

Developing Vocabulary Learning through CALL-based Games

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Preface

There is nothing more difficult to plan, more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to manage than the creation of a new system. For the initiator has the enmity of all who would profit by the preservation of the old system and merely lukewarm defenders in those who would gain from the new one.

(Machiavelli (1513) The Prince

The present book explored the effect of using CALL-based games on learning vocabulary items by Iranian English learners, and it investigated how playing CALL-based games can lead to a better learning and recall of vocabulary by Iranian students. Forty male pre-intermediate English learners participated in this book whom were placed in two groups on the basis of their scores on a placement test. Therefore, they were homogenized in terms of the general proficiency, and groups were assigned as one experimental group and one control group. The experimental group was instructed by the treatment of using CALL-based to teach English words while the control group received traditional method. The book data were obtained from the 40-item multiple choice tests as a pre-test, a post-test, and a delayed post-test. The results of t-test clearly showed that the learners in the experimental group performed better in post-test than the pre-test which implies that the treatment was effective in helping the language learners perform better on post-test. However, a statistically significant difference was found between the post-tests' scores of the two groups. The mean of experimental group was greater compared to the control group. Moreover, the results of the repeated measures test showed that the experimental group did much better than the control group in the delayed post-test which was given to find out if the treatment was effective on recall of the vocabulary items

too. The participants were Iranian and from an Iranian Language Institute, so the results cannot be generalized to learners of other nationalities. However, in the authors' view, the findings of this study have valuable implications for teachers and learners, methodologists and syllabus designers, linguists and CALL experts. Using the result of the present book is an aim of raising the consciousness of a better technique of teaching vocabulary items in order to make language learning more interesting for the learners. Although teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) has always been an issue of great importance in Iran, the results have always been unsatisfactory. Many studies have searched for the best way of teaching vocabulary, no specific method has been agreed on. The present book tries to analyze the effect of using CALL-based games on teaching vocabulary to Iranian EFL learners.

In Iran, there has been a lot of finding done in the field of vocabulary learning but a few finding has focused specially on effect of using CALL-based games on learning and recall of vocabulary items (Haqiat Pasand, 2013). One of the problems that language teachers always face is that language teaching classes for kids are boring most of the times. To solve this problem, some of the teachers use gaming as a fun way to make the class interesting.

Since we are now living in the 21st century which is full of technology and our world has become almost a digital world, in recent years, use of computers and software/games has increased in a way that we can find lots of software in the field of language learning. This kind of software is mostly designed for adults or upper-intermediate level students. Since using software is not as easy as games for the kids and also children are more interested in gaming rather than using software, special games have also been designed for kids to make it more feasible for the kids to learn English.

Since gaming has both positive and negative effects on learning, this study aims to find out whether gaming is beneficial enough to become a part of educational system or not. Negative effect can be stated in that the games may distract the students/learners from the main goal which is learning and positive effect can be stated in that games are like a task, so when the children do a task themselves, they master it better. The main point of this study is that the games which will be used during the treatment will just focus on learning not solely playing a game.

Positive effects of games on learning cannot be neglected since we all know that children can learn anything through games better than any methods. A good example would be kindergartens; in kindergartens, most of the things that kids learn are taught through games and fun activities. Since games themselves mostly include fun activities, they can be used to teach everything to children.

Learning a second/foreign language has always been an important issue for most of the families recently. They prefer to send their children to language schools in the early years of their life and as soon as possible. Therefore, attempts are made to find appropriate ways to achieve this goal by authors and language teachers.

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