

Exploring the Use of Digital Game in Learning Listening Skills for the Eleventh Graders of Senior High School 1 Punggur

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Abstract

This research aims to explore the use of digital games in learning English listening skills for grade XI students at Senior High School 1 Punggur. The main focus of this research is to identify the types of digital games used by students, their experiences in using digital games as learning media, as well as the contribution of digital games to students' listening skills. This research used a qualitative method with a case study approach. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, direct observation, and documentation, with participants as many as six grade XI students who have experience using digital games in English learning. The results showed that students played various digital games containing English elements like instructions, dialogue, and player interaction. The digital games also enrich vocabulary and help students get used to listening to conversations in various contexts and English accents. These games positively impacted four listening skills: ability to focus, general understanding, listening response, and accuracy of listening. Thus, digital games have the potential to be an effective and fun learning media in improving students' listening skills, especially when used wisely and in a balanced manner.

Key words: digital games, English language learning, learning media, listening skills, qualitative research

INTRODUCTION

Listening is one of essential language skills for achieving effective academic communication achievement among students. It is a certainly integrative skill because it is usually the first skill that students learn, and it has been emphasized as an important component in the English learning process. Listening is a skill that can improve with practice. In sense, it is the active process of receiving and responding to spoken language (Putri & Sinaga, 2020). It means that the sound falling on our ears and then take the raw material of words, word arrangement, and the rise and fall of the voice to create meaning. Moreover, the ability to understand spoken language is known as listening skills (Sipayung & Aristianti, 2022). Listeners use their prior knowledge to fully comprehend what they are hearing after recognizing the sound or the speaker's words. Their comprehension is ultimately the result of the listening process.

For students, mastering listening skills is crucial as it enables them to understand spoken language effectively, participate in conversations, and succeed in

academic settings. However, learning listening skills often poses challenges due to students' lack of interest, limited exposure to authentic listening materials, and the monotony of traditional teaching methods. Furthermore, nowadays students are more interested in playing games as their media towards learning listening, including the use of digital games.

Digital games as interactive system with goals and rules, where users engage with computer software through various devices like monitors, keyboard, and mouse. These games can take multiple forms, including console games, PC games, and online game, and are also accessible via portable such as mobile phones and tablets (Aydemir, 2022). In recent years, digital games have gained recognition as a valuable educational tool, offering interactive and stimulating environments that cater to diverse learning styles. For students, these games often serve as a bridge between theoretical concepts and practical applications, enhancing their understanding in learning listening skills. Also, game learning can foster critical thinking and teamwork, skills that are essential for excelling in academics.

The appeal of digital games lies in their ability to engage students through challenges, rewards, and immediate feedback. High school students, who are often exposed to rigorous academic expectations, can benefit from these elements as they make learning more enjoyable and less stressful. For instance, strategy-based games can improve problem-solving skills, while role-playing games may enhance storytelling and communication abilities. Such games not only motivate students to learn listening skills but also create opportunities for them to explore creative solutions, develop resilience, and achieve higher academic outcomes.

Digital games with interesting setting, high-quality visuals, sound effects, and visual characteristics can enhance learning experiences (Gunduzalp, 2024). This combination of features not only captures learners' attention but also promotes better retention and understanding of the material through interactive engagement. This is in line with (Acquah & Katz, 2020) found that digital learning games can be used as effective L2 learning tools that motivate players to learn and interact. Hence, the

results said most of the language acquisition outcomes were positive, which means the digital learning games can be implemented successfully for students.

This research aims to explore the use of digital games in teaching English listening skills to eleventh grade students in high school. Therefore, the research questions are: 1) What are the types of digital game do students' use in learning listening skills? 2) What is the students' experience of using digital games as a media for their learning listening skills? 3) How do the digital games contribute the students' learning listening skills?

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach to explore the use of digital games in learning English listening skills among eleventh-grade students at Senior High School 1 Punggur. Qualitative research enables an in-depth understanding of social phenomena (Creswell, 2012), and a case study helps examine specific experiences of individuals in this case, students who use digital games as a learning medium.

Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation. Six students from class XI 6 were selected purposively based on their experience using English-language digital games. Semi-structured interviews were conducted via WhatsApp voice calls, recorded, transcribed, and anonymized. Classroom observation focused on students' listening activities and the role of digital games, while documentation included listening scores support the findings.

To ensure data validity, the study used triangulation by comparing data from interviews, observations, and documentation. The analysis of data was conducted with the interactive paradigm proposed, which includes data collection, reduction, display, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2015). This approach helped identify key themes and provided a comprehensive understanding of how digital games contribute to students' listening skill development.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

This research aims to explore the use of digital games in teaching English listening skills to eleventh grade students at Senior High School 1 Punggur. The

findings of this research are divided into three main components: first, to identify the types of digital games used by students; second, their experiences in using digital games as learning media; third, as well as the contribution of digital games to students' listening skills. These findings highlight the types of digital games played by students, their experiences, and the contribution of digital games to listening skills. The interview section is placed under three points, which present the results of the research questions.

Types of Digital Games Played

When analyzing the dominant types of digital games played by students, this research identified several types of digital games as the dominant learning media that contributed to their listening skills. (Chen et al., 2020) said that several classifications of digital game types, namely: strategy games, adventure games, Role-Paying Games (RPGs), action games, and simulation games.

Moreover, the researcher found that students engage with various types of digital games, for example, participant 1 played adventure games and RPGs, participant 2 mentioned playing strategy games. Simulation and action games were also popular choices (participant 3 and participant 4). Also, participant 5 played action and adventure games, and participant 6 played RPGs.

More importantly, all students confirmed having experience with games that include English-language elements, such as Growtopia, Homescapes, The Sims, CS:GO, Watch Dogs, Metaphor Re Fantazio, and Clair Obscur: Expedition 33. These games commonly contain storylines, instructions, dialogues, or interactions in English, offering authentic exposure to the language.

These findings show that, while the game types vary, students are naturally familiar with English listening materials through gameplay, especially when the games include narratives or involve player communication in English.

Student Experience of Using Digital Games as a Learning Media

The students had generally positive experiences of using digital games as a medium to support English listening skills. The participants reported that games with interactive storylines, communication and sound features helped them become more

engaged with the language. Digital games storytelling and narrative simulation allow players to dive into another identity and increase understanding of the virtual world and the language used in it (Hsiao, 2007). This is consistent with students' statements that they were helped to recognize English accents and speech styles through the characters in the game.

“... The Sims has voice features such as dialogue with other characters, announcements accompanied by text, descriptions of objects, and others that make me hear and see English repeatedly so that I recognize the accent, speaking style of characters in English.” (P3)

“... there is a story game mode in CS:GO where each specific battle area has a different accent. Also, this game is a multiplayer game, where players play together with other players online. When I play this game I interact with my online friends from various countries such as Singapore, China, India, Europe, and others who use English. ... I now recognize various accents through the dialogue and voice features in digital games.” (P4)

“... the Watch dogs game there is a story line and dialog where there are several different characters, such as a character from England who uses a British accent, then a black skin character who uses an American accent, and a character who comes from India.” (P5)

“The English voice or dialogue feature in games really helped me recognize different accents. In the RPG games I played, Metaphor Re Fantazio and Clair Obscur: Expedition 33, in both games there are different characters. For example, there are white people using British and American accents, and so on...” (P6)

Several students (e.g., P1, P4, P5, P6) said that the need to communicate or follow the story in the game in English made them more motivated to understand vocabulary and context. P4 mentioned interacting with international players through voice chat, which helped them recognize different English accents and improved their overall comprehension. Similarly, P3, P5 and P6 explained how understanding the

different speech styles and accents of the characters in the game helped them become more familiar with American and British English.

On the other hand, a few students (e.g., P1 and P2) indicated that while games helped expand vocabulary, they were less helpful in improving accent recognition. Thus, the effectiveness of digital games in improving listening varies based on the features of the game and the student's engagement level.

“.... So far, it hasn’t helped me, because I only listen to the sound feature in the game and chat with other players through the chat bar. However, from here I can find out new vocabulary in English....” (P1)

“For me, it hasn’t helped me recognize accents, because I tend to understand the new vocabulary instructed by the game.” (P2)

Contribution of Digital Games to Students' Listening Skills

Digital games make a real contribution to helping students learn listening skills, especially in four main aspects: ability to focus, general understanding, listening response, and accuracy of listening (Shockingawful, 2017). Most participants admitted to experiencing distractions when listening to English materials, such as a voice that was too fast, a noisy environment, or unfamiliar vocabulary. However, through the experience of playing English games that present instructions, conversations, and narratives, students learned to overcome these distractions with strategies such as repeating the audio, asking friends, or listening more carefully.

In terms of general understanding, some students had difficulty understanding the main idea in long or quick conversations. Nonetheless, digital games help them get used to recognizing context and expanding vocabulary through direct and repeated interactions. Furthermore, response to spoken commands or questions also improves as students get used to making decisions based on dialog or instructions in the game. Games also encourage students to filter out important information in order to continue the game, which exercises listening skills more actively.

Further, accuracy in listening is mainly related to understanding different English accents. Listening skills are automatically active because they must speak with other player (Lakuana et al., 2023). So that players become more familiar and adapted to listening to directions, conversations, and background sounds in English-language

games. Additionally, while meeting other players with different accents, the players can be better taught in listening to English with varying accents. Participants who played international games such as CS:GO, Watch Dogs and RPGs showed better ability to recognize different accents due to frequent exposure to the voices of other characters or players. This suggests that digital games not only improve basic listening skills, but also provide an authentic and contextualized listening experience, which is difficult to obtain in formal classroom learning.

CONCLUSION

Digital games play a significant role in supporting the development of students' English listening skills. Eleventh-grade students at Senior High School 1 Punggur engage with various types of digital games such as adventure, RPG, simulation, strategy, and action games that integrate English instructions, dialogues, and interactions. These games not only expose students to real and contextual English usage but also help enhance their vocabulary, focus, and comprehension.

In addition, the students had generally positive experiences of using digital games as a media to support English listening skills. The participants reported that games with interactive storylines, communication and sound features helped them become more engaged with the language. Also, students reported that regular interaction with game narratives and players from various countries contributed to their ability to recognize different accents and respond more effectively to spoken English.

Furthermore, digital games were found to contribute to four key aspects of listening: the ability to focus, general understanding, listening response, and listening accuracy. While most students perceived the benefits positively, particularly in improving vocabulary and understanding through repetition and immersion, a few faced challenges in time management and concentration. Despite these challenges, digital games offer an enjoyable, motivating, and practical medium for independent learning that complements formal classroom instruction in listening. Hence, with proper guidance and balanced usage, digital games can serve as valuable tools for enhancing students' listening skills in English.

Authors Biography

Qurrata A'yunin began learning English in 2021. The author is an eighth-semester student at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, English Education Department, UIN Jurai Siwo Lampung. During her sixth semester of university, the author participated in a community service activity Asistensi Mengajar for approximately two and a half months at a state high school in Central Lampung. Currently, the author has completed her studies up to the munaqosyah stage and is awaiting graduation in August. Her passion for English education has motivated her to explore more effective teaching methods through academic research.

Ning Setio Wati is an English lecture at Universitas Islam Negeri Jurai Siwo Lampung. I specialize in English Language Teaching (ELT) and am responsible for speaking and writing courses.

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