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## **Teachers' perceptions towards video – game-based teaching technique on the acquisition of intermediate school students' vocabularies**

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**Abstract**---The main goal of the current study is to investigate the impact of using educational video games strategy on the vocabulary acquisition performance in learning the English language from teachers' and students' points of view. the researcher follows a qualitative method in his research. A questionnaire is developed to be the main tool for collecting data. The researcher uses the Statistical Analysis System- (SAS) to analyze the data. the researcher uses different statistical tools the researcher uses the Statistical Analysis System- (SAS) to analyze the data and to achieve the aims of the study. The researcher chooses the schools randomly as a sample for the study in Babylon province. After analyzing the data, the researcher concludes that using educational video games strategy is a very efficient way of teaching English vocabulary to EFL students. It improves the learners' vocabulary. It adds fun to lessons by using technologies and creates a good environment for students that increase their motivation for learning.

**Keywords**---perceptions, video – game-based teaching, technique, acquisition intermediate school students, vocabularies.

## **Introduction**

Given the rapid development of software programs and the accessibility of young people to technology, higher education has begun to accept video game-based learning (VGBL) as a more common pedagogical practice for teaching in the classroom (Omegna, 2020:6). Games, either traditional board games, online, video, and or digital games, are mostly used for entertainment purposes (Dickey, 2006).

Students' low-performance level in English vocabulary as their English exams results and as other teachers of English affirm. The researcher looked deeply for an effective strategy to facilitate these difficulties. Thus, the students' low-performance level in vocabulary requires serious research for alternative and effective strategies that increase students' performance such as using a video game to facilitate the acquisition of the vocabulary. Today's teens use video gaming as a means to communicate, express, and learn ( Omegna,2020:7).

This study aims to explore the impact of using educational video games on enhancing Iraqi EFL students' vocabulary acquisition in learning the English language. This study seeks to answer the following question: " To what extent do the educational video games influence intermediate school students' vocabulary performance?" The outcomes of the study will be significant for the EFL teachers, curriculum designers, educational policymakers, and school principals. The outcomes will be a good indicator of the important role that the games play in developing students' vocabulary performance. Learning by doing is an important action that most educational interests focus on.

## **Literature Review**

### **Vocabulary**

One way to build up new vocabulary in the student's mind is by using educational games in the teaching process. According to Rodgers and Heidt(2020) games have a great effect on learning vocabulary. They include friendly competition and create a cooperative learning environment. They improve learners' communicative abilities and learners have an opportunity to use the target language. The same idea has been stated by Derakhshan and DavoodiKhatir (2015) who expressed that games help learners to learn the target language skillfully. They are very enjoyable for learners that aid them in retaining new words rapidly. The game creates a meaningful context for language learning. It can be stated that using vocabulary games in the classes enables learners to improve their English knowledge flexibly and communicatively.( Alavi & Gilakjani,2019:2; Hasan, et al., 2022)

According to Kang (1995), vocabulary is the basic unit of language learning. The words shape the main sections of a message. A person is not able to learn a language without knowing words. Vahdat and Behbahani (2013) said that language learners do not have enough vocabulary knowledge, and despite a lot of ways to help learners learn it, no specific strategy has been identified as the most

effective one. Thus, the research continues toward finding the best way of learning vocabulary.

There are numerous techniques concerned with vocabulary presentation. However, there are a few things that have to be remembered irrespective of the way new lexical items are presented. If teachers want students to remember new vocabulary, it needs to be learned in context, practiced, and then revised to prevent students from forgetting. Teachers must make sure students have understood the new words, which will be remembered better if introduced in a "memorable way" (Hubbard et al., 1983: 50 & Rahoomi, et al., 2018).

One thing that students, teachers, materials writers, and researchers all agree on is that vocabulary acquisition is an essential part of mastering a second language. However, the best means of achieving vocabulary learning is still unclear, partly because it depends on a wide variety of factors (Schmitt, 2008). Nation and Kyongho (1995) categorized vocabulary into two main groups: general service vocabulary (frequently used words) and special-purpose vocabulary (words for academic purposes).

Jun and Annual (2008) conducted a study to show the role of the size of vocabulary knowledge in reading comprehension. They found that for students to be able to read texts containing low-frequency vocabulary, knowledge of 2000 to 3000 high-frequency words is necessary. (Hussein, et al., 2019 & Kareem, et al., 2019)

Vocabulary learning is very important for people who learn English both as a foreign language and as a second language. Tozcu and Coady (2004: 473) point out that learning vocabulary is an important aspect of language two and foreign language acquisition and academic achievement and is vital to reading comprehension and proficiency, to which it is closely linked. Moreover, Heubener (1965: 88 cited in Rohmatillah (2014)) states that learning vocabulary is based on the formation of specific habits. Since this involves the association of symbols and their meaning, it is clear that an enrichment of the meaning of the word is as important as its frequent repetition. (Hammad, et al., 2018 & Dehham, et al., 2020)

Several publications examine motivation in video games. However, not all researchers entirely agree on the source of this motivation. Some attribute the compelling nature of games to their narrative context (Dickey, 2006; Fisch, 2005; Waraich, 2004) while others find motivation is linked to goals and rewards within the game itself or intrinsic to the act of playing (Amory, Naicker, Vincent, & Adams, 1999; Denis & Jouvelot, 2005; Jennings, 2001). Nevertheless, all find that motivation to play is a significant characteristic of educational video games and that effective game design considers both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards for play. (Abbas, et al., 2018; Bairmani, et al., 2021)

### **Game-based Learning**

Game-based learning is defined as 'an initiative that combines or mixes video games and education (Tsai & Fan, 2013, p. 115). Considering language learning,

(Reinhardt and Sykes,2012) proposed a framework that makes a distinction between game-based and game-enhanced language learning. According to them, game-based language learning involves using an educational DVG (i.e., a DVG specifically developed for language learning purposes) while game-enhanced language learning refers to the use of commercial-off-the-shelf DVDs for language learning. According to them, investigating both categories is needed since research on commercial DVDs cannot be replicated with educational DVDs.( Ali, et al., 2019)

Video games were not the first option for acquiring a language, “since the very first video games were made out of old radar equipment designed to simulate a game of table tennis” (Postic, 2015). Until the mid-1980s, video games were nothing more than moving images with barely any depth to the gameplay other than being a reflex test. They could not contain any narrative because of the lack of attractive graphics and a plot. Gradually, video games had evolved to a point where they were considered an interactive movies designed for passive and, later increasingly, for active language interaction. According to (Doring,2002), children build confidence in using the language in a “low-affective” atmosphere for learning. Video games fully engage the attention of learners. They create a non-threatening atmosphere in presenting information and encourage thinking and communication skills (Prez, &Guzmn-Duque, 2014). Therefore, learning a foreign language while playing video games “was very effective because it was highly motivating due to its entertainment value, and there was no pressure or evaluation methods that could deter players from openly engaging in using the language” (Postic, 2015).

### **Previous Studies**

Shah and Saleem(2021) investigated the EFL Teacher's Perception of teaching vocabulary using word games through a qualitative study. A descriptive survey approach was used. The questionnaire was one of the tools utilized to collect the data. The study's participants were ten EFL instructors. Questionnaires, observations, and interviews served as data collection tools. As a result, pupils will benefit from such a teaching approach since they will be engaged in the process and find it pleasant. Students' academic performance may be improved by using creative techniques such as word games, which can aid in problem-solving and discovery, discussion, and question and answer sessions. Teacher views word games as the use of different techniques that may improve learning and also provide space for studentships in the school.

Ranmeet (2019) investigated the effectiveness of using language games in teaching vocabulary in secondary school international journal of scientific and technology research. 33 Malaysian secondary school students from Shah Alam. Pre-test and Post-test questions, as well as open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires and interviews, were used to collect the data. The results showed that using language games in classes was successful since the games were shown to be successful in infusing the elements of play and learning in a vocabulary classroom. Students of all learning styles and language competence levels will enjoy the element of fun in a learning environment.

## Methodology

The participants consists of 200 teachers from intermediate schools who were selected randomly from Hila City in Iraq.

A questionnaire and an interview for teachers and also a questionnaire for students were prepared to collect the data. Tools validity and reliability were calculated statistically.

## Results and Discussion

To answer the question of the study, mean scores and a standard division were used to analyze the items of the questionnaire. Table 1 shows the results.

Table 1: The mean and standard division of the effect of educational video game techniques on the acquisition of English vocabulary

No	Items	Mean	Standard deviation
1.	Educational Video games make students' vocabulary acquisition more spontaneous as compared to traditional learning.	4.08	0.26
2.	Practice educational video games during the teaching process will increase fun and self-learning skills for the learners.	3.90	0.15
3.	playing Educational video games can be helpful to the acquisition of English vocabulary and/or promote self-study habits.	3.81	0.14
4.	Using Educational video game in English learning courses is energy, increase the fun, and is time-consuming.	3.71	0.20
5.	Educational video games can develop the listening skills of the learner through watching and listening to the material at the same time.	3.92	0.21
6.	It is better to learn some activities and different scientific subjects during Educational video games than in a traditional way.	3.91	0.22
7.	The learner can learn better through Educational video than through the traditional process because the learner can learn through more than one sense.	3.89	0.16
8.	The teacher uses edutainment tools such as music, videos, computer apps, video games, and multimedia to bring joy and happiness during learning time.	3.84	0.17
9.	Some Teachers lack the competence and knowledge about the methodology of Educational video games and their implementation in the right way.	3.79	0.18
10.	The teacher should ensure the diversity of means to present the lesson such as using taps, and video games, not just relying on textbooks.	3.76	0.19
11.	The teacher can control the lessons by changing from	3.75	0.14

	traditional classes to learning by using educational video games.		
12.	A long time of preparation and, a great effort that Educational video game requires causes dissatisfaction feelings.	3.62	0.18
13.	The teacher can develop the learners' experiences and new skills for learners through Educational video games.	3.61	0.13

Table 1 shows that the items have been ranked from the highest mean to the lowest mean. The highest mean is 4.08 for the item entitled " Educational Video games make students' vocabulary acquisition more spontaneous as compared to traditional learning". While the lowest mean is 3.61 for the item entitled " The teacher can develop the learners' experiences and new skills for learners through Educational video games". The rest items' mean scores ranged between 3.90 and 3.62.

The results show that the EFL teachers have positive perceptions toward using the video – Game-Based teaching strategy in teaching English vocabulary to the intermediate school students. The EFL teachers believe that educational Video games make students' vocabulary acquisition more spontaneous as compared to traditional learning. In addition, implementing educational video games can help students to acquire English vocabulary and promote self-study habits. Furthermore, educational Video games ensure the diversity of means to present the lesson such as using taps, and video games, not just relying on textbooks.

It can be inferred that educational video game strategy helped students in acquiring new vocabulary and linking its form with its meaning in a way that made them get benefit from their memory and then perform well in vocabulary performance. Technological resources could facilitate and accelerate foreign language acquisition. by using educational video games, English teachers could increase students' motivation, overcome anxiety, enhance cognitive skills and support long-term memory. EFL teachers could use educational video games in teaching vocabulary, grammar as well as listening, and reading comprehension interestingly and effectively and as video games continue to gain popularity, it seems likely that learners will import or download foreign-language video games, using video games as an effective media for self-study. The results of the study are in line with the results of the study of Abdulhussein and Alimardani, E. (2021), Chen, et al. (2021), Rodgers and Heidt (2020), Tan and Tan (2020), Thompson and von (2020), Janebi and Haghghatpasand (2019), Camacho and Ovalle (2019), Vasquez, and Ovalle (2019).

## **Conclusion**

To sum up, the results show that video-game-based learning has a strong effect on acquiring new vocabulary. The games can be a good tool to help EFL students to learn and retain vocabulary for a long time. Life-long- learning can be achieved by using educational video games as one tool for teaching vocabulary.

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