

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Several online games have been developed and can be played by a variety of players. According to Rama et al. (2012), massively multiplayer online games are immersive, graphically rich 3D environments in which many players from geographically distinct locations can navigate the game space and interact via digital characters known as avatars. Besides, as mentioned by Azman & Dollsaid (2018), while engaging in online gaming, users can text chat with one another in addition to competing and participating in the current game. With specialized audio hardware for voice chats, players can also communicate with each other. Thus, online games provide a wealth of opportunities for casual, contextualized communication in the learner's target language, including communication with native speakers.

The types of internet games these days range from casual single-player to multiplayer games with millions of concurrent players. World of Warcraft (WoW) is one of online games that supports multiplayer gaming. Besides, WoW is a well-known massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG). MMORPGs are a category of online role-play games that takes place in a virtual world where large numbers of players create their characters (Goh, 2016). Yee (2006) and Bytheway (2015) added that MMORPGs are real-time digital strategy games set in permanent virtual worlds where players engage in cooperative activities, exchange actual and virtual items, explore their surroundings, and connect for social and in-game business objectives. Therefore, digital game played by multiplayer assists players from various countries to interact using English.

As one of the online gamers, particularly in the World of Warcraft (WoW) game. Gamers should utilize English as the language to engage with other players and complete line quests to improve the characters in the game. According to Bytheway (2015), the WoW interfaces offer a variety of linguistic resources, such as written directions and storylines, optional display tips, accessible manuals,

animated film clips with spoken audio and captions, as well as access to synchronous and asynchronous (typed) chat messaging, actual time phone-like talks with discord, and interactive wikis. Thus, it is possible that WoW gamers potentially learn the English language on this platform as they are encouraged to socialize using their respective target languages in both written and spoken form during game-play sessions.

As already mentioned, the WoW game employs English to carry out tasks and develop characters. Gamers frequently use Google translate to look up unfamiliar English words. Along with Bytheway (2015), the majority of online gamers connect with one another while playing massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPGs) in their second language, which is typically English. When they frequently use Google translate to look up unfamiliar English words, gamers begin to understand the meaning of the words even without the help of Google translate. It means that as a result of playing World of Warcraft games and the help of Google translate to translate the vocabulary, their English vocabulary may increase. Therefore, WoW is useful as a trigger tool for learning English vocabulary.

It is important to explore how Indonesian WoW gamers learn English vocabulary in this game. Since digital games can also have potential for educational purposes, they can pave the way for a more enhanced and innovative language learning environment for EFL players. WoW is a game with rich stories and dialog, which provides a real context for English usage. The game involves a lot of interaction with other players from around the world through chat and forums, forcing the player to actively use English to communicate. Frequently used words and phrases in the game help to reinforce comprehension and memory. The player repeats the words over and over again during the game. Thus, digital games have many benefits, especially for English language learners.

Previous studies relevant to this study have been conducted by Alhebshi and Gamlo (2022) on the effects of mobile game-based learning on Saudi EFL foundation year students' vocabulary acquisition. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of mobile games on Saudi EFL students' vocabulary

acquisition. Moreover, Azman and Dollsaid (2018) conducted the study titled applying massive multiplayer online games (MMOGS) in EFL teaching. They looked into how the WOW game affected Malaysian EFL game players' language acquisition. In addition, a study was conducted by Yudha and Mandasari (2021) on the analysis of game usage for senior high school students to improve their vocabulary mastery. This study aimed to determine whether senior high school students' vocabulary mastery has improved as a result of playing games to learn the language. Another study was conducted by Yudha and Utami (2022) entitled the effect of online game DoTA 2 in students' vocabulary. The purpose of this study is to discover English language acquisition experiences of DoTA 2 players. Furthermore, Bin-Hady (2021) conducted study on the role of games in enhancing EFL students' vocabulary acquisition. The purpose of this study is to investigate the benefits of (digital) games for fostering vocabulary learning in EFL students. While this study focuses on the evidence that Indonesian WoW gamers learn new English vocabulary through playing this game.

Although many investigations have been addressed to explore the importance of online games to English language learning, scarce studies have focused on investigating the contributions of WoW games to English language learning. Even very little research emphasizing how the Indonesian WoW gamers learn English vocabulary through WoW. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap.

## **1.2 Formulation of the Problem**

The research question formulated in this study is, “How do the Indonesian WoW gamers learn English vocabulary while playing WoW?”

## **1.3 Operational Definitions**

To avoid misunderstanding the terms set out in this study, the researcher provides the definitions related to this study, such as:

### **1.3.1 English Vocabulary Learning**

English vocabulary learning is learning English vocabulary through WoW games by running English quests. Players are required to understand every command of the quest in order to be completed.

### **1.3.2 World of Warcraft (WoW)**

World of Warcraft is MMORPGs-based games that can be played online. The goal of this game is to develop the character of the players by completing quests and being able to create parties with friends to make it easier to complete the quests.

### **1.3.3 Indonesian WoW Gamers**

Indonesian WoW gamers are WoW gamers at a Farming House in Tasikmalaya Indonesia.

## **1.4 Aim of the Research**

This study aims to find out evidence that WoW Indonesian gamers learn English vocabulary from this game.

## **1.5 Significances of the Study**

**1.5.1 Theoretical contribution:** This research contributes to the development of English vocabulary learning theory through online game, namely WoW game.

**1.5.2 Practical contribution:** This research is to enrich existing research, especially English vocabulary learning through WoW games on Indonesian WoW gamers.

**1.5.3 Empirical contribution:** This study is to provide an empirical understanding of how Indonesian WoW gamers learn English vocabulary through online game.