

Improving Young Learners' Vocabulary Acquisition: A Pilot Program in a Game-Based Environment

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Abstract : Modern simulation mobile games have the potential to enhance students' interest, motivation and creativity. Research conducted on the effectiveness of digital games for educational purposes has shown that such games are also ideal at providing an appropriate environment for language learning. The paper examines the issue of simulation mobile games in regard to the potential positive impacts on L2 vocabulary learning. Sixteen intermediate level students, aged 10-14, participated in the experimental study for four weeks. The participants were divided into experimental (8 participants) and control group (8 participants). The experimental group was planned to learn some new vocabulary words via digital games while the control group used a reading passage to learn the same vocabulary words. The study investigated the effect of mobile games as well as the traditional learning methods on Greek EFL learners' vocabulary learning in a pre-test, an immediate post-test, and a two-week delayed retention test. A teacher's diary and learners' interviews were also used as tools to estimate the effectiveness of the implementation. The findings indicated that the experimental group outperformed the control group in acquiring new words through mobile games. Therefore, digital games proved to be an effective tool in learning English vocabulary.

Keywords : control group, digital games, experimental group, second language vocabulary learning, simulation games

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