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Using Video Games for Active Engagement in EFL Classes in Middle Schools: Combating Classroom Monotony through Interactive Learning.

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Dedication

I dedicate this humble work

To my parents, whose unwavering love, support, and guidance have been the foundation of my success . Your sacrifices and dedication have made it possible for me to pursue my dreams and achieve my goals. I am forever grateful for all that you have done for me and proud to be your daughter.

To my cherished husband, whose unwavering support and understanding have been my pillars of strength throughout this journey. I am grateful for your patience, kindness, and generosity, and for the many ways you enrich my life every day.

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With all my love and hope for you bright and happy futures.

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Abstract

The implementation of Competency-Based Approach in Algeria's educational system, specifically in teaching English as a foreign language, has been plagued by numerous challenges and consequences. The most important one is Monotonous teaching which can lead to decreased motivation, attention, and learning outcomes among students. It often involves using the same teaching methods, materials, or activities repeatedly, without considering the individual needs, interests, or learning styles of the students. The present study, then, aims at shedding light on the use of digital video games to actively engage the learners, foster their motivation and save them from monotony. To reach this end, an action research was conducted in Aidouni Brothers Middle School (Souahlia) relying on a number of sources and instruments for data collection. A questionnaire for learners, an interview for teachers and a classroom observation. The data collected from these research instruments were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. The triangulation of results revealed that the use of educational video games to teach English is a very effective method to actively engage the learners in the lessons as it allows them to learn in an environment full of fun, entertainment, challenges and interest which fosters their motivation and free them from monotony. The study, thus, confirmed the hypotheses that the use of video games in EFL classes can highly enhance learners' motivation and engagement. Accordingly, this work emphasised that understanding in depth the main sources of motivation and engagement was crucial to achieve the objectives of English Language Teaching in Algeria.

list of abbreviations and acronyms

AI: Artificial Intelligence

CBA: Competency Based Approach

DVG: Digital Video Games.

DGBLLT: Digital Game-Based Language Learning and Teaching.

EFL: English as Foreign Language.

L1: First language.

L2: Second language.

LLM: Language Learning Motivation

MMORPGs: Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games.

NPCs: Non-Player Characters.

PPT: Power Point

SDT: Self Determination Theory.

WTC: Willingness To Communicate.

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General Introduction

General introduction

The implementation of Competency-Based Approach (CBA) in Algeria has caused several challenges and effects in the educational system, particularly in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). One of the main causes of these challenges is the lack of readiness in the Algerian educational environment for the implementation of CBA, as reported by some educationalists.

The effects of the implementation of CBA in Algeria include decreased motivation, attention, and learning outcomes among students due to monotonous teaching. Monotonous teaching can lead to decreased motivation, attention, and learning outcomes among students. It often involves using the same teaching methods, materials, or activities repeatedly, without considering the individual needs, interests, or learning styles of the students. Monotonous teaching can also involve delivering lectures or presentations in a monotonous tone, without using interactive or multimedia resources, or without providing opportunities for students to ask questions, participate in discussions, or apply their knowledge in practical ways.

In the context of EFL classes, the implementation of CBA has also been associated with boredom among students. Ineffective teaching styles, monotonous English lessons, as well as unavailability of using technology in the classroom have brought the learners boredom in learning English. The learners claim that the teachers sometimes get angry when learning English occurs. They just come, teach and deliver a task almost in every meeting. The teachers also teach English monotonously. They teach present tense, past tense, and narrative text monotonously. Indeed, it has made them bored learning English. Apart from it, they do not employ technology in teaching English in class such as the use of PPT or providing a supporting platform like YouTube in the process of teaching and learning English in the classroom.

To avoid monotonous teaching, it is essential to use a variety of teaching methods, such as group work, project-based learning, problem-solving, and multimedia resources, to cater to different learning styles and preferences. Incorporating interactive and engaging activities, providing regular feedback, and

encouraging student participation and collaboration can also help to prevent monotony and enhance the learning experience.

To address these challenges and engage students through innovative activities, creativity is essential. Creativity in the preparation of teaching materials and contents is needed to make it easier for students to follow each stage of teaching. In addition to the creativity in the preparation of materials, creativity and innovation in delivering the materials are also obligatory parts. Teachers must be able to tackle down the problems faced by students in learning English, such as poor grammar, lack of vocabulary as well as lack of pronunciation, while non-linguistic problems involve shyness and lack of confidence.

The use of video games in educational settings has been a topic of growing interest in recent years, with many researchers and educators exploring their potential to enhance student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement. Despite the promise of video games as a tool for teaching English, however, there remains a need for more research on their effectiveness and potential challenges in middle school classrooms.

This study, then, is important to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the potential benefits and challenges of using video games in English education, and to inform the development of more effective teaching practices that leverage the power of video games to engage and motivate middle school students.

Thus, the purpose of this study is to explore the use of video games as a means of vigorously engaging middle school students in English classes. Precisely, this study investigates the influence of video games on student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement, and compares classes that use video games with those that do not.

Consequently, this study strives to answer the following questions:

1-To what extent does the use of video games in English classes influence student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement compared to classes that do not use video games?

2-How do students and teachers perceive the effectiveness of video games as a tool for teaching English, and what factors contribute to their perceptions?

The above mentioned questions led to the formulation of two hypotheses:

H1: The use of video games in English classes has a significant positive impact on student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement compared to classes that do not use video games.

H2: Students and teachers perceive video games as an effective tool for teaching English, and their perceptions are influenced by factors such as the type of video game used, the integration of video games into the curriculum, and the level of support and training provided to teachers.

In fact, the researcher's willingness to fulfil the earlier objectives led her to undertake an action research as a relevant means to investigate the effects of using digital video games in enhancing EFL learners' skills as well as increasing their motivation and engagement. This investigation will gather both quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain statistics and descriptions concerning how video games influenced EFL acquisition at the level of middle school in Algeria: a questionnaire for the EFL pupils of Middle school year 3, a structured observation in 3rd year classroom and an interview with the EFL teachers.

This study is purposefully structured into two chapters in order to verify the aforementioned hypotheses .The first chapter aims to discuss how research into digital games is connected to earlier research on game-based learning, primarily with younger learners, and examine the main areas where studies have been conducted and their most significant findings. Furthermore, it addresses some of the challenges faced by the field and proposes future directions for research and development in this area.

The second chapter is devoted to the analysis of data gathered from three research instruments: a questionnaire, a classroom observation as well as an interview.

Before presenting the results that are then separately analysed, in order to address the research questions and either confirm or reject the research hypotheses. These findings are aimed to help to improve the teaching of English in Algeria. Thus, this chapter concludes by presenting some suggestions and recommendations related to the research results and relevant to the Algerian context.

Chapter one

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1.1 Introduction

Digital games, which are engaging, multimedia-rich, immersive, and widely popular, have been drawing growing attention from educators in recent times due to their potential to enrich the language learning experience, both within and beyond the classroom. Research in general education has established that playing computer games can lead to various perceptual, cognitive, behavioural, emotional, and motivational impacts and results (Connolly et al. 2012: 661), although this varies depending on the content (Young et al. 2012). Initial studies in the field of language acquisition have revealed that game play can have a positive influence on motivation, eagerness to communicate, language socialization, and other factors that play a role in the language learning process. However, as a relatively new area of study, there are still significant shortcomings in the available literature, and there are many promising avenues that have yet to be explored. This article will discuss how research into digital games is connected to earlier research on game-based learning, primarily with younger learners, and examine the main areas where studies have been conducted and their most significant findings. The article will also address some of the challenges faced by the field and propose future directions for research and development in this area.

1.2 Motivation in language learning

Motivation is a critical factor in EFL learning, as it influences learners' engagement, persistence, and achievement. It plays a crucial role in learning English as a foreign language (EFL). It is the driving force that initiates and sustains learners' efforts to acquire the language.

Motivation is an important, pervasive behaviour determinant (Schunk, Meece, & Pintrich, 2013) of students, teachers and administrators (Elliot & Covington, 2001). Research has shown that motivation affects human behaviour in the “choice of a

particular action, the persistence with it and the effort expended on it” (Dörnyei, Csizér, & Németh, 2006, p. 9).

Language Learning Motivation (LLM) theories have undergone dramatic changes since first introduced. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) have categorized them into three phases: the social psychological period (1959-1990), the cognitive-situated period (1990s), and the processoriented period (turn of the 20th century).

A lot of scholars have defined motivation ,research has shown that motivation is a significant predictor of language learning success. Jeremy Harmer (1988) defines motivation as the process whereby a person's interest or enthusiasm is aroused and sustained to achieve his goal. He put emphasize on the importance of motivation in language learning and teaching, stating that motivation is the fuel that drives learners to learn, to persist in the face of difficulties, and to achieve their goals.

Learners who are highly motivated tend to engage in more language learning activities, persist longer in the face of difficulties, and achieve higher levels of proficiency than those who are less motivated. Intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation are two types of motivation that can influence EFL learning.

1.2.1 Intrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation are two types of motivation that can influence EFL learning. Intrinsic motivation refers to the internal drive to learn a language for its own sake, such as for personal enjoyment, satisfaction, or curiosity. Learners who are intrinsically motivated are more likely to engage in language learning activities voluntarily and persist in the face of challenges.

Edward Deci and Richard Ryan (2000), the co-founders of Self-Determination Theory, have extensively researched and written about intrinsic motivation. They define intrinsic motivation as "the doing of an activity for its inherent satisfaction rather than for some separable consequence."(p.55). According to Deci and Ryan,

intrinsic motivation is driven by three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. When these needs are satisfied, individuals are more likely to experience intrinsic motivation and engage in activities for their own sake. Intrinsically motivated learners are more likely to develop a positive attitude towards language learning, engage in deeper processing of language input, and persist in language learning over time.

1.2.2 Extrinsic motivation

On the other hand, extrinsic motivation refers to the external factors that drive learners to learn a language, such as rewards, grades, or social pressure. Learners who are extrinsically motivated may engage in language learning activities to obtain external rewards or avoid punishment.

Edward Deci and Richard Ryan(2000) have extensively researched and written about extrinsic motivation. They define extrinsic motivation as "*the performance of an activity in order to attain some separable outcome.*"(p55) According to Deci and Ryan, extrinsic motivation can undermine intrinsic motivation and lead to lower levels of engagement, persistence, and well-being.

Kohn and Deci (1993) provide evidence and examples of the negative effects of extrinsic motivation on learning, motivation, and well-being. They argue that intrinsic motivation is a more effective and sustainable source of motivation than extrinsic motivation, and that educators should focus on creating learning environments that support learners' autonomy, competence, relatedness, and interest.

However, it is important to note that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can play a role in EFL learning, and the optimal balance between the two may vary depending on the learners' individual characteristics, goals, and contexts. Teachers can help promote learners' intrinsic motivation by creating a supportive and engaging learning environment, providing meaningful and authentic language learning tasks, and encouraging learners' autonomy and self-regulation. At the same time, teachers

can also use extrinsic motivation strategically, such as by providing feedback and recognition for learners' effort and progress, to support learners' language development.

1.3 Engagement

Engagement refers to the active participation and involvement of learners in the learning process. It involves the cognitive, emotional, and behavioural aspects of learning, including attention, interest, effort, and persistence. Engagement is a multidimensional construct that can be influenced by various factors, such as motivation, self-efficacy, and the learning environment.

Self-determination theory (SDT) is an educational theory that emphasizes the importance of student autonomy (Ryan and Deci, 2000). According to SDT, individuals have three essential needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Anja et al., 2016). Ryan and Deci (2017) argue that how educators fulfill these fundamental needs of learners will affect their success, motivation, engagement, and achievement.

Self-determination theory (SDT) is viewed as a mediational framework where the teaching style of the educator in the classroom is crucial and acts as a mediator of class engagement (Núñez and León, 2019). The fundamental psychological needs of learners are met and sustained when the educator provides autonomy support in the classroom, which in turn predicts the level of class engagement. Deci and Ryan (2016) emphasized that competence, autonomy support, and relatedness are among the most critical elements that support learner autonomy in the SDT.

Thus, SDT proposes that there are three basic psychological needs that motivate self-initiated behaviour and are essential for individual psychological health and well-being. These needs are autonomy, competence, and relatedness when these three psychological needs are satisfied, individuals are more likely to be intrinsically motivated, engaged, and persistent in their activities. On the other hand, when these

needs are thwarted, individuals are more likely to experience extrinsic motivation, disengagement, and poor well-being.

1.3.1 Learners' Engagement

Student engagement refers to the degree of students' active participation, investment, and involvement in the learning process. It involves students' cognitive, emotional, and behavioural engagement, such as their attention, interest, effort, and persistence in learning. Student engagement is a term used to describe an individual's interest and enthusiasm for school, which impacts their academic performance and behaviour.

J. Gonzalez (2013) defines student engagement as the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education. Generally speaking, the concept of “student engagement” is predicated on the belief that learning improves when students are inquisitive, interested, or inspired, and that learning tends to suffer when students are bored, dispassionate, disaffected, or otherwise “disengaged.” Stronger student engagement or improved student engagement are common instructional objectives expressed by educators.

Student engagement is, therefore, an important factor in language learning as it has been found to be positively correlated with language learning outcomes, motivation, and autonomy. It can be fostered through various strategies, such as providing opportunities for student choice, feedback, and collaboration, and creating a supportive and challenging learning environment.

1.3.2 Types of engagement

Student engagement is a crucial factor in language learning can be categorized into several types. Fredricks et al. (2004) identify three types of engagement.

- **Behavioural engagement**

Alludes to the observable actions and behaviours that students demonstrate in language learning such as, attending class regularly, participating in discussions, completing assignments, and seeking feedback .This includes students observing community norms and participating in activities.

- **Emotional engagement**

Also called affective engagement refers to students' feelings of interest, boredom, happiness, sadness, and anxiety. Emotional engagement refers to the emotional investment and connection that students have with language learning. This includes feelings of interest, enjoyment, and motivation towards learning a language, as well as the ability to regulate their emotions and cope with challenges

- **Cognitive engagement**

It refers to the mental effort and strategic thinking that students invest in learning a language. This includes activities such as analysing language structures, practicing grammar rules, and developing problem-solving skills. It is closely related to motivation and involves students' desire and ability to engage in a variety of strategies to self- direct learning.

1.4 The importance of game play

Play is a fundamental learning process through which children naturally develop various skills, including physical, cognitive, emotional, and social abilities. In an influential early study, Bruner (1972) found that children who had opportunities to play with objects showed similar to better problem-solving skills than those who did not. Moreover, play promotes creativity, positive attitudes, and resilience in solving problems.

Play also significantly contributes to the development of first language (L1) skills. Vygotsky's (1967) emphasized the importance of play in enabling children to

create meaning from their immediate context, express emotions, and communicate with other children, even without fully developed language abilities. For instance, children can use physical objects or movements to compensate for language gaps, facilitating collaborative language construction and scaffolding.

1.5 The history of video games in EFL learning

The use of games in foreign language teaching has a long history, with some advocating for their central role in language classrooms. Non-digital games remain popular, and the role of physical games in second language acquisition continues to be explored.

The emergence of gaming consoles and personal computer games has increased interest in game play among people of all ages and led educators to incorporate games in their teaching. While games vary widely, they share common characteristics, such as rules, goals, feedback, conflict, interaction, and story representation. These are also characteristics of many successful language teaching environments and indeed (perhaps with the exception of the “representation of a story”) of task based language teaching, in particular as related to the use of technology (Thomas and Reinders 2010, for a collection of papers on technology in task-based language teaching).

Another characteristic of many commercially produced recreational digital games is their complexity, with many games including extremely elaborate story lines, multiple characters, and complex problems to solve, and plot twists. This complexity was initially not found in games designed for use in education (sometimes referred to as “edutainment”). Often limited to simple vocabulary exercises with the addition of a points system, many such games do not meet the criteria proposed by Prensky and others. As for the theoretical underpinnings of Digital Game Based Language Learning and Teaching (henceforth DGBLLT), sociocultural theory has played a particularly important role in the implementation of games in education (Ma et al. 2011) and specifically in the area of language education (Lantolf and Thorne 2006; Thorne 2008). In particular, collaborative games such as Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPGs), in which people play with and against others online, and

simulation games, in which players create and communicate in virtual worlds, create many opportunities for collaboration and competition and rich opportunities for exposure to L2 input as well as opportunities for L2 output and interaction, all of which have rich theoretical bases in second language acquisition research (e.g., Krashen on L2 input, 1982; Swain on output, 1985; Long 1981). Another aspect of games in education is the additional control they give learners over the learning process (Butler et al. 2014), for example, by allowing players to choose different levels, avatars, scenes, and so on. Such control has been linked to (the development of) learner autonomy, which in turn has been linked to language acquisition (Benson 2013). A final theoretical basis comes from the fields of embodied and grounded cognition (Clark 2001; Gibbs 2006), which highlight the importance of our body, either virtual or real, in cognition. New developments in virtual reality are likely to increase interest in this area in the future.

1.6 Digital video games in learning English

A large number of researchers have highlighted video games 'role in English as a foreign language acquisition , reflecting its importance in this type of research .Thus Research in Digital Game-Based Language Learning and Teaching DGBLLT , is connected to a longstanding interest in the role of play in language learning and education as a whole.

Video games are perceived as computerized games which require player input to manipulate certain elements within (Wilen-Daugenti,2009).they facilitate active EFL acquisition and learning by presenting authentic situations in which language is used in accordance with various contexts, allowing for linguistic skill enhancements (Toufik & Hanane,2021). Moreover, video games provide features such as visuals, texts, sounds and use of lexical items.

In addition to being motivators in EFL learning video games are also facilitators of active language acquisition among students. Reinders & Wattana (2011).

Therefore, before discussing research on DGBLLT, it is crucial to understand the concept of "play" and how game play affects development and language learning.

1.6.1 The Affordances of Digital Games

To comprehend the advantages of digital games in language learning and teaching, it is useful to examine existing research in terms of how it tries to leverage the affordances (or context-dependent potential benefits) that digital games provide.

Gee (2009) describes digital games as "problem-solving spaces that use continual learning and offer pathways to mastery through entertainment and pleasure." He (2003) argues that effective digital games incorporate learning principles and possess design features particularly relevant to language learning. Gee's (2003) book lists 36 of these principles, such as "the active, critical learning principle," which encourages active and critical, not passive, learning, and "the psychosocial moratorium," where learners can take risks without facing real-world consequences.

Additionally, Reinhardt and Sykes (2012; Sykes and Reinhardt 2012) propose a framework for understanding the various roles games can play in language research and practice, categorizing them into game-enhanced, game-based, or game-informed. Game-enhanced learning utilizes entertainment games, game-based learning involves educational games, and game-informed learning applies game play principles. Each category may raise different questions regarding learning and teaching.

Furthermore, Whitton (2014) distinguishes eight roles for games: learning with entertainment games, learning with educational games, learning inspired by games, learning within games, learning about games, learning from games, learning through game creation, and learning within game communities. Research can focus on the effects of game-enhanced, -based, or -informed learning on either second language (L2) acquisition or affective factors involved in L2 learning. This distinction is used to summarize some of the key studies in the field.

Studies on the impact of digital game-based language learning and teaching (DGBLLT) on language acquisition are somewhat limited, partly due to the challenge of controlling variables when digital games are used as a supplement to existing courses. Most research has focused on the opportunities games provide for target language exposure and interaction, assuming these factors contribute to language acquisition.

In this vein, Rankin et al. (2006) conducted a pilot study with four ESL students playing the MMORPG "EverQuest II" to assess if gaming could enhance English language proficiency and new vocabulary knowledge. Rankin et al. (2009) further analyzed in-game dialogues between native and non-native speakers in EverQuest II, revealing that ESL students significantly increased their target language output when interacting with native speakers. The study suggested that MMORPGs, like EverQuest II, promote L2 interaction, as players must be active learners and engage with others in the environment.

Moreover, the findings from Rankin et al.'s (2006, 2009) studies on DGBLLT were partially supported by Scholz (2016), who conducted a study with 14 German as a foreign language learners in Canada using the MMORPG "World of Warcraft" in an informal setting over four months. Data from in-game experiences and out-of-game conversations, with three focus group meetings in German, showed that the game environment positively impacted the participants' language development. The transfer of linguistic constructions from the game environment to non-game situations played a significant role in their language development.

So far there has been a relatively low amount of research regarding the topic of EFL acquisition through digital video games. Sensing the need for an innovative method by which EFL can be acquired; few researchers have conducted studies concerning the role of video games in EFL acquisition. One paper written by Ningtyas and Suganda (2020) hypothesised that the use of hobbies, especially video games would potentially improve students' vocabulary, reading skills, speaking skills and sustain their motivation.

Furthermore, Amin and Wahyudin(2022) were able to prove that this method was effective in improving the students comprehension and increase the students' learning motivation: using the game "Age of Empires2" they were able to demonstrate that using the narrative of a video game would engage the students into a higher degree and improve their skills effectively. Additionally, new vocabularies are introduced, critical thinking is intensified in order to understand the game's narrative.

Moreover, video games could assist the learners in improving their pronunciation. Another research conducted by Putri and Muryanti(2020) demonstrated that video games play an important role in EFL acquisition in the sense that it permits learners to acquire new vocabularies and practice pronunciation by listening to the characters' speech and mimicking it.

It is likely that similar effects can be observed in language learning and teaching, where digital games can enhance engagement, motivation, and overall learning outcomes. However, more research is needed to specifically explore the effects of digital game-based language learning and teaching.

1.6.2 The Effects of DGBLLT

The main effects of Digital Game-Based Language Learning and Teaching are not explicitly stated in the context of language learning, but we can draw some parallels from the effects of digital game-based education.

A meta-analysis conducted by Vogel et al. (2006) on the impact of digital games in educational settings, excluding language learning, revealed that the primary benefits were in the emotional domain. This finding is unsurprising as most studies in DGBLLT have focused on aspects such as student engagement, motivation, and anxiety. Additionally, researchers have identified a role for games in facilitating learners' language socialization (e.g., Duff, 2007; Tarone, 2007) and the development of their social identity within games (Thorne and Reinhardt, 2008).

In the context of EFL, digital games have been found to contribute to a moderate overall effect size, indicating that they can effectively improve learning gains.

Additionally, digital games have been shown to promote cognitive development, be an immersive and enjoyable activity, and are widely used in educational contexts.

1.6.2.1 Affective Factors

Affective factors related to digital game-based language learning and teaching include motivation, willingness to communicate, and enjoyment. Digital games can lower affective barriers to learning and increase learners' intrinsic motivation.

Anyaegebu et al. (2012) examined the assumption that digital games can enhance motivation, engagement, and interest in language learning by studying the impact of the game "Mingoville" on young Chinese learners of English. The qualitative results indicated that most students were motivated to learn English with Mingoville because it was enjoyable, reduced anxiety, and encouraged collaboration. However, some students found the experience demotivating due to boredom or disinterest in games.

In the same vein, Peterson (2010, 2011) took a different perspective, focusing on second language (L2) interaction in digital games. The learner-centred approach, anonymity, personal avatars, and reduced paralinguistic cues in real-time chat in network-based games can decrease anxiety and boost self-confidence. Peterson's subsequent studies (2012a, b) specifically examined learner interaction and attitudes in Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPGs).

In Peterson (2012a), six Japanese EFL university students played the MMORPG "NineRift" for two 90-minute sessions, a week apart. Results showed that learners actively participated, used various strategies, engaged in exclusive L2 dialogues, and had positive attitudes, reporting that MMORPG interaction was engaging, motivating, and improved their fluency and discourse management.

Gameplay has been shown to have a positive impact on students' willingness to communicate in English, which is an important aspect of language learning. Additionally, the process of building and creating games can further enhance language learning experiences, as it allows for contextualized learning, generative learning, and focused tinkering.

1.6.2.2 Linguistic and social interaction

Linguistic and social interaction factors in digital game-based language learning and teaching include the development of vocabulary, intrinsic motivation, contextualized language learning, and focused alteration.

Peterson (2012) investigated the linguistic and social interaction and attitudes of four intermediate Japanese EFL university students in the MMORPG "Wonderland." Participants joined four 70-minute sessions over a month. Similar to the previous study, participants used a range of strategies and conducted interaction solely in the target language. They also provided positive feedback, stating that MMORPG interaction, combined with the anonymity provided by pseudonyms and avatars, reduced anxiety and encouraged risk-taking and creative language use.

Zheng et al. (2009) explored the impact of the virtual world "Quest Atlantis" on English language learning by examining the collaboration and discourse practices between two native and two non-native English speakers. The quartet worked together for 10 weeks. The results indicated that the game enabled learners to have genuine, purposeful interactions with native speakers and closely cooperate to accomplish quests. This allowed native speakers to impart linguistic knowledge and non-native speakers to share cultural insights during in-game chats. The interaction was viewed as negotiation for action, an extension of negotiation for meaning, promoting greater cultural awareness, collaboration, and shared cultural identity for successful quest completion. Participants acknowledged that negotiation for action was a unique interaction type not found in their traditional language classroom experiences.

Finally, relatively little research has been carried out on the effects of DGBLLT on language acquisition. Most studies look at affective factors, such as motivation, engagement, and willingness to communicate. Although these are fruitful and important areas of inquiry, it is important ultimately to link these to better learning outcomes. Many studies are able to make tentative predictions at best. For example, Reinders and Wattana (2015) make the reasonable assumption, based on existing literature, that an increase in WTC will be beneficial to language acquisition and that because they were able to establish an impact of game play on an increase in participants WTC, games are likely to have a positive role in language acquisition; however, they did not prove this link. Similarly Turgut and İrgin (2009) showed increased strategy use from game play, and again, although there may well be a positive link between strategy use and language acquisition, this is not certain, and no direct benefit to learning could thus be established.

1.6.3 DGBLLT Challenges

Research on Digital Game-Based Second Language Learning and Teaching (DGBLLT) encounters various challenges, which can be grouped into operational, pedagogical, and methodological categories.

1.6.3.1 Operational challenges

Include privacy, safety, and security concerns, as well as apprehensions from parents and stakeholders about game usage in educational settings. Technical issues also arise, as many teachers may lack the skills and enthusiasm to play and teach games, and modifying game environments demands technical proficiency that many educators lack. Additionally, games can be costly, requiring purchases, licenses, or specialized equipment like fast processors, graphics cards, headphones, and microphones.

1.6.3.2 Pedagogical challenges

Consist of the integration of games into existing curricula, which can be difficult for teachers unfamiliar with DGBLLT. Critics argue that gamification, or the application of gaming principles in education, often results in add-ons that do not challenge traditional practices. The impact of these issues on DGBLLT's effectiveness remains undocumented partly because of the operational and pedagogical issues described above, most studies on game play are relatively short. Although this is an argument that could be made against most of the research in language learning and teaching, in DGBLLT research, it is all the more important to conduct longitudinal studies that can minimize the novelty effect.

1.6.3.3 Methodological challenges

Involve accounting for the novelty factor of introducing games in classrooms. Although games may not be new to most learners, their use in educational settings can generate excitement, leading to increased motivation and potentially better learning outcomes. Researchers must control for this novelty factor to accurately assess DGBLLT's impact.

In studies that look at game play in out-of-class settings, it is important to monitor the amount of time learners interact in the target language, as otherwise any benefits could be attributed simply to greater time-on-task rather than game play itself (although it could be argued that if game play causes learners to spend more time interacting in the target language, for example, because they enjoy such language use more than other forms, then this is a worthwhile benefit in and of itself). A challenge with much research on DGBLLT is that it takes place (either entirely, or in part) outside of formal settings. This can make data collection difficult (both for practical as well as privacy reasons). At the same time, this challenge is one that needs to be taken up if language researchers are to get a full understanding of the entirety of the language learning process.

1.7 Critical Appraisal

The current state of DGBLLT research provides early, tentative conclusions regarding its potential role in language education and its impact on language acquisition. While there are still challenges to be addressed, existing studies indicate that games contribute to positive affective aspects of language learning, which are linked to language acquisition. Specifically, games have been shown to increase motivation, reduce anxiety, and enhance engagement and willingness to communicate. These findings suggest that DGBLLT can be a valuable tool in language education, fostering an engaging and supportive learning environment.

The learning experience through digital games is not yet fully understood, and there are several challenges for future studies to establish stronger links with existing knowledge about (language) learning and teaching. Reichle (2012), Jackson et al. (2012), and Reinders and Wattana (2012) suggest focusing on memory processes, strategy instruction, and interaction with willingness to communicate, respectively. Other promising areas include teacher and peer feedback, focus on form in informal settings, and the quality and quantity of input and opportunities for extended output in game settings.

In this vein, Scholz (2016) emphasizes the need for research that goes beyond learners' reflections and directly examines learners' experiences, including linguistic experiences, for a better understanding of the relationship between DGBLLT and language acquisition.

Another challenge is to identify specific game aspects that influence the language learning process. Garris et al. (2002) note the lack of consensus on game features that support learning, the process by which games engage learners, and the types of learning outcomes that can be achieved through game play.

Yet it is still under debate as to which particular aspects of a game lead to learning of any kind. Do the motivating aspects lead to active participation or does the active participation increase motivation? And what specific learning outcomes can be achieved? Without evaluation of the impact of games on

specific learning outcomes, games will continue to be categorized largely as motivating and fun, but instructionally useless (Wilson et al.2009,p.221).

The appeal for a deeper insight into the connection between game features and learning results has not been thoroughly addressed, particularly in the Digital Games and Foreign Language Learning domain of language education. To achieve this, multiple research approaches are likely to be required.

However, digital games present a fertile ground for language acquisition and warrant increased attention from researchers in the future. As games become increasingly integrated into our lives, including those of educators, their presence in the educational setting is expected to expand. The task for teachers and researchers is to recognize and leverage the benefits of games to optimally support the language learning process.

1.8 Definition of educational video games

An educational video game is a type of video game that is designed to provide learning or training value to the player. It is intended to be both entertaining and educational, and often incorporates elements of gameplay and storytelling to engage and motivate the player. Educational video games can cover a wide range of subjects and topics, and can be used to teach a variety of skills, including reading, math, science, and critical thinking. They can be used in a variety of settings, including schools, homes, and museums, and can be played on a variety of devices, including computers, consoles, and mobile devices. Some educational video games are designed specifically for educational purposes, while others may be commercial games that have educational value. Educational video games are, therefore, a valuable tool for enhancing learning and making it more engaging and enjoyable.

In this vein Gee (2007), a professor of literacy studies at Arizona State University, offers a definition of educational video games that highlights their purpose of teaching specific knowledge, skills, or attitudes. He defines Educational video games as digital games that are designed to teach specific knowledge, skills, or

attitudes. They are typically structured around learning objectives and incorporate gameplay mechanics that support learning and engagement.

This definition of educational video games highlights their potential as a powerful learning tool that can support learners in acquiring new knowledge, skills, or attitudes in a dynamic and interactive way.

Moreover, Gee (2007) makes a strong case for the relationship between video gaming and learning for today's children. He argues that the new literacy that develops during gaming promotes skill mastery, agency, and control that can readily be transferred to meet broader educational objectives.

In the same context Kurt (2006) views educational video games as an interactive software programs that combine elements of play and learning to create engaging and meaningful experiences for learners. They are designed to support learning goals and provide opportunities for learners to practice and apply new knowledge and skills.

Squire's perspective aligns with the growing body of research that supports the use of educational video games in various educational settings. These games have been shown to improve learners' motivation, engagement, and retention, as well as to foster critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration skills. As such, educational video games represent a promising and innovative approach to teaching and learning, and have the potential to transform traditional classroom instruction into dynamic and engaging learning experiences.

Richard E. Mayer, professor of psychology at the University of California, Santa Barbara. (2016) provides a comprehensive definition of educational video games that highlights their potential to promote learning and development in various domains. He explains that "Educational video games are digital games that are designed to promote learning and development in a variety of domains, including cognitive, social, emotional, and physical. They are typically structured around learning objectives and incorporate gameplay mechanics that support learning and engagement."

Mayer emphasizes the importance of educational video games in promoting cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development, and their structure around learning objectives and gameplay mechanics that support learning and engagement.

Additionally, Mayer's emphasis on the role of educational video games in promoting learning and development in various domains is particularly noteworthy. While cognitive development is often the primary focus of educational technology research, social, emotional, and physical development are also crucial components of holistic learning and development. Educational video games can provide learners with engaging and meaningful learning experiences that support their growth and development in these areas, making them a valuable tool for educators and learners alike.

1.9 Digital Video Games (DVGs) and language learning motivation (LLM)

Digital video games can provide an engaging and interactive learning experience that can motivate learners to improve their language skills can also be an influential tool for increasing motivation in learners. They can provide engaging and interactive experiences that motivate players to learn and develop new skills.

Gamification of education, or the use of game design elements in non-game contexts, can help learners become more actively involved in their learning and can foster the development of technological skills that are important for academic and professional success.

Malone and Lepper (1987) were the first to study motivation in educational games (Tzeng,1999).they identified four factors including challenge ,curiosity, control and, fantasy, consisting building blocks on intrinsic motivation in games .Malone and Lepper(1987)maintained that the challenge a game presents should be kept within the learner's abilities-their zone of proximal development(Vygotsky,1978)- to avoid frustration,anxiety, and boredom(Csikszentmihalyi,1991;Kiili, De Freitas,Arnab ,& Lainema,2012).curiosity could be raised by means of audio visual or sensory stimuli or appealing game-stories.

Furthermore, since participation is closely related to motivation (Dörnyei&Ushioda,2011) it become important to use a variety of instruments to help engage more learners . To this end ,although the focus of their studies has not been on Language Learning Motivation (LLM)researchers such as GEE (2007) ,Molins-Ruano et al.(2014),Schrader, Lawless, and Deniz (2010),and Van ECK(2009) have suggested the implementation of DVGs in educational settings because of their abundance of motivational elements.

Moreover, DVGs may increase intrinsic and/or extrinsic motivation for replays(Kuo&Chuang,2016),which are viewed as processes that ultimately result in acquisition and mastery of new knowledge (Buckley and Anderson,2006).

Therefore, digital video games can be a valuable resource for promoting language learning motivation in EFL. By providing an engaging and interactive learning experience, digital video games can help learners hone their language skills and foster their intrinsic motivation.

1.10 Video games and Willingness to Communicate (WTC)

Video games can be a powerful tool for communication, both in terms of the ways in which they allow players to communicate with each other and in the messages and narratives that they convey.

Willingness to communicate (henceforth WTC) refers to an individual's readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons. It is a concept that is often studied in the context of language learning and teaching, as it is an important factor in determining a learner's level of engagement and participation in communicative activities.

WTC in a second language (L2) has been a significant focus in recent L2 research, with studies examining the impact of digital games on WTC. Reinders and Wattana (2016) investigated the effects of a popular online role-playing game, Ragnarok, on 30

Thai EFL learners in a university language course. The game was modified to include collaborative tasks and played during six 90-minute lessons.

In this vein, to measure WTC, researchers used questionnaires adapted from MacIntyre et al.'s (2001) WTC scale and previous studies on language anxiety, communication anxiety, and perceived competence. The questionnaires, administered at the beginning and end of the course, assessed participants' self-perceptions of their willingness to use English, confidence, anxiety, and communicative competence.

Initial results showed low confidence, high anxiety, low perceived competence, and low WTC. However, after six gaming sessions, participants reported significant improvements in confidence, reduced anxiety, increased competence, and higher WTC. The authors concluded that well-designed tasks leveraging game affordances could positively influence the language learning process.

Thus, learners with a high level of WTC are more likely to actively seek out opportunities to use the language and interact with others, which can lead to increased language proficiency and a more positive language learning experience.

Furthermore, one way in which video games simplify communication is through multiplayer gameplay. Many video games allow players to interact with each other online and play together in real-time, often through voice chat or text messaging. This can create a sense of community and social interaction, and can also provide opportunities for teamwork, partnership, cooperation, and competition.

Additionally, video games can transfer messages and narratives through their design and content. Games often have stories, characters, and themes that can convey ideas and values, and can be used to explore complex issues and ideas. For example, games like "Papers, Please" and "This War of Mine" explore themes of morality, ethics, and social justice, while games like "Minecraft" and "Roblox" allow players to create and share their own content, fostering creativity and self-expression.

Moreover, video games can also be used as a communication instrument in numerous fields such as education, healthcare, and business. For instance, in education, video games can be used to teach complex concepts, engage students, and stimulate active learning. In healthcare, video games can be used to promote physical activity, improve cognitive skills, and help patients manage chronic conditions. In business, video games can be used for training, simulation, and team-building.

1.11 Educational video games and students proficiency

Educational video games can increase students' proficiency in numerous ways such as providing an active, personalized, and engaging learning experience that includes real-time feedback.

Informal language learning instruments such as DVGs have been found to be very fruitful in terms of learning outcomes compared to classical classroom practice (Cole & Vanderplank, 2016). Previous studies (e.g., Ebrahimzadeh & Alavi, 2016) have examined DVGs in formal education on texts indicating encouraging results. These researchers provide further evidence that the common formal classroom practice might not still fit to be considered the relevant language learning context (Sockett, 2014).

This conforms to Gee's (2007) third learning principle called the "semiotic principle", which explains the relationship existent among several sign systems such as images, colour codes, words, etc. in which gamers observe items with thumbnails, descriptions and effects which help them learn English vocabulary.

Yet, video games have also been discovered to be effective facilitators in the acquisition and development of various micro and macro skills. To begin with, video games play an important role in improving student's reading comprehension. Amin and Wahyudin (2022) conducted a study in which they analysed the impact of the video game entitled *Age of Empires II* on students' reading comprehension in relation

to narrative text. The results of this study indicate that the designed video game had a positive impact on the students reading comprehension of narrative text.

Clear goals and opportunities for practice and repetition can also significantly develop language learning skills. Clear goals help learners understand what they need to achieve, providing a sense of direction and motivation. Meanwhile, practice and repetition allow learners to reinforce their knowledge and improve their proficiency.

Moreover, practice and repetition can take many forms, such as speaking, writing, listening, and reading, which can help learners to develop different language skills and to use the language in different contexts. For example, learners can practice speaking with a language partner, repeating phrases and sentences until they feel comfortable and confident. They can also practice writing by keeping a journal or writing emails, repeating grammar structures and vocabulary until they become automatic.

1.12 How do video games provide effective learning



Effective learning is underpinned by five key factors: meaningful context, authenticity, motivation, the freedom to make mistakes, and learner autonomy. Cambridge English teaching and learning materials effectively utilize meaningful context and authenticity by presenting new language in a way that creates a real need for interaction and communication. It is widely recognized that learners are most

successful when they are motivated, allowed to learn from their mistakes, and empowered to take charge of their own learning journey.

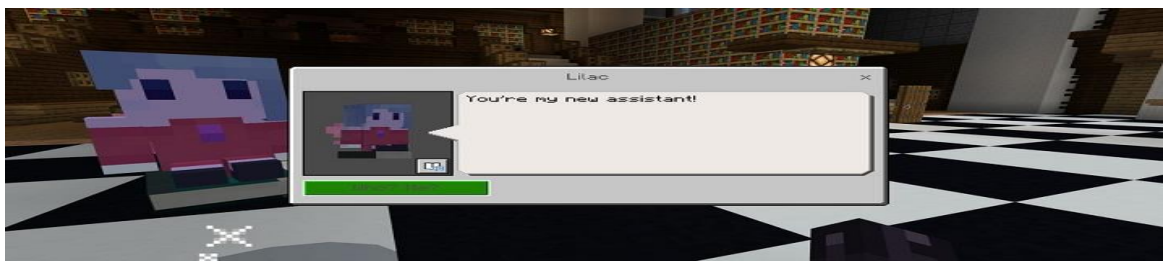
In this regard, video games offer numerous benefits and support each of the components of effective learning by providing:

1.12.1 Context – A strong narrative

The significance of context in learning is immense, as it aids in linking new information with our existing knowledge, thereby enabling us to associate new information with our understanding of the world. In language learning, for instance, we study various topics like family, hobbies, or vacations instead of learning words in alphabetical order. In the absence of an appropriate context, new information lacks a reference point in our brain, which makes it challenging to retain.

Moreover, video games are exceptional in delivering a robust and captivating narrative context, which is a valuable tool for learning. It is inherent in humans to connect with narratives, as they elicit emotional responses and are consequently memorable. In the context of teaching young learners, storytelling is especially crucial because children depend on episodic memory, which entails recalling specific facts and events that are connected in the learning process.

1.12.2 Authenticity – Purposeful interactions



Proficiency in using a foreign language is more significant than having an extensive comprehension of its grammar rules. In authentic situations, such as requesting a cup of coffee in a foreign nation, communication is based on our needs

and objectives, rather than emphasizing grammatical precision. This inherent motivation to communicate is similarly present in video games, such as Adventures in English with Cambridge.

In this language-learning experience, the player interacts with Lilac, a fairy librarian in a vast library. To fulfill Lilac's request for a hot drink, the player explores the library and discovers a fully functional vending machine. The player can choose from various options like "milkshake," "juice," and "lemonade," but the librarian only responds with "Ah, finally! It was delicious, thank you!" when the player brings her a cup of coffee. This rewarding interaction provides the player with authentic language used in context.



1.12.3 Motivation – Emotional engagement

The level of motivation in learners has a significant impact on their educational outcomes, both inside and outside the classroom. Students who are invested in their learning are typically concentrated and inquisitive, leading to better academic performance compared to those who are disengaged or preoccupied. Video games effectively harness the narrative, challenges, and rewards to stimulate an emotional response that is directly tied to motivation.

For instance, in the game Minecraft, learners are driven to solve language-related puzzles, which facilitate their advancement within the game. The game environment and characters they encounter inspire them to persist in their learning journey. Players

have the flexibility to select specific elements to focus on, but they cannot bypass the language aspect. The language is seamlessly integrated into the game's interactions, and players must communicate in English to make progress. This approach to language learning in Minecraft fosters engagement, motivation, and proficiency.

1.12.4 Mistakes help you learn – Freedom to fail



At first glance, it might appear counterproductive, but when learning a language, errors can be advantageous if learners are granted the chance to recognize and contemplate them in a secure environment. Video games excel at offering numerous safe opportunities to practice. For example, in the Minecraft game, players have the liberty to explore the wrong path or misspell a word. Rather than incurring penalties or losing progress, mistakes lead to additional language input, guiding learners towards the correct answer. This freedom to make mistakes in video games is crucial for effortless language practice and serves as a fundamental component of language learning.

By providing a risk-free space for learners to experiment with language, video games can foster a growth mindset and encourage learners to view mistakes as stepping stones towards mastery. This approach can help to reduce anxiety and foster a more positive attitude towards language learning, making it more accessible and enjoyable for learners of all ages and abilities.

1.12.5 Autonomy – Independent decision making



Finally, in all kinds of teaching contexts, learner autonomy is another cornerstone of success. The more engaged the learner is in their own learning process, the more successful the results. In language-learning classrooms, learners are encouraged to develop study skills alongside listening, writing, speaking and reading – keeping consistent vocabulary notes, drawing mind maps, developing strategies for exam taking, listening and expeditious reading, to name just a few.

In video games, the process of becoming an independent decision maker is naturally fostered through the nature of the task in hand: the player has to discover ways out of tricky situations, frequently coming back to the starting point and starting all over again in order to progress within the game. In doing so, the players not only develop their sense of curiosity, but also perseverance, problem-solving skills and confidence, the usefulness of which stretches back to the classroom and beyond.

1.13 AI games VS digital games

Digital games are electronic games that can be played on a computer, console, or mobile device. They can be simple or complex, and can include a wide variety of genres, such as action, adventure, puzzle, and simulation games. Digital games can be single-player or multiplayer, and can be designed for entertainment, education, or other purposes.

AI games, on the other hand, are digital games that incorporate artificial intelligence (AI) technology. AI is a branch of computer science that deals with the creation of intelligent agents, they are systems that can perceive their environment, reason about it, and take actions to achieve specific objectives.

In the context of AI games, AI technology is used to create Non-Player Characters (NPCs) or virtual agents that can interact with the player in a realistic and dynamic way.

Both AI games and digital games can be recommended in education, depending on the specific learning objectives and context. AI games can be particularly useful for their personalized learning, real-time feedback, goal-oriented approach, and ability to create intelligent agents that can interact with the player in a realistic and dynamic way. On the other hand, digital games can be useful for their engaging and fun nature, opportunities for collaborative learning, and opportunities for practice and repetition.

1.14 Gaming and gamification

Gaming refers to the act of playing video games, whether for entertainment, education, or other purposes. Video games are electronic games that can be played on a computer, console, or mobile device. They can be simple or complex, and can include a wide variety of genres, such as action, adventure, puzzle, and simulation games.

On the other hand, gamification, refers to the use of game design elements in non-game contexts. It is, therefore, the process of incorporating game design elements,

such as points, badges, leader boards, and challenges, into non-game activities to make them more engaging and motivating. Gamification can be used in a variety of contexts, such as education, marketing, and business, to promote engagement, motivation, and learning.

For example, in education, gamification can be used to create interactive learning experiences that incorporate game design elements, such as quizzes, puzzles, and challenges, to make learning more engaging and fun.

1.15 Types of educational video games

Educational video games have emerged as a promising and innovative approach to teaching and learning, offering a unique blend of entertainment and engagement that can help to enhance students' motivation, retention, and understanding of various subjects. These games are specifically designed to facilitate learning and can be categorized into several different types, each with its own unique features and benefits.

1.15.1 Crossy Road



This game needs one device per class and the Teacher will need a touchscreen that can be screencast onto a projector, or simply a single touchscreen device. A copy of the game which is available on the Google Play and App Store.

In **Crossy Road**, learners are a chicken! Their job is to cross as many roads as they can without getting squashed by the traffic. The squashing animations are very cute!

- **Lead-in activity about jokes**

Do the students know any jokes in English? Does the class think they're funny? You can supply a couple like the classic 'What kind of key do you need to open a banana?' (A monkey ! If they don't find that funny, there's no hope for the future of humanity). And then the teacher can introduce the so known joke 'Why did the chicken cross the road? (To get to the other side).

The teacher can introduce the game to the pupils by telling them that the game was created based on the idea of a chicken crossing the road. It is called "Crossy Road" and you're all going to play it. But first, the teacher needs to prepare ,example: What do chickens, and people, need to do before they cross the road? Then he/she can elicit/teach some language about road safety along with the mimed actions. For example, 'look both ways before crossing the road', 'stop when the light is red', and 'go when the light is green.' You could also add phrases like 'be careful' and 'cars are very fast'. Once the teacher has helped them practice this language, he/she can demonstrate the game.

In a perfect world, teachers would have a touchscreen that can be screencast onto a projector so the whole class can see the screen. If that's not available, they can use a rolling pair system at the front of the class. For example, choose a volunteer to come to the front with you. They're going to 'cross the road'. The class (or another volunteer) tells them 'look both ways before crossing the road' and the student at the front does the action.

Then teachers give them the device and they play *Crossy Road* as far as they can until they get squashed (they will get squashed eventually – they'll love it). The class

says ‘oh no! Be careful! Cars are very fast!’ . If teachers want to, they can write each student’s score on the board (the number of steps they took before the squashing), then choose the next player. Keep going until everyone has had a turn and then find out who the winner is!

Alternatively, teachers can expand the lesson, adding more activities that build on the road safety language, either before or after the gameplay. They can also diversify into animal vocabulary (why did the duck/elephant/giraffe cross the road) and ask students to come up with their own ending to the joke.

This example shows how a game made for entertainment purposes, which doesn’t feature much language within the gameplay itself, can be used as the basis for a lesson that students will never forget.

1.15.2 Gormi’s Winter Wonderland



This game needs a sufficient number of devices for students to work in pairs or groups. In groups of two or a few and a duration of around 45 minutes, learners embark on a journey through our new winter mini-world with Gormi! Young learners will assist Gormi in arranging a fantastic party for his friends in this winter-themed escape room. They will investigate a sizable, magical igloo, solve riddles, and gather materials to kick off the celebration!

The game is about Gormi's Winter Wonderland which is centered around cold weather and winter. Gormi is hosting a winter party for his friends and needs your assistance in preparing hot cocoa to keep them warm outside. When the furnace malfunctions, the player must assist Gormi by retrieving some coal from his "garden shed," which turns out to be a colossal igloo! The player becomes trapped inside the igloo and must locate hidden items to aid in their escape. They will explore four rooms with varying weather conditions: rainy, frosty, snowy, and icy.

With students working in pairs or small groups, they can take turns controlling the game. Depending on their proficiency level, teachers can also encourage them to take turns reading the dialogue aloud (and to dramatize it as much as possible!). Teachers can introduce some key phrases to facilitate collaboration, such as 'What's over there?', 'What's that?', 'We have to go this way.' When students reach the central area of the igloo (after the cave-in), teachers can allow each group to choose which room to explore first: rainy, frosty, snowy, or icy.

Alternatively, teachers can ask all students to complete the same area to simplify monitoring, but it can be enjoyable to assign different areas and then ask the groups to share their discoveries with the class once everyone has completed the first one. Regardless, having students work together in groups is advantageous as they can assist each other with game controls, as well as the language and puzzles within the game. Depending on how much class time teachers have, they may wish to break up the game, rather than completing it all in one lesson.

1.15.3 Minecraft



Released in November 2011, the video game Minecraft has emerged as a cultural phenomenon, exceeding expectations and selling a remarkable 170 million copies across multiple platforms. Despite its basic and blocky visuals, the game's sandbox environment provides countless opportunities for imaginative players to construct extensive and intricate structures or even entire universes. The game's central themes of mining and crafting have contributed to its widespread popularity.

Despite the rise of more recent gaming sensations, such as Fortnite, Minecraft has maintained its relevance and is being utilized creatively in the field of education. An example of this is the ABC School of English in Pulawy, Poland, which has incorporated Minecraft into its curriculum to teach English to its students. The school employs the game to evaluate students' comprehension through clickable multiple-choice questions, listening exercises, and typing-based questions. This method enables students to learn the language in an enjoyable and interactive manner, thereby increasing their engagement and improving their learning outcomes.

Furthermore, given the prevalence of student disengagement in learning, it is essential to establish a connection with them and enable them to relate to and engage

with the subject matter. The Director of Studies at the ABC School of English, Sean O'Connor, prioritizes this concept in the initiative, stating that to teach them effectively, you need to enter their world.

This approach highlights the significance of understanding and catering to students' interests and preferences to foster a more engaging and effective learning environment.

1.16 Teacher support

The younger generations have consistently demonstrated a remarkable capacity for embracing novel experiences, experimenting, and persisting in their efforts until they accomplish their objectives. They are not discouraged by setbacks and do not attribute failure to their personal inadequacies. This inclination equips them well for learning new games, as they are not hesitant to attempt and retry until they master the game. Consequently, there is no necessity to instruct them on how to play, as they possess a natural propensity to discover and learn the game independently. This learning approach fosters resilience, self-efficacy, and a growth mindset, which are valuable skills that can be transferred to various aspects of their lives.

As an active educator, the first instinct of a teacher is to seek out support materials to simplify lesson preparation. Even if time constraints prevent playing the game or a lack of gaming experience, teachers can still access walkthroughs in the teacher's notes to assist students when they encounter difficulties. Additionally, detailed lesson plans are provided, suggesting a structure for either face-to-face or online instruction, such as:

- a) Introduction: Introduce the game and its objectives to the students.
 - b) Body: Guide students through the game, providing assistance and support as needed.
 - c) Conclusion: Reflect on the learning experience and reinforce key concepts.
- 10 minutes Warm-up activity

- 30-45 minutes Gameplay phase (in-class or at home)
- 45 minutes Classroom activities phase
- 10 minutes Extra practice or homework.

The classroom worksheets should be the right length to keep young learners engaged, and they complement the game play very well.

1.17 Conclusion

As a teacher, one was constantly searching for resources that students would find captivating, applicable, and engaging. Additionally, one was partial to assignments that wouldn't result in unbearable hardship or second thoughts about one's life choices. The notion of incorporating video games into the classroom initially sparked excitement and apprehension. The motivational aspect is evident, and as a seasoned gamer, one recognizes the potential of video games to cultivate valuable learning skills such as persistence, curiosity, and problem-solving. However, the challenge lay in practically integrating them into the classroom. One pondered whether employing video games with students would merely complicate matters without any substantial benefits. Fortunately, integrating video games in the classroom need not be a source of distress, as there is considerable flexibility in the methods that can be adopted.

Through this chapter, we discuss different types of video games and the importance of using them in the classroom are very useful in learning a foreign language.

Additionally, video games may help students to develop their language skills, enhance their listening and speaking, and avoid their grammatical mistakes and improve their pronunciation.

Finally, video games inspire students to interact with each other in classroom. Also, using video games activities create an agreeable atmosphere, occasions for students to participate and explain their ideas, opinion and emotions. The teacher should involve video games activities in teaching vocabulary.

Chapter II

Research Methodology

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2.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to illuminate the role of video games as a technique of teaching English in Algeria ,mainly in enhancing the pupils ‘linguistic skills and learning motivation . It will first describe the methodology, the research setting, target population and the research population and timing. It eventually sheds light on the research tools used to collect data for the present work. It consists of the description of the research methodology, This chapter attempts to confirm or refute the hypotheses suggested by the researcher it also provides some suggestions and recommendations concerning the use of video games to enhance pupils engagement and save them from monotony.

2.2 Situation analysis

Situation analysis is a crucial step in any research as it presents an accurate picture of the context in which the research is taking place and it can be used to guide strategic planning and decision-making.

2.3 Educational setting description

The AIDOUNI BROTHERS Middle School creates a favourable learning atmosphere for its students, allowing them to gain the necessary knowledge and abilities for their future pursuits as it adheres to a curriculum established by The Ministry of National Education .This curriculum meets with the coherent legislative frame work regulating our educational system.

Moreover, the four years of middle school are crucial foundation for the intellectual, emotional, physical and social development of the child. These years will help him *(he/him are unmarked forms used here to refer to both male and female) to gradually acquire competencies at all levels of school education and to continue learning even after leaving school.

a) Teaching and learning approaches and goals at middle school

It is stated in the curriculum that Learning English at middle school aims at primarily developing “communicative competence” in English. In the actual curriculum there is a shift from a paradigm of accumulation and transmission of linguistic knowledge and ideas to a paradigm of interaction, all within a social constructivist view of learning. Focusing on the learner and enable him to be actively engaged in deeper cognition, acquisition of knowledge and development of a number of competencies. In addition an important role is given to strategies (strategic competence) In order to foster effective learning.

b) Target competencies

By the end of MS3, the learners will be able to interact, interpret and produce simple oral and written messages/texts of average complexity, of descriptive, narrative, prescriptive and argumentative types, using written, visual or oral support, in meaningful situations of communication related to his environment and interests.

c) Pedagogical challenges and issues

It's crucial to recognize that each classroom and group of students is distinct, and teachers may face unique challenges or problems. However, by being conscious of these frequent difficulties and devising strategies to tackle them, teachers can foster a positive and productive learning environment for their EFL students. The main challenges and issues relevant to the research focus that are encountered in the educational setting.

-Students might opt to use their native language instead of English in class. To encourage students to speak English, teachers can urge them to use English as much as possible and establish a classroom atmosphere where English is the primary language used.

-Students may rely excessively on the teacher for help and struggle to complete tasks independently. To empower students, teachers can offer guidance and support while encouraging them to take charge of their learning.

-Students may lack motivation or interest in class. In this situation, teachers can aim to make lessons more engaging and interactive, incorporating various teaching methods and materials to maintain students' interest and motivation.

2.4 Description of the video game used, *Minecraft*

One of the advantages of digital products is their quicker development cycle and responsiveness to user feedback. The development team is eager to listen to feedback and make improvements, such as fixing bugs and adding new features, to enhance the user experience. It offers a fun and engaging way to inspire children to learn English at home, as it can be played on various devices, including desktops, tablets, and gaming consoles. This allows learners to explore the game's world and complete enjoyable puzzles, meet new characters, and solve mysteries while learning new vocabulary.



Released in November 2011, the video game Minecraft has emerged as a cultural phenomenon. Despite its basic and blocky visuals, the game's sandbox environment

provides countless opportunities for imaginative players to construct extensive and intricate structures or even entire universes. The game's central themes of mining and crafting have contributed to its widespread popularity.

2.5 Research design

A research design is the framework of research methods and techniques chosen by a researcher to conduct a study. It addresses problems and creates a consistent and logical model for data analysis. In essence, it's a strategy to collect, study, and evaluate data. The present design was established to allow the researcher to sharpen the research methods suitable for the subject matter and set up the study studies for success.

2.5.1 Research methodology

In the present research the researcher based on an action method as a relevant means to investigate the effects of using digital video games in enhancing EFL learners' skills as well as increasing their motivation and engagement.

The use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches was exhibited to obtain statistics and descriptions concerning how video games influenced EFL acquisition at the level of middle school in Algeria. The researcher utilized qualitative approach which according to Wittenberg (2000) is defined as a form of empirical research where data are not presented in a form of statistics and numbers. On the other hand quantitative approach employs mathematical models to procure numerical data (Bhardwaj, 2017).

This research design was chosen because it permits for a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of video games on student learning and teacher practices in Algerian middle school . By collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, this study can provide a more nuanced and contextualized understanding of the potential benefits and challenges of using video games in the classroom

2.5.2 Research Instruments

To answer the research questions, this study will use a mixed-methods research design, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods. The study comprises a sample of middle school students and English teachers, and employs classroom observations and surveys to collect data.

Quantitative data will be collected through a survey in order to procure usable data to measure student's engagement and motivation. So this study utilized a closed-ended questionnaire which refers to the type of questionnaire which contains questions as well as a set of predetermined answers; the respondents may then choose the answers that best represent their situation.(VEDASTUS,2018).

On the other hand to answer the research question, the qualitative approach was used. The procurement of the qualitative data was valuable in illuminating the details of how video games affect EFL acquisition .Qualitative data were collected through observations of classroom instruction and through interviews with teachers to gather their perceptions of the effectiveness of video games as a tool for teaching English. The data were then summarized and organized into logical descriptive data.

2.5.3 Target population

To conduct this study the researcher choses a population that consist of 30 students ,males and females .the participants are third year middle school students at AIDOUNI BROTHERS Middle School in the commune of Souahlia.

The researcher choses third year students because first and second years are still beginners and fourth years don't have enough time because they have to prepare for the BEM exam.

By focusing on middle school students and their English teachers, an interview was attributed to 11 teachers in different middle schools, 6 of them answered. The findings inform the development of more effective teaching practices that contribute to the ever growing body of research on the use of video games in education.

2.6 Description of the pupils' questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed for third year Middle school pupils at Aidouni brothers' middle school in the commune of Souahlia. It was divided into three sections of thirteen questions starting from yes/no questions , multiple choice questions and end with questions about the use of video games in classroom. section one was about pupils personal information ,gender and their level of English .section two was about the frequency playing video games and how they found learning English before the use of video games in class. And section three was about their opinions about their level and how they found learning English after the use of video games.

2.7 Results analysis

The questionnaire used in this research was able to provide valuable insights as how video games influenced the teaching of EFL in middle school;33 respondents answered all the 16 questions spread across four major categories regarding the role of digital video games in influencing the respondents' acquisition.

- **Question1: participants' gender**

The first question in the first category included personal information such as the respondents gender .

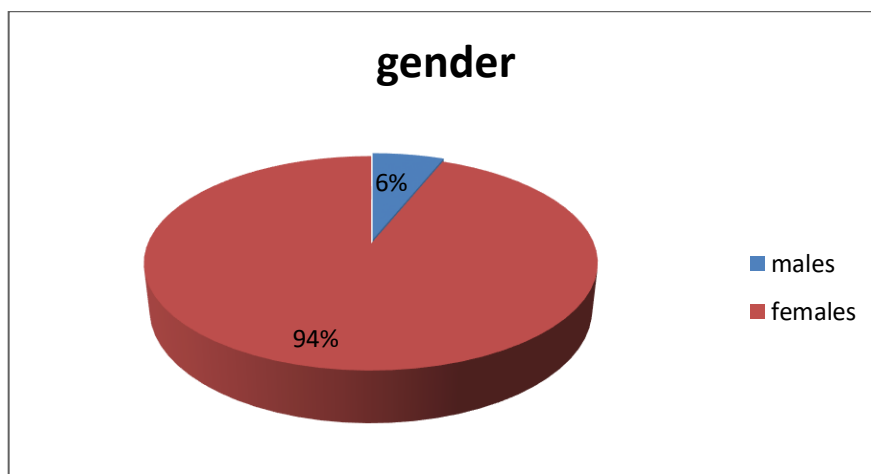


Figure 2.1 participants' gender.

The researcher concluded that most of the respondents 93.9% were girls and 6.1% boys

- **Question2 students perception of their level of English**

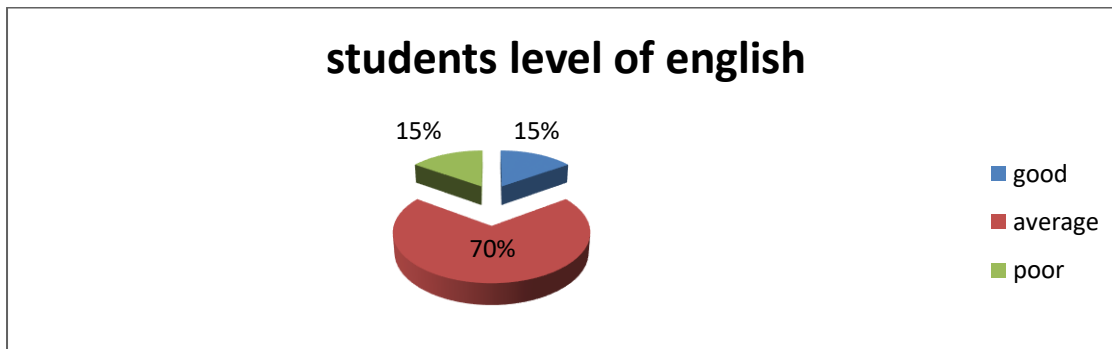


Figure2.2. pupils' perception of their level of English.

The analysis of the data shows that in overall 70% of the respondents considered their level of English average.15% good and 15% poor.

- **Question3 pupils opinions about learning English.**

The third question was related to what tasks do the respondents prefer oral tasks or written tasks.

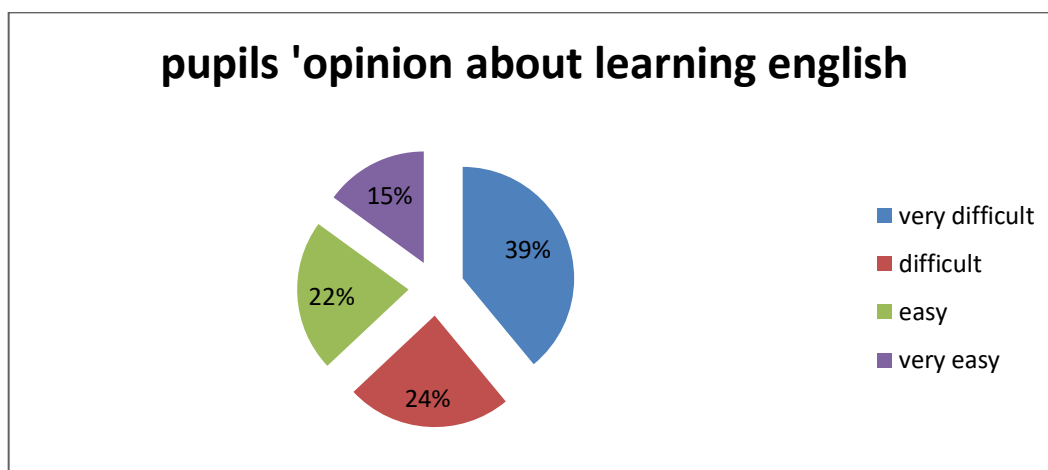


Figure2.3. pupils' opinion about learning English.

The answers showed that 39% found learning English very difficult before the use of video games,24% found it difficult, 22% said that it was easy and 15% answered very easy.

- **Question 4: pupils' favourite tasks**

The 4th question concerned whether the respondents preferred written tasks or oral tasks.

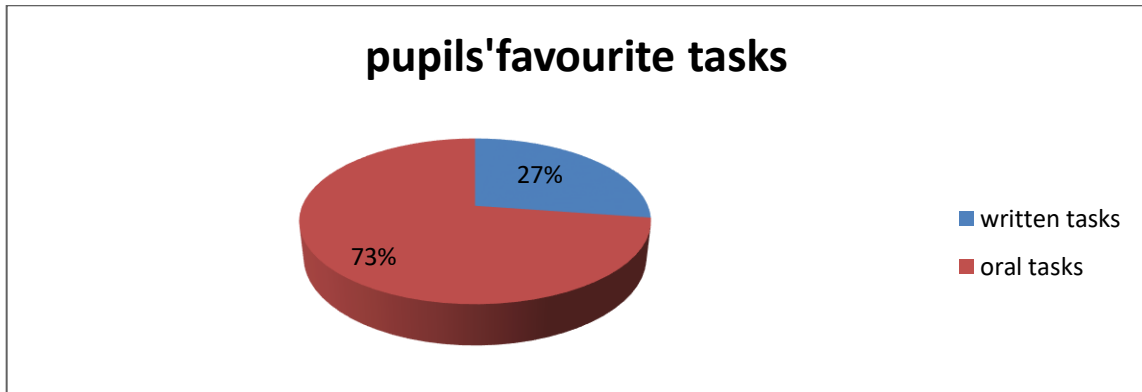


Figure 2.4. pupils favourite tasks

The data shown that 72.7% of the respondents preferred oral tasks whereas 27.3% enjoyed written tasks.

- **Question 5 pupils' opinion about vocabulary.**

In the 5th question the respondents were asked about how they found their vocabulary mainly before the use of video games.

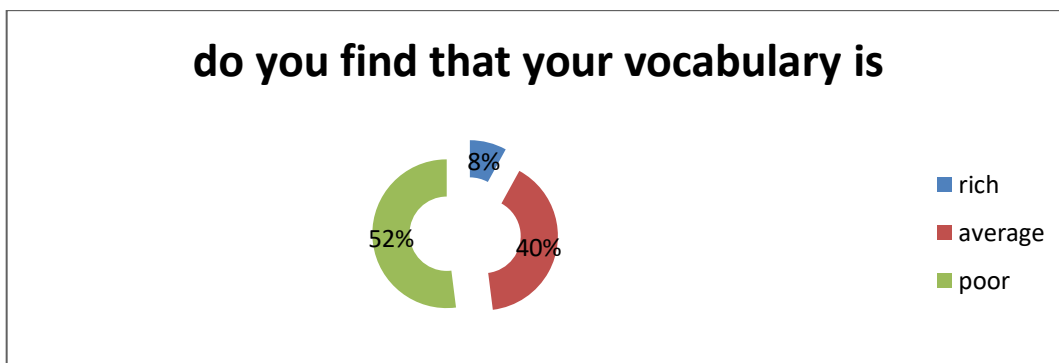


Figure 2.5. Pupils vocabulary before the use of video games.

Results show that 52% found their vocabulary poor, 40% found it average and 8% said their vocabulary was rich.

- **Question 6 the use of different strategies to motivate the pupils**

The 6th question asked the respondents whether their teacher used different strategies to motivate them.

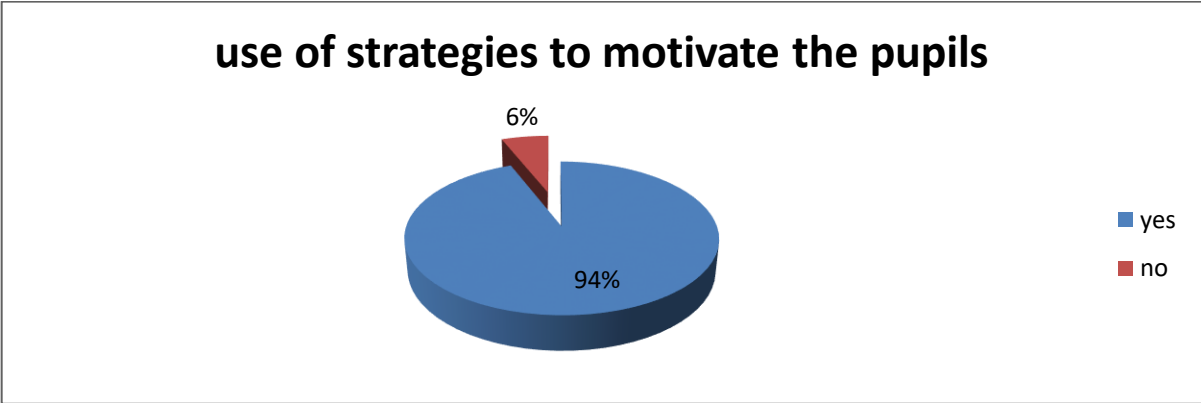


Figure 2.6. The use of strategies to motivate the learners.

The results showed that 94% of the respondents answered yes their teacher used different strategies to motivate their learners against 6% who said he/she didn't .

- **Question 7 like or dislike video games**

The next question was related to whether the respondents liked playing videogames.

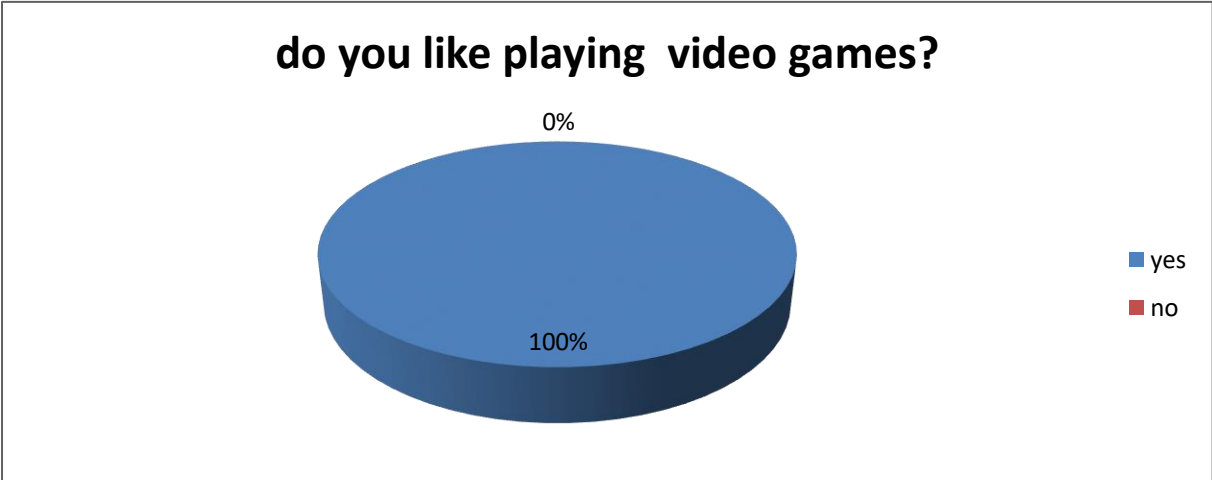


Figure2.7. pupils like or dislike playing video games.

The collected data shows that 100% of the respondents liked playing video games.

- **Question8: frequency of playing video games.**

The 8th question was related to how often do the respondents play video games.

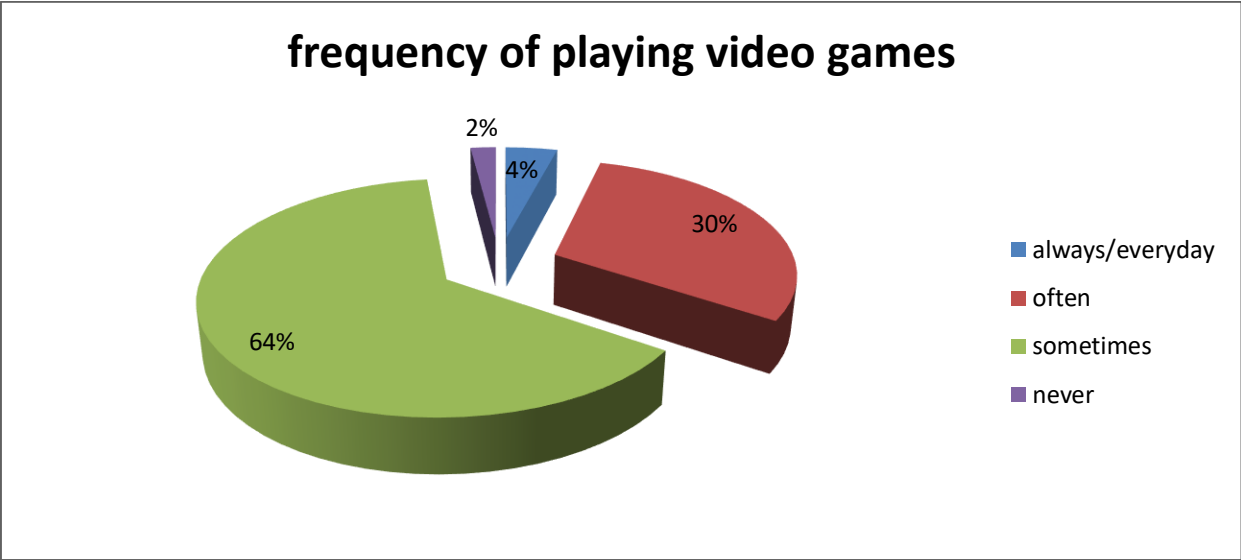


Figure 2.8. frequency of playing video games.

The analysis of the data shows that 64% of the responses were sometimes.30% of the respondents often play video games .4% said they always played video games and only 2% of them never play.

- **Question 9 boredom in EFL class after the use of video games.**

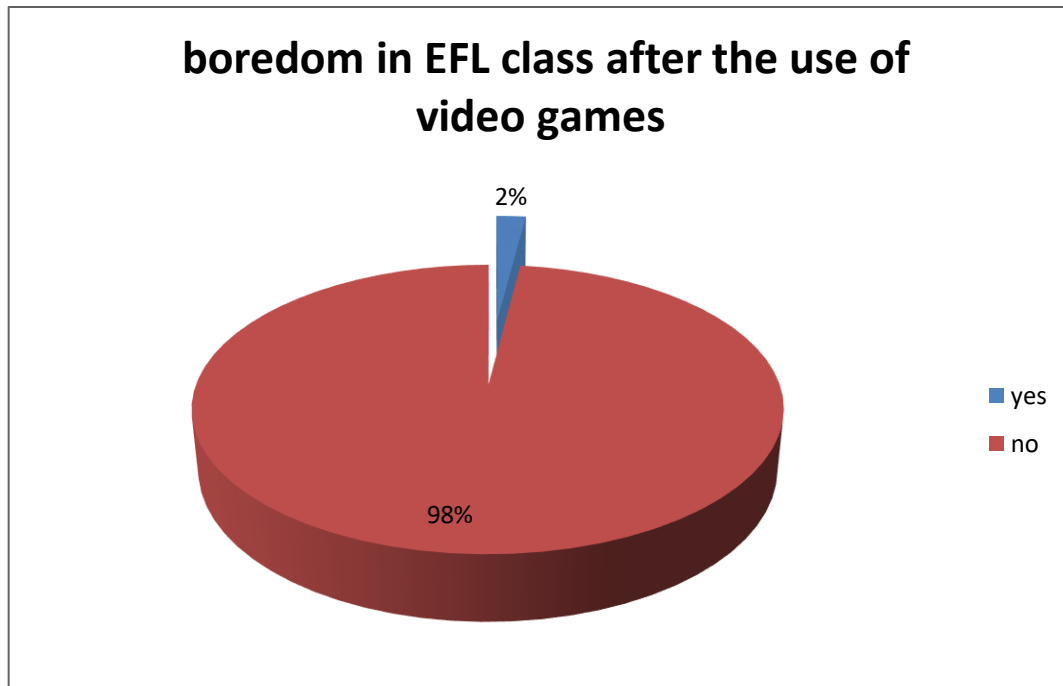


Figure 2.9. Boredom after the use of video games.

The analyse of the responses shows that 98% of the participants didn't feel bored anymore after the use of video games in class and 2% still feel boredom in class.

- **Question 10: learn by playing video games.**

In this question the researcher asked the participants if they learned by playing video games.

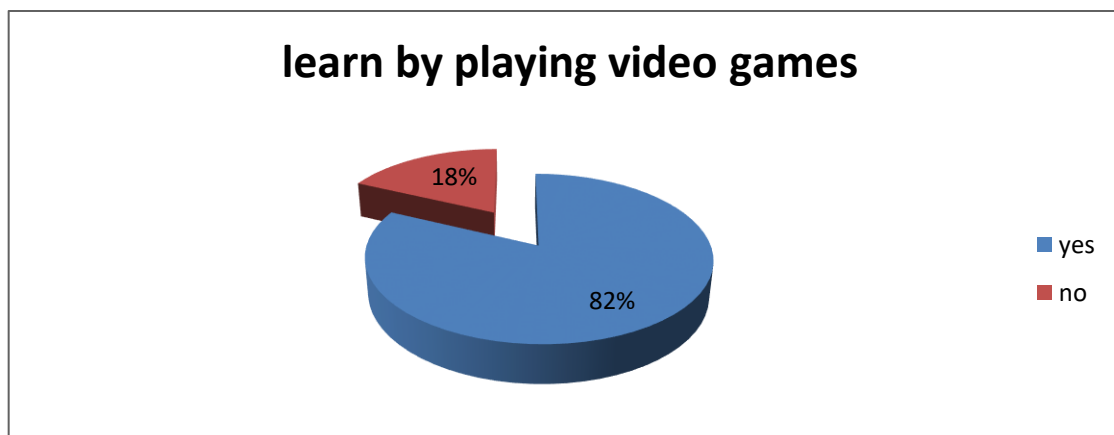


Figure 2.10. learning by playing video games.

The data analysis revealed that 82% of the respondents said yes they learned by playing video games.

- **Question 11 participants' vocabulary after the use of video games.**

In the 11th question the participants were asked how they found their vocabulary after the use of video games

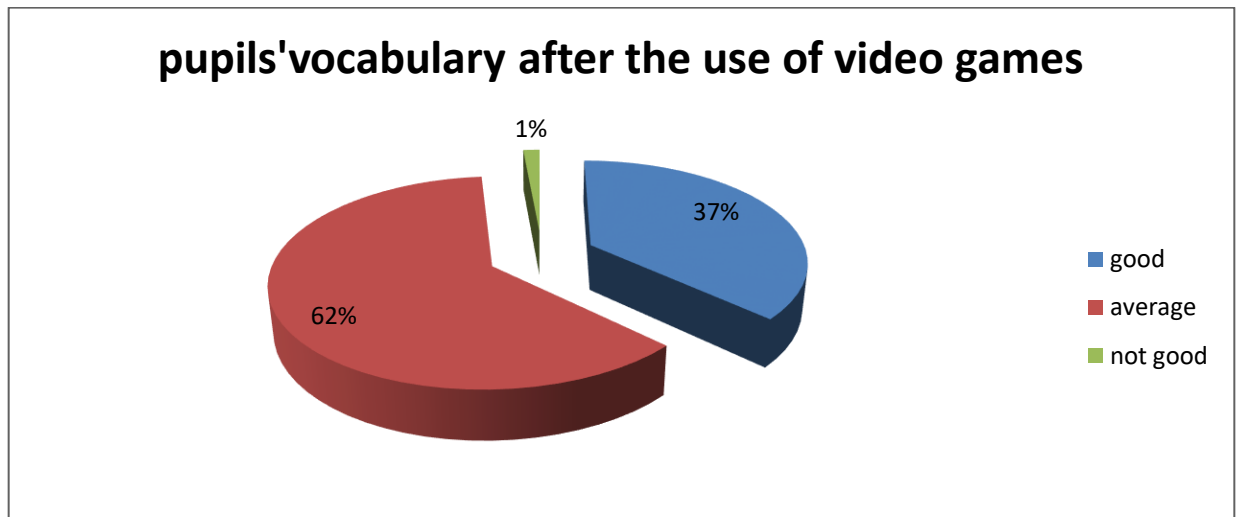


Figure 2.11. Participants' vocabulary level after the use of video games.

The analysis of the subject shows that 62% of the respondents found their vocabulary average after the use of video games,37% said it was good after the use of video games against 1% who found their vocabulary still not good.

- **Question 12 using video games in class can**

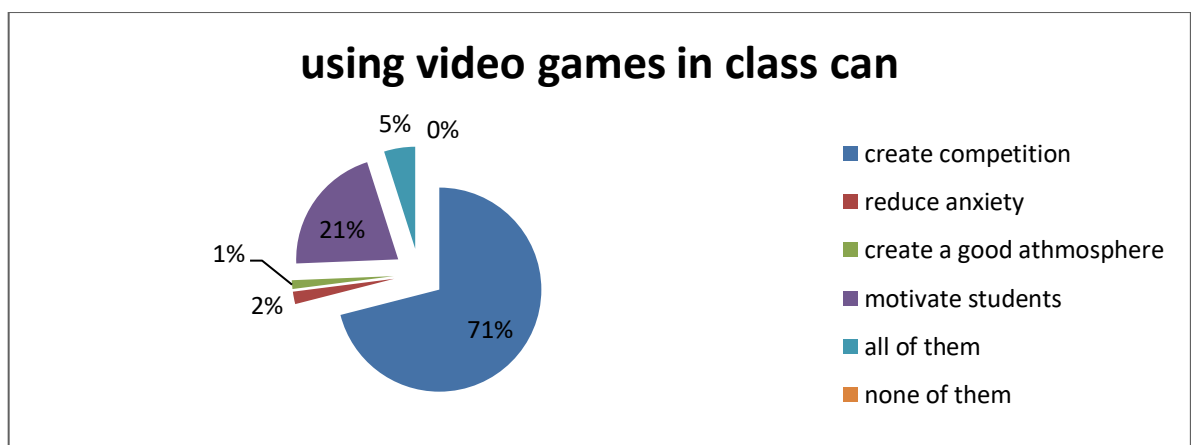


Figure2.12. what can the use of video games in EFL class do.

Data analysis shows that 71% of the respondents viewed that the use of video games in classroom created competition, 21% of them said that it motivates them, 5% answered all of them 2% said that the use of video games reduced their anxiety and 1% liked the good atmosphere.

- **Question 13: participants' feelings towards video games.**

In this question the participants were asked whether they felt comfortable when speaking English after the use of video games.

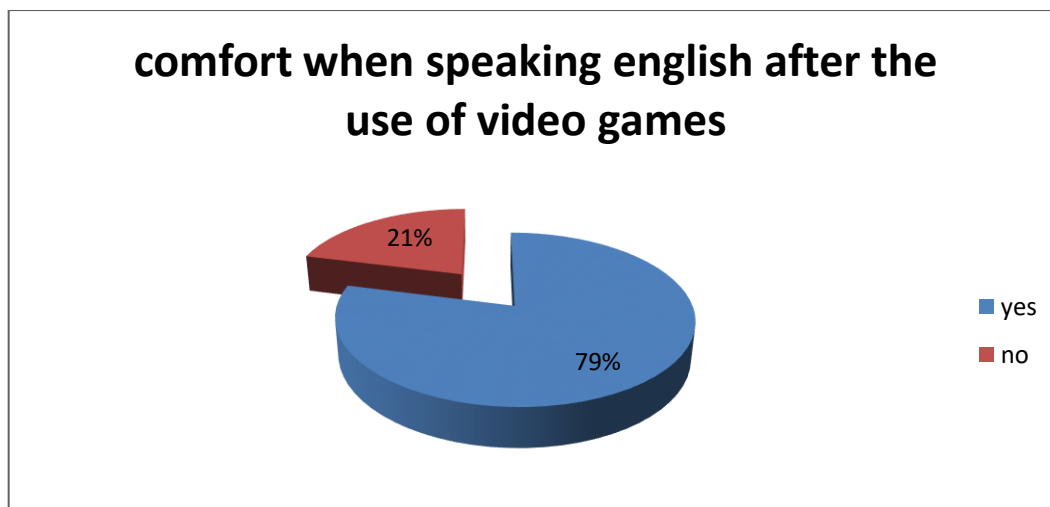


Figure 2.13. pupils comfort toward speaking English after the use of video games.

The collected results show that 79% of the respondents feel comfortable when speaking English after the utilisation of video games whereas 21% of the respondents still feel uncomfortable even after using video games in EFL class.

2.8 Description of Classroom observation

In order to find out the impact of video games on students motivation and engagement in EFL classes, and to have an in-depth view of what really happens inside the classroom, the researcher opted for observation as a tool to collect data. Observation is according to Kawulich (2012,p.01) “*a way of gathering data by watching behaviour, events or noting physical characteristics in the natural setting*”

It is therefore considered as highly effective and valued method, that permits the researchers to have an insider view and to have an extensive understanding of the research topic.

In the same vein ,Kawulish (ibid) expressed that in any case methodically watching your environment, paying attention and consideration on exercises taking place and composing down what one have got learned within the setting will be a crucial piece of the data collecting process.

The researcher started her observation during the first term of the school year 2023/2024, with a third year middle school class at Aidouni Brothers Middle School in the ‘commune’ of Souahlia. The main aim of this observation was to see how and to what extent digital video games can affect learners’ motivation and engagement. The researcher’s observation took four sessions that included educational video games with an experienced teacher at Aidouni Brothers Middle School. In this session, the researcher focused on observing the learners’ attitudes, acts, reactions, interactions and body language .the educational video games were used in teaching the first sequence entitled “Me, my abilities, my interests and my personality”. I listen and do, the language use with the objective was to enable the pupils to talk about their interests, express their abilities and inabilities, likes and dislikes and use frequency adverbs.

2.8.1 Observation grid before the use of video games

The objective of the following grid of Observations is to help the researcher gather data and insights about teaching and learning processes, mainly about their interaction ,participation ,risk taking, volunteering and more importantly motivation and engagement. Additionally it helps the researcher reflect on their own practice, identify strengths and weaknesses, and make data-informed decisions to improve their instructional strategies and classroom management.

Observations level	High	Medium	Low	None
Eyes on the teacher	X	X	X	
Non-verbal response		XX	X	
Discussion on the topic		X	X	
Participation		X	X	
Volunteering			X	X
Asking questions			X	X
Expressing ideas			X	
Interaction		X	X	
Engagement			X	X
Enjoyment		X	X	
Self esteem		X	X	X
Taking risks		X		
Afraid of mistakes	XXX			
Physical ,mental and emotional energy	X	X		
Motivation		X	X	

Table 1: observation grid before the use of video games.

The collected data show that the participants participation was maigre they were afraid of making mistakes though their physical and mental energy was high they didn't want to make any efforts or to take risks , the researcher noticed a medium to low motivation and engagement.

2.9 Results analysis

The data collected through observation showed amelioration in the pupils' participation and risk taking. Moreover, the researcher noticed a very high enjoyment which led to a higher degree of motivation and engagement. Add to this that the participants were less afraid of making mistakes and asking questions. And above all this they interacted and discussed the topics in a very satisfying manner.

- **Pupils' engagement observation**

During the sessions of observation the observer noticed positive body language, consistent focus, participation , and learners confidence were observed by the researcher to determine whether the pupils are engaged or not during playing educational video games.

- **Positive body language**

The following table shows the researcher's observation of the positive body language of 33 pupils of third year during four sessions of playing video games.

	high	medium	low	none
Eyes on the teacher	X	-	-	-
Non-verbal response(moving)	X	-	-	-

Table 2: positive body language

The table above shows positive body language. Eye contact between the teacher and pupils is high than it was in classical tasks also their facial expressions were very expressive, smiles ...etc. their posture reflected that they were engaged.

- Consistent focus**

The following table shows the teacher’s observation in terms of focus and concentration during playing video games.

	High	Mediu	Low	None
degree		m		
Discussion on topic	X			

Table3: pupils focus in classroom.

The results show that most of the pupils stay focused during playing educational video games they listen carefully to the teacher and to each other mainly while the teacher explains the game’s rules. The researcher, however, observed that the pupils sometimes tend to get very excited for a moment to talk about who is going to win or about the game itself.

- Pupils’ participation**

The next table elicits data about pupil’s participation.

	High	Medium	Low - none
volunteering	X		
discussing	X		
Asking questions	X		

Table4: pupils participation

During the lesson through video games the observer noticed that the pupils make more efforts to speak English and even correct the language to each other especially in group work. She also noticed that the pupils tend more to ask questions about the games rules while playing. They also tend to make more noise than before using video games.

- **Pupils confidence and motivation**

The following table represents the pupils' motivation and confidence while learning with video games.

	High	Medium	Low
Work independently	X	X	
Willingness to take risks	X		
Interest in the lesson	X		
Do their best	X		
Self esteem	X		
Physical,mental and emotional energy	X		
Express ideas and thoughts.	X		

Table 5: Pupils' confidence and motivation.

The result show that, besides being interested in the lesson and working independently, educational video games allow pupils to express their ideas and thoughts with no fear of making mistakes ,also they are not afraid of taking risks.

2.10 Description of teachers' interview

By focusing on middle school students and their English teachers, this study provides valuable insights into the potential benefits and challenges of using video games in teaching English at this level. The findings inform the development of more effective teaching practices that contribute to the ever growing body of research on the use of video games in education.

The interview consists of three sections divided into thirteen questions divided into three rubrics .the first rubric starts from how many years they have been teaching moving to what they do to motivate their learners and whether they were interested or not in using video games in English classes and if video games increase the learners familiarity with English language. The second rubric focuses on what concerns or challenges do they have about using video games in your EFL classes and whether the use of video games can increase learners' motivation and reduce monotony.

In the third rubric the participants were asked to suggest the most effective educational video games they may know .

2.11 Results analysis

In order to explore the role of video games in EFL classes an interview was attributed to 11 teachers in different schools in the wilaya of tlemcen, only 6 of them answered.

- **Question 1 seniority in teaching English**

The first question the interviewees were asked about their seniority in teaching

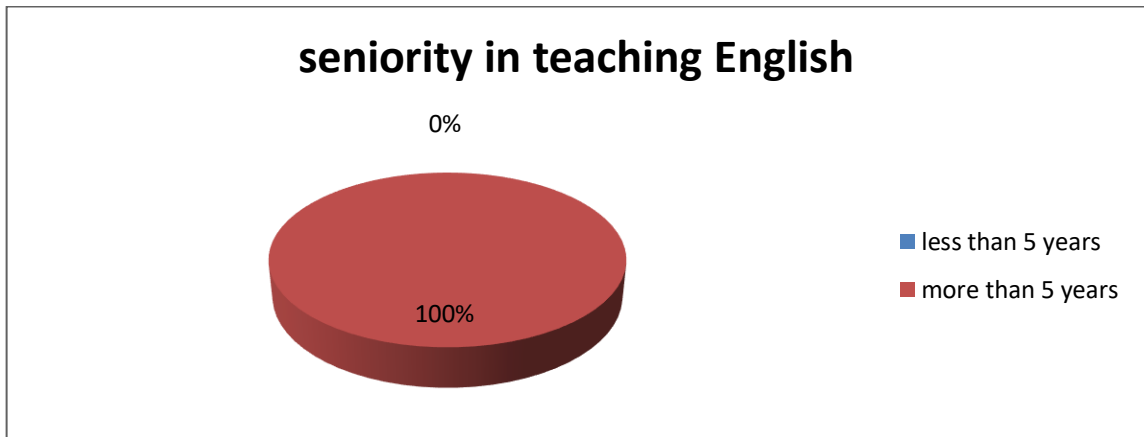


Figure 2.14. Seniority in teaching English.

The analyse of the collected data shows that 100% of the interviewees confirmed that they had over 5 years of experience in teaching

- **Question 2: learners' difficulties in learning English**

The second question was on whether their learners faced difficulties in learning English.

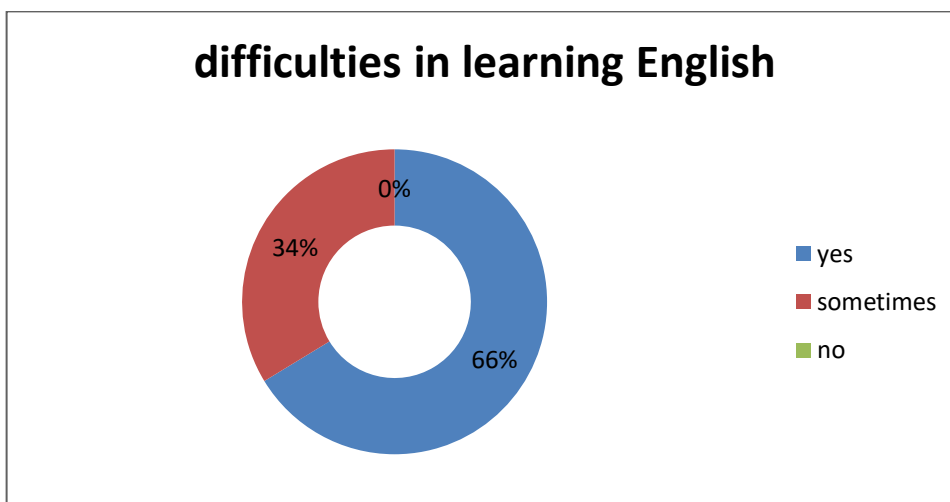


Figure2.15.whether learners face difficulties in learning English.

The results collected showed that Four teachers (66.7%) answered yes and 2 (33.3%) said that their learners sometimes face difficulties in learning English.

- **Question 3: use of strategies to motivate learners**

The third question was about whether the interviewees used different strategies to motivate their pupils and if yes what kind of strategies.

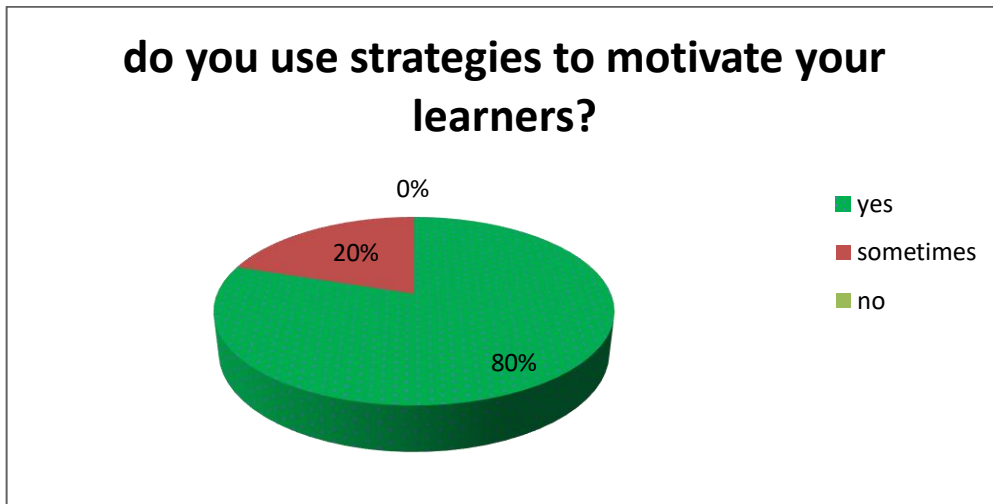


Figure 2.16. Strategies to motivate learners

The results' analysis shows that 80% of the participants confirmed that they often used strategies to motivate their learners and 20% of them sometimes used strategies to motivate the pupils. Moreover, the interviewees assumed that they used different tactics in their EFL classes such as Competitions, language games ,songs ,videos and puzzles.

- **Question 4: frequency of using games in EFL classes**

The fourth question was on how often do they (teachers) use language games when teaching?

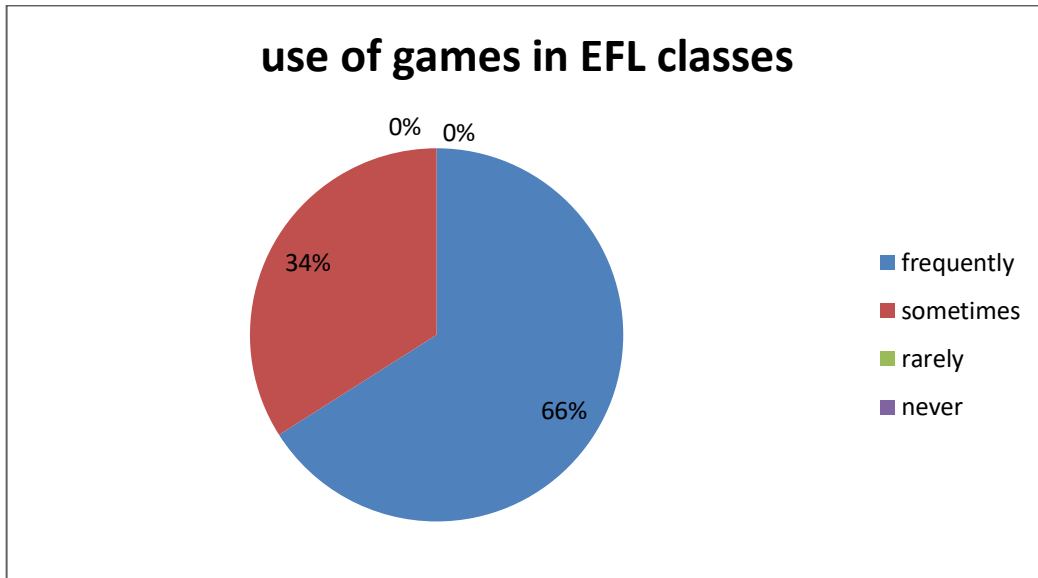


Figure2.17. frequency of using games in EFL classes.

The 6 respondents answered as follows: 66.7% said that they frequently used games. And 33.3% answered that they sometimes used games in teaching.

- **Question 5: teachers 'current level of interest in using video games in EFL middle school classes**

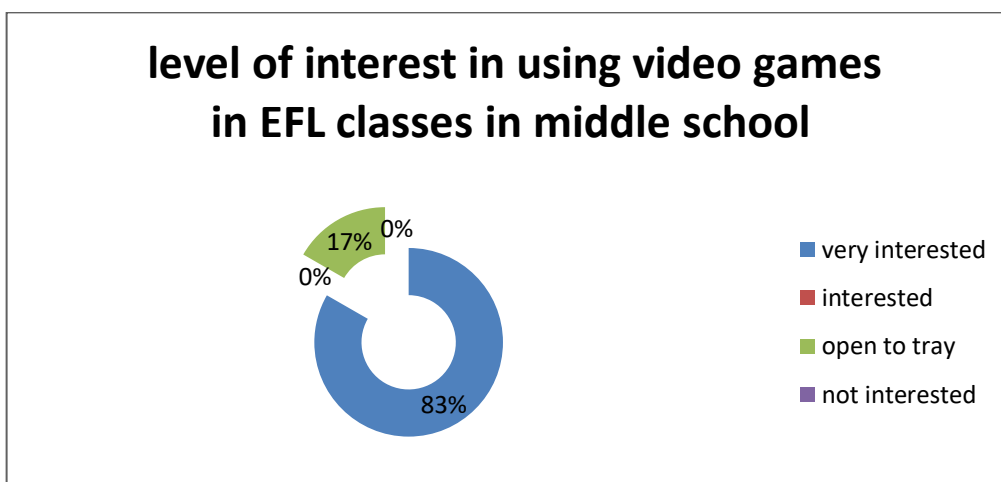


Figure2.18. participants' level of interest toward using video games in EFL classes.

Concerning the 5th question which was about the interviewee's current level of interest in using video games in EFL middle school classes. 83.3% of the respondents said they were very interested in using video games in EFL classes and 16.7% were open to try .

- **Question 6: previous use of video games in EFL classes**

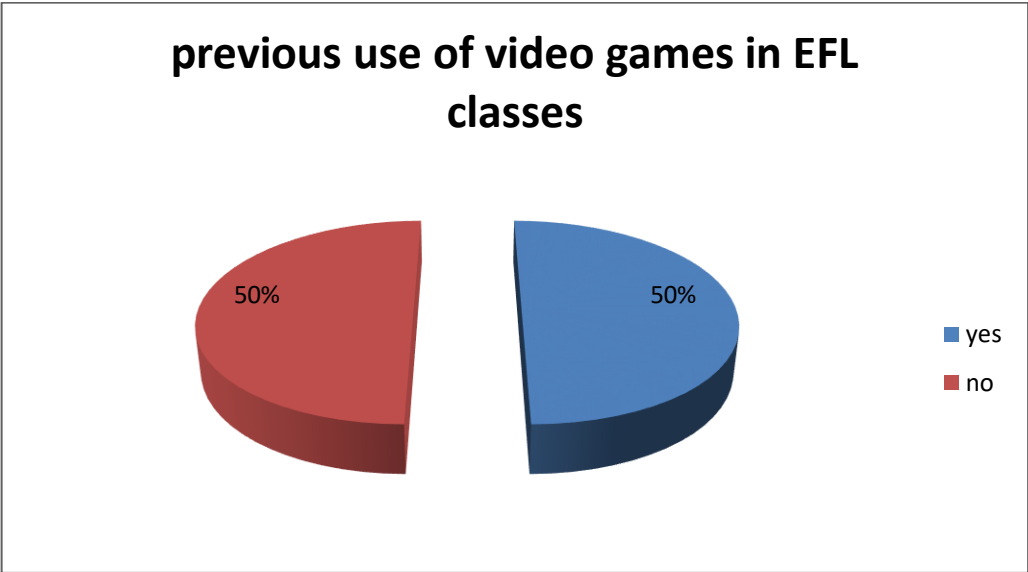


Figure2.19. previous use of video games in EFL classes .

The results show that 50% of the respondents said yes they tried Minecraft and they were happy with the results.

- **Question 7: participants ‘opinion about the relation between the use of video games and motivation.**

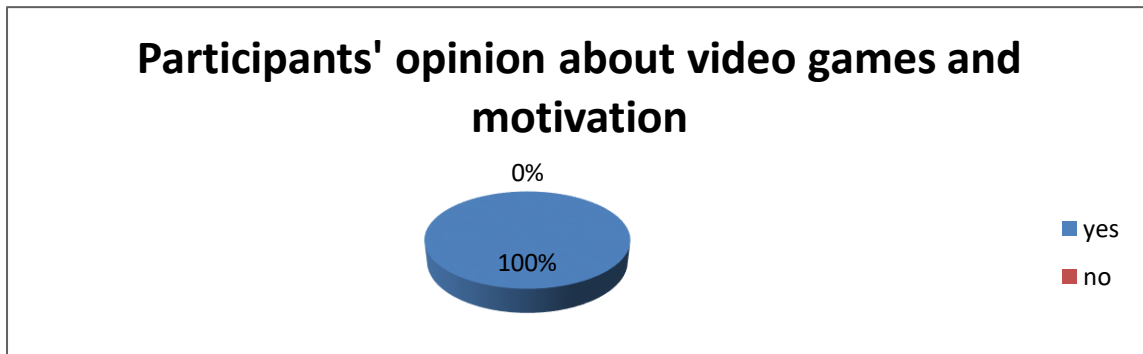


Figure 2.20. participants’ opinion about the relation between the use of video games and motivation.

The data show that 100% said yes and all of the respondents confirmed that video games can help active engagement in EFL middle school classes.

- **Question 8 :the use video games challenges**

The researcher asked the interviewees in the 8th question about what concerns or challenges do they have about using video games in their EFL classes and the results showed that the interviewees had some issues such as the Availability of the right equipment and a specific theatre room . Also they complained from crowded classrooms which cause too much noise in class, in addition to the very limited time. The respondents also complained from the huge lack of materials and some of them mentioned the cost of the game as a very important challenge that shouldn’t be neglected. Another challenge mentioned by the respondents is the access to required tech resources since, according to them, limited resources often makes difficult to schedule access to the computers .

- **Question 9: most effective types of video games**

In question number 9 the researcher asked what types of video games do they think would be most effective in EFL middle school classes. The data collected reveals that the interviewees suggested different types of video games such as

Communicative ones. Educative ones. Simple and funny video games. Tactile and kinaesthetic video games and Computer gaming.

- **Question 10: video games and monotony**

In the 10th question the interviewer asked on How do the interviewees think video games can motivate pupils save from monotony in EFL classes. The respondents affirmed that video games can motivate the pupils through holding their interest also by changing the traditional way of teaching which is considered boring for -them and using a more interactive method to engage them especially when they are changing games each time

- **Question 11 :video games and English proficiency**

In the 11th question the researcher asked if the participants thought that the practice of video games in EFL classes can increase the learners' familiarity with English language. The results' analysis showed that all the responses were positive; the respondents confirmed that pupils learn many new words and lexis via these videos.

- **Question12 :needed support and resources**

The 12th question asked about what support or resources do they need to effectively use video games in your EFL classes. The analyse of the results revealed that they all agreed on the same points which are the need of enough computers, to reduce the number of pupils per class and the availability of internet for free.

- **Question 13: suggestions**

The last question was whether they had any suggestions for specific video games that could be used in EFL middle school classes .33.3% said they had no suggestions 16.7% opted for communicative ones but did not mention any example of video games.16.7% opted for computer gaming in general. 16.7% opted for Minecraft.

And the last 16.7% said that the video games should be selected according to the level of the learners.

2.12 Discussion of the findings

Based on the data analysis of the research instruments ,pupils questionnaire, classroom observation and teachers interviews ,the researcher gets final and convincing answers to the research questions namely the first one: To what extent does the use of video games in English classes influence student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement compared to classes that do not use video games? And also the second one : How do students and teachers perceive the effectiveness of video games as a tool for teaching English, and what factors contribute to their perceptions?

Regarding the first hypothesis which stipulates that digital video games actively engage the pupils, enhance their motivation and reduces monotony, the collected data revealed interesting results. The class observation showed that, video games highly motivate the learners video games can provide a unique and engaging way to supplement traditional language learning methods which are most of the time boring and increase learner motivation. The researcher finds that video games can sustain learners' motivation in EFL classes by providing a context for learning new words and concepts, repetition, entertainment, interaction, and cultural immersion. Thus, by creating a classroom environment that fosters autonomy, competence, and relatedness, teachers can help students maintain motivation and increase their engagement in EFL class activities.

Additionally, video games can help prevent boredom in EFL classes by providing a unique and engaging way to supplement traditional language learning methods. Therefore ,video games could be utilized to create courses that not only make learning enjoyable but also engage and motivate students in both traditional and online. Moreover, the results reveal that active engagement is closely related to gaming as was one of the concerns of de Haan et al.(2010) Who investigated the effects of

using the music of video games to enhance the learners 'vocabulary. learning environments.

The second hypothesis suggests that video games are very effective as a tool for teaching English . the results of the pupils' questionnaire and the interview with the teachers confirm the hypothesis , the researcher finds that video games make the learners much more inquisitive, involved and very excited so they become more passionate and active the fact that increases the amount of participation, interaction and involvement which means that they are highly motivated and actively engaged in the learning process and this is thanks to video games which help fostering positive relationships between the classmates themselves as well as between the classmates and their teacher ,video games also hone their curiosity and interest to learn and make them take pleasure in learning and respond well to challenges.

Additionally, the results procured from the questionnaire with regard to whether video games impacted the respondents listening and speaking in a positive manner showed that the respondent agreed strongly that through video games they could comprehend and follow expressions and improve their speaking skills.

From the results it could be deduced that digital video games are very beneficial in EFL learning.

Furthermore after the analyse of the findings the researcher concluded that game environment was very advantageous to the participants language development and that in particular the process of transferring linguistic constructions encountered in the game environment to a non-game environment .

From the results also, it could be concluded that the respondents strongly agreed that video games were able to assist them in improving their reading skills which include identifying the main ideas of a text ,understanding the instructions and difficult vocabularies .

Moreover, the respondents' responses to the statements in the questionnaire were able to provide a deep insight into the role of video games as a learning

motivator; the respondents were; on a large margin, in strong favour of the idea that video games had positive impacts on their learning motivation.

The results that showed positive responses , were able to reveal the effectiveness of audio and visual elements in video games in not only improving the responders' listening and speaking skills ,but also helping them acquiring new vocabulary, and attaining higher levels of learning motivation.

Finally , this research was able not only to demonstrate that the integration of video games genres and contexts could improve learners 's listening and speaking skills and motivation, but it was also capable to prove that this integration of video games genres and contexts into EFL acquisition may help learners improve their linguistic skills.

2.13 Limitations of the study

In any research study, it is crucial to recognize and address the limitations that may impact the validity and generalizability of the findings. The current study has a number of limitations that warrant discussion.

Firstly, the sample size was relatively not homogeneous in gender since there were much more girls than boys, which may have limited the statistical power of the study and the ability to detect deeper effects.

Secondly, the study relied on self-reported data, which can be subject to recall bias and social desirability bias. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data may have influenced the results, as participants were the researcher's own pupils they may have provided responses that they perceived to be more desirable or accurate, rather than their actual experiences.

Additionally, due to the small number of responding teachers (6), the findings may not be representative of the larger population, and the results should be interpreted with caution.

2.14 Recommendations

Based on the findings, several recommendations can be made for the use of video games in English language teaching in Algeria.

First, teachers should consider incorporating video games into their lessons to enhance pupils' engagement and motivation. This can be done by selecting age-appropriate and language-focused video games that align with the curriculum and learning objectives.

Second, teachers should provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on their language learning and gameplay experiences. This can be done through guided discussions, reflective writing prompts, or other activities that encourage pupils to think critically about their language skills and the strategies they used in the game.

Third, teachers should consider using video games as a tool for differentiation and personalized learning. By allowing pupils to choose their own games or levels, teachers can provide opportunities for pupils to work at their own pace and focus on their areas of need.

Moreover, the results collected from research instrument have demonstrated that video games have a very beneficial effect on learners' motivation and engagement in EFL classes and that they could be a very helpful tool in teaching English to the new coming generations.

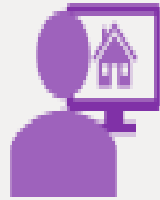
2.14.1 For the learners

Because of the limited number of interviewees and the lack of homogeneity among the respondents in this research it would be better to conduct this study with more homogeneous classes with more participating teachers in order to provide stronger reliable results.

Also incorporating this study to a broader scope of participants including more middle School classes or even schools would make the results more generalizable.

The following table shows some suggestions of how educational video games can be played in class as well as at home.

Students play at home



before class



after class

Students play in class



One device
per student



In groups
or pairs



One device
per class

Figure 2.21: students play at home VS students play in class

2.14.2 For the teachers

Language teachers should not only focus on language skills they should prioritize learners' motivation and active engagement beyond language skills for several reasons. First, fostering learners' motivation and engagement can lead to improved academic achievement and better language skills. When learners are actively engaged in the learning process, they are more likely to invest cognitive effort, which can enhance their understanding and retention of the material. Moreover, motivated learners are more likely to participate in class discussions, ask questions, and seek additional resources, further supporting their language development.

Moreover, prioritizing motivation and engagement can help language teachers address the diverse needs and interests of their learners. By tapping into learners' intrinsic motivation and encouraging active participation, teachers can create opportunities for learners to explore topics that are relevant and meaningful to them. This can lead to a more student-centred approach to language instruction, where learners take an active role in their own learning and are better able to connect their language skills to real-world contexts.

2.15 Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the role of video games as a teaching technique for English in Algeria, focusing on enhancing pupils' linguistic skills and learning motivation. The methodology, research setting, target population, and timing were described, followed by an explanation of the research tools used to collect data.

The findings of this study generally support the hypotheses that video games can enhance pupils' linguistic skills and learning motivation. The use of video games in the English language classroom can provide an engaging and interactive learning experience, helping to maintain pupils' interest and motivation. Furthermore, video games can offer opportunities for pupils to practice their language skills in a fun and low-stress environment.

General conclusion

General conclusion

With the growing acceptance of using educational video games to teach English as a foreign language, the use of video games in English classes has been a topic of interest in educational research. The current study highlighted the effects of using digital video games to enhance learners' motivation and engagement especially that many learners feel disengaged during the lessons due to monotonous teaching.

The main objective of this research was to find out if the use of educational video games affect positively or negatively on learners engagement and motivation. Another aim of this study is to find how do students and teachers perceive the effectiveness of video games as a tool for teaching English, and what factors contribute to their perceptions.

This study is sustained by two main questions:

1-To what extent does the use of video games in English classes influence student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement compared to classes that do not use video games?

2-How do students and teachers perceive the effectiveness of video games as a tool for teaching English, and what factors contribute to their perceptions?

To make the study systematic two main hypotheses were tested. The first hypothesis (H1) suggests that the use of video games in English classes has a significant positive impact on student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement compared to classes that do not use video games. Meanwhile, the second hypothesis (H2) posits that students and teachers perceive video games as an effective tool for teaching English, and their perceptions are influenced by factors such as the type of video game used, the integration of video games into the curriculum, and the level of support and training provided to teachers.

Based on the study's main questions and hypotheses, there are some potential future research directions:

As the current study focuses on the immediate impact of video games on student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement . Future research could investigate the long-term effects of video game-based learning on English language proficiency.

The second hypothesis suggests that the level of support and training provided to teachers may influence their perceptions of video games as a teaching tool. Future research could not only explore the most effective ways to train and support teachers in integrating video games into their English language classes, but also examine the factors that influence these attitudes, such as gender, age, prior experience with video games, or cultural background...etc.

Future research could investigate the neural mechanisms underlying the impact of video games on English language learning, such as the role of attention, memory, or executive functions.

Moreover, future research could explore the potential of video games to promote accessibility and inclusivity in English language learning, such as designing games that cater to students with disabilities or those from marginalized communities.

The researcher's desire to achieve the previously stated objectives prompted the decision to conduct action research as an appropriate method to examine the impact of digital video games on enhancing the skills of EFL learners and increasing their motivation and engagement. This investigation aims to collect both quantitative and qualitative data to provide statistics and descriptions on how video games affect EFL learning among 3rd-year middle school students in Algeria. To achieve this, the researcher plans to use a student questionnaire, classroom observation, and teacher interviews.

This research study is intentionally organized into two main chapters to verify the previously stated hypotheses. The first chapter focuses on discussing the relationship between digital game research and earlier studies on game-based learning, particularly with younger learners. It also explores the primary areas where research has been conducted, highlights the most significant findings, and identifies challenges

faced by the field. Additionally, it proposes future directions for research and development in this area. The second chapter presents the analysis of data collected from three research instruments: a questionnaire, a classroom observation, and an interview.

While the results of individual studies may vary, there is a growing body of evidence that supports both hypotheses. Research has shown that the use of video games in English classes can lead to increased student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement. Additionally, students and teachers generally view video games as an effective tool for teaching English, with their perceptions being influenced by factors such as the type of video game used, the integration of video games into the curriculum, and the level of support and training provided to teachers.

In conclusion, this study provides evidence that video games can be an effective tool for teaching English in Algeria, particularly in enhancing pupils' linguistic skills and learning motivation. By incorporating video games into their lessons, teachers can provide an engaging and interactive learning experience that supports pupils' language development and promotes a love of learning.

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APPENDICES

Pupils 'questionnaire: The use of video games in English classes in middle school.

Greetings dear students . This survey asks you about how do you find the utilization of video games in English language classes. The usefulness of this survey depends on your thoughtful answers, the information obtained from you will help, teachers and student leaders to improve the conditions that contribute to your learning.
Thank you for your cooperation and participation.

1) Gender

- Male
- Female

2) How do you consider your level of English?

- Good
- Average
- Poor

3) How do you find learning English?

- Very difficult
- Difficult
- Easy
- Very easy

4) Which classroom activities do you find the most enjoyable?

- Written tasks
- Oral tasks

5) When learning English do you think that your vocabulary is?

- Good/rich
- Average
- Poor

6) Does your teacher use different strategies to motivate you to learn English?

- Yes
- No

7) Do you like playing video games?

- Yes
- No

8) How often do you play video games?

- Always /every day
- Often
- Sometimes
- Never

9) Do you feel bored in your English class after the use of video games?

- Yes
- No

10) Did you learn by playing video games?

- Yes
- No

11) How do you find your vocabulary after the use of video games?

- Good
- Average
- Not good

12) Using video games in English class can

- Create competition
- Reduce anxiety
- Create a good atmosphere
- Motivate students
- All of them
- None of them

13) Do you feel comfortable when speaking English after the use of video games?

- Yes
- No

Teachers 'interview: The use of video games in EFL classes in middle school .

By focusing on middle school students and their English teachers, this study provides valuable insights into the potential benefits and challenges of using video games in teaching English at this level. The findings inform the development of more effective teaching practices that contribute to the ever growing body of research on the use of video games in education.

1- How many years have you been teaching?

- less than 5 years
- more than 5 years.

2- Do your learners face difficulties in learning English?

- yes
- sometimes
- no

3- What strategies do you use to motivate your pupils?

4- how often do you use language games when teaching?

- frequently
- sometimes
- rarely
- never

4- What is your current level of interest in using video games in EFL middle school classes?

- very interested.
- open to try
- not interested.

5- Have you ever used video games in your EFL classes before? If yes, please describe your experience.

- yes
- No

6- Do you think video games can help active engagement in EFL middle school classes? Why or why not?

- yes
- no
- no idea

7- What concerns or challenges do you have about using video games in your EFL classes?

.....
.....

8-do you think that the use of video games can increase learners 'motivation

- yes
- No

9- What types of video games do you think would be most effective in EFL middle school classes?

.....
.....

10- How do you think video games can motivate pupils save from monotony in EFL classes?

.....
.....
.....

11- Do you think that the practice of video games in EFL classes can increase the learners familiarity with English language?

.....
.....

12- What support or resources do you need to effectively use video games in your EFL classes?

.....
.....

13-Do you have any suggestions for specific video games that could be used in EFL middle school classes?

.....
.....
.....

Lesson plan

Level MS3	School:Aidouni Brothers	Teacher :GHIRANE.CH
Sequence 1:ME,MY ABILITIES,MY INTEREST AND MY PERSONALITY.	Lesson: Expressing Ability and Inability in Minecraft	Frame work: PPU.
General Learning objective: By the end of the lesson,students will be able to use Minecraft to express ability and inability in a fun and engaging way.	Domain: oral/written/both I pronounce: can/ can't	Materials: -w.board -Tablets one device per group. -Alternatively: one screen +data show.
Cross curricular competencies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Intellectual: learner can talk about his abilities and inabilities and interpret verbal and non-verbal messages. ➤ Methodological: learners can use his listening and speaking skills. ➤ Communicative:learner can communicate freely in the context of the game ➤ Personal/social: learners can socialise through oral exchanges. 	Core values <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Raising awareness and encourage learners to reflect on their talents. ➤ Being positive. Subjects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Language Arts, Technology Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Critical thinking, creativity, communication 	More values: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pupils will also have the opportunity to develop their critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills.

I- Warm up:

Short Description: In this lesson, students will use the Minecraft video game to create structures and scenarios that demonstrate ability and inability.

Introduction: In this lesson, students will learn how to express ability and inability using the Minecraft video game. They will use various in-game tools and resources to create structures and scenarios that demonstrate their understanding of these concepts.

Objectives:

- Students will be able to use Minecraft to create structures and scenarios that demonstrate ability and inability.
- Students will be able to explain how their creations demonstrate these concepts.
- Students will be able to give and receive feedback on their creations.

Teacher's role :

- Make sure all students have access to the Minecraft Education Edition.
- Divide students into small groups.
- Provide each group with a set of guidelines for creating their structures and scenarios.
- Allow time for students to share and discuss their creations.
- Guiding Ideas and Questions:

Example:

-How can you use Minecraft to demonstrate ability?

-How can you use Minecraft to demonstrate inability?

-How can you give and receive feedback on your creations?

Student Activities:

- **Presentation:** (10 minutes, visual, auditory ,kinaesthetic)

-Explain the learning objectives to students.

-Divide students into small groups.

-Provide each group with a set of guidelines for creating their structures and scenarios.

- **Practice:** (game play ,40 minutes ,visual, auditory, kinaesthetic and tactile)

-Allow students to use Minecraft to create their structures and scenarios.

-Encourage students to be creative and think critically.

-Remind students to follow the guidelines.

-Sharing and Feedback (10 minutes)

-Allow each group to share their creations with the class.

-Encourage students to give and receive feedback on their creations.

➤ **Use:**

-Students will be able to use Minecraft to create structures and scenarios that demonstrate ability and inability.

-Students will be able to explain how their creations demonstrate these concepts.

-Students will be able to give and receive feedback on their creations.

Remark: teacher should put emphasis on the correct pronunciation of can and can't.

Summary

Student engagement is a critical factor in academic achievement, and educators are continually seeking innovative ways to enhance student motivation and interest in learning. This study investigated the impact of video games on student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement in English classes. The study found that video games can be an effective tool for teaching English in Algeria, particularly in enhancing pupils' linguistic skills and learning motivation. By incorporating video games into their lessons, teachers can provide an engaging and interactive learning experience that supports pupils' language development and promotes a love of learning. Furthermore, the study's findings have implications for educators and policymakers seeking to improve student engagement and academic achievement. Finally, future research could explore the long-term impact of video games on student engagement and academic achievement, investigate the effectiveness of different types of video games, and examine the role of teacher training and support in integrating video games into the curriculum.

Résumé

L'engagement des étudiants est un facteur crucial dans la réussite académique, et les éducateurs cherchent continuellement des moyens innovants pour améliorer la motivation et l'intérêt des étudiants pour l'apprentissage. Cette étude a examiné l'impact des jeux vidéo sur l'engagement, la motivation et la réussite académique dans les classes d'anglais. L'étude a révélé que les jeux vidéo peuvent être un outil très efficace pour enseigner l'anglais en Algérie, en particulier pour améliorer les compétences linguistiques des apprenants ainsi que leur motivation. En intégrant les jeux vidéo dans leurs leçons, les enseignants peuvent offrir une expérience d'apprentissage à la fois révolutionnaire, interactive et engageante qui soutient le développement linguistique des élèves et promeut l'amour de l'apprentissage. De plus, les résultats de l'étude pourraient donner de nouvelles perspectives pour les éducateurs et les décideurs qui cherchent à améliorer l'engagement et la réussite des étudiants. Enfin, des futures recherches pourraient explorer l'impact, à long terme, des jeux vidéo sur l'engagement et la réussite des étudiants, examiner l'efficacité de différents types de jeux vidéo et pourquoi pas étudier le rôle de la formation et du soutien des enseignants pour intégrer les jeux vidéo dans le curriculum.

ملخص

مشاركة الطلاب هي عامل حاسم في النجاح الأكاديمي، ويبحث المدرسون باستمرار وسائل مبتكرة لتحسين دافع الطلاب والاهتمام بالتعلم. أجريت هذه الدراسة لاستكشاف تأثير الألعاب الإلكترونية على المشاركة والدافع والنجاح الأكاديمي في صفوف اللغة الإنجليزية. كشفت الدراسة أن الألعاب الإلكترونية يمكن أن تكون أداة فعالة جداً لتعليم اللغة الإنجليزية في الجزائر، خاصة لتحسين مهارات اللغة لدى المتعلمين بالإضافة إلى دوافعهم. من خلال دمج الألعاب الإلكترونية في دروسهم، يمكن للمدرسين تقديم تجربة تعلم ثورية ومتفاعلة ومثيرة للاهتمام تدعم تطور اللغة لدى الطلاب ويحفز حب التعلم. علاوة على ذلك، يمكن أن يوفر نتائج الدراسة منظوراً جديداً للمدرسين والقائمين على صنع القرار الذين يبحثون عن تحسين مشاركة الطلاب والنجاح الأكاديمي. أخيراً، يمكن أن تبحث الأبحاث المستقبلية في تأثير الألعاب الإلكترونية على مشاركة الطلاب والنجاح الأكاديمي على المدى الطويل، ودراسة فعالية أنواع مختلفة من الألعاب الإلكترونية، وربما دراسة دور التدريب والدعم للمدرسين لدمج الألعاب الإلكترونية في المناهج الدراسية.