

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Any foreign language education aims at helping English foreign language students understand and effectively use the target language. During this process, the learner will need to expand their vocabulary in order to develop their skills. Knowledge of the English vocabulary is required for language proficiency because vocabulary is an important aspect of language teaching and learning, Teachers must use effective methods and strategies to assist students in developing their vocabulary knowledge in order to improve their language comprehension and production abilities.

In certain learning settings, vocabulary instruction relies heavily on memorizing dictionary-based word lists, where learners are expected to recall items accurately. Naturally, the students will remember some words during this time. However, they will forget it on the next time. That situation is also known as short-term memory (Cahyono & Widiati, 2015). Due to human memory is limited, short term memory is developed. In other words, they don't require the words learnt for their needs on their daily activities. Of course, necessity is crucial in improving vocabulary.

The students' need for some words will cause the worlds to be stored in long term memory. Recognizing need is extremely important. It means that the students will notice the words that unfamiliar and understand what they mean and as a result, motivation is required. The need for word recognition will be seen by them who see the words' context. Finally, they will summarize the meaning of these words. As a result, in understanding the meaning of some words, context is important, after understanding these words, for some people, it will become long term memory (Manning et al., 2013).

Nowadays, technological has made it possible for teachers and students to use online resources in their learning and teaching in a variety of ways. One of it is to play video games. It can be used both inside and outside of the EFL classroom to

help students improve their listening, speaking, and vocabulary skills. People nowadays are not unfamiliar with video games. Some people play video games for entertainment, to pass the time, or even for educational purposes. A video game can also be used to educate. Although, on different side, there are some video games that created with negative contents include crimes, sadism, and can make negative impact as well, such as laziness, addiction and so on. Aside from the negative aspects, video games have some positive effects. Studies on the online games and virtual environment in language learning has advantages including increased vocabulary mastery, better motivation and engagement, and improvement of prospects for communicative competence (Ariffin, 2012; Berns et al., 2013).

Furthermore, in recent years, researchers in language acquisition have become interested in massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPGs), which many players participate online at the same time. According to researchers, it has benefited in providing opportunities for learner to interact in multiple languages (Gee, 2003; Kongmee et al., 2011). During online gaming, players can play the game while also communicating with one another via text chat sessions. In addition to increase vocabularies, MMORPG games usually have a main quest feature that is equipped with a main story that must be completed by players. The story scene can be a dialogue between characters or a narration read by the narrator. Most games usually don't provide a feature to skip the story scene, this forces players to read the whole story although in the community are many players who like the story even though it is provided in English.

It can be seen that games can be used as a learning medium and serves as an educational tool which is effective because it entertaining and engaging. This kind of game also needs considerable thought. In other words, while playing the game, the player will employ higher-order thinking skills (Anderson et al., 2008). Some students will be more interested in playing the game because it is used for stimulation. The students will inadvertently learn the language while playing with motivation from the beginning (Anderson et al., 2008). Some people will be enticed to study English through video games rather than watching TV, reading a book, or listening to the radio. As a result, because the player is attractive while playing the

game, they will have an attractive learning environment and will also study the language on the video game (Campos et al., 2013).

The phenomena driving this research revolve around the transformative impact of MMORPG gameplay, specifically in relation to vocabulary acquisition and English language skills improvement. MMORPGs have gained immense popularity, resulting in significant cultural, social, and economic changes. This case explores how the widespread popularity of MMORPGs has reshaped the gaming landscape, influenced not only the entertainment industry but also gave rise to new job opportunities. One such example is the emergence of "Farming House" where individuals are recruited to play MMORPGs and perform specific tasks, earning income similar to a regular job. This indicates the profound influence of MMORPGs on various aspects of society. Another significant case lies in the claim made by many players that their English language skills, particularly their vocabulary, have improved through playing MMORPGs. This intriguing phenomenon prompts an exploration of the potential of MMORPG gameplay as a context for vocabulary acquisition. Within the immersive virtual worlds of MMORPGs, players engage in quests, interact with characters, engage in in-game communication with other players, and navigate dialogues presented in English.

By delving into these cases, this research seeks to address a notable gap in existing studies by focusing on the exploration of how English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners, specifically men aged 20 to 25 acquire English vocabulary through playing Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPGS). Unlike previous studies, my method uses case study to explore specific contexts in depth, focusing on how and why certain events or experiences occur. Additionally, my study adds a new dimension by including participants from a "Farming House", where people earn real-world money by playing MMORPGS. **This addition broadens the scope of the study to examine language learning in the context of real-world economic activities**, providing insight into the intersection of gaming, language acquisition and livelihoods. As a result, this study aims to explore how EFL learners acquire English vocabulary through MMORPG gameplay in real-world contexts. Despite growing research on game-based language learning, few

studies in Indonesia have examined how MMORPGs support vocabulary acquisition among adult EFL learners, particularly in economically motivated contexts such as farming houses. This study addresses that gap.

The present study is theoretically grounded in four major frameworks relevant to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. First, Krashen (1985) Input Hypothesis emphasizes the importance of comprehensible input in facilitating natural language learning. Second, (Oxford, 1990) Language Learning Strategies Theory highlights the role of learners' cognitive and metacognitive strategies in processing new vocabulary. Third, Craik & Lockhart (1972) Depth of Processing proposes that meaningful and contextual engagement enhances memory retention. Finally, Vygotsky (1978) Sociocultural Theory underscores the social and interactive dimensions of learning, suggesting that knowledge is constructed through collaboration and communication with others. Together, these theories frame the investigation of how EFL learners acquire English vocabulary through MMORPGs as an autonomous, socially mediated, and contextually meaningful learning experience.

B. Formulation of the Problem

One question is delivered in this research: "How do EFL learners acquire English vocabulary through playing MMORPGs in a real-world setting?"

C. Operational Definitions

1. MMORPGS (Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games)

Online multiplayer video games that feature persistent virtual worlds and player interaction in the context of this study. These games often take place in an expansive digital setting where players take on fictitious roles, work together, and participate in real-time events.

2. Vocabulary

The collection of words, phrases, and expressions used in the English language is referred to as vocabulary in the context of this study.

3. EFL Learners

Non-native English speakers who are actively learning the language for a variety of communicative or educational goals.

D. Aim(s) of the Research

This study aims to investigate the process of English vocabulary acquisition among EFL learners through MMORPGs. In other words, this research offers significant contributions to the field of language education by exploring how MMORPG games can enhance EFL learning especially on vocabulary.

E. Significance of the Study

Games are used not only to help learners succeed in EFL classes, but also to motivate them and increase cooperation among them. This kind of media can be implemented on the EFL classroom in the future. In other words, this kind of game is capable to the needs of a generation that grown up socializing with digital media and also can provide optimal learning mediums for them.

1. Practical Significance

Provides insights for language teachers on the potential benefits of integrating MMORPG games into their teaching practices. By incorporating gaming into the classroom, teachers can create a more engaging and interactive learning environment, which may enhance students' motivation and interest in learning English.

2. Theoretical Significance

Suggest that MMORPG games can serve as an effective tool for EFL Learning, specifically in the area of vocabulary acquisition. The research findings will contribute to the existing literature on the benefits of using technology for language learning, particularly in the context of gaming.

3. Empirical Significance

Indicate that using MMORPG games as a language learning tool has a positive impact on students' English language proficiency. This study may

encourage further research into the effectiveness of gaming in language learning, and may provide evidence to support the integration of technology into language education.