It can be concluded that video games is actually an effective tool in enhancing ESL vocabulary as suggested by Gee (2009) that a well-designed video game has a higher probability of delivering outcomes because of its ability to enhance theoretical or contemporary pedagogy which will lead towards success in learning. In normal classroom, memorization create a wall for students to develop their higher order thinking skill. It is contradicting the practice of modern education. As what being proposed by (Barron 2008) in order to develop high level thinking, student need to engage complex and meaningful projects that demand collaboration, research, management of resources, and the development of an ambitious performance or product. The
result of this research had proved that sample’s is highly motivated based on their higher posttest for the experimental group. As samples were motivated, it make it possible for them to engage and deliver the task. This situation explained that video game is useful in helping to stimulate learner’s internal motivation which is important to engage learners in any task to improve their skill and in turn their capabilities (De Aguilera 2003).

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References


