

## METHODS FOR ENRICHING THE VOCABULARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE OF SCHOOLCHILDREN THROUGH ONLINE GAMES

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Language teaching and learning has many approaches and methods that always develop every time. Those can be more sophisticated since nowadays technology plays its role to be used in language teaching and learning. One of those technologies is computer games which can be found both in computer application and online. There are many online games that can be used for teaching EYL. Therefore the teacher should consider what kind of games which can be applied in EYL class. Particularly, it must be related to the topic and the students' level of proficiency.*

**Key words:** *online games, language, vocabulary, technology development*

Recently, our children are mostly digital native children. They tend to use any kind of technology in their daily life. The common technology just like computer or laptop is almost everywhere. Children may have their own computer in their homes. It provides many kind of application they can use for typing, browsing, playing movie, video and music, and also games. Games application and online games are provided in a computer from the easiest to the complicated one. Mostly, the games use

English for their instructions. As the teachers/parents, we can take benefit from that kind of technology development especially to teach our children or young learners.

Before applying games to English for young learners, we should consider and look at children's characteristic, interest, and the reason why they need to learn English earlier and at the age of primary and kindergarten which the average old for young learners are around 3-6 years old. The characteristic of young learners are short attention span, very active, well-responsive to praising and rewards, differ in their experience language, less shy than older learners, imaginative, enjoy learning through playing, imitating and skill full in listening accurately and mimicking what they have heard. Therefore, for the successful teaching of English for young learners, it is essential for the teacher to understand the young learners' characteristics, instincts, and interests in their cognitive, linguistic, and emotional aspects, because it will play a crucial role in how the teacher builds a lesson, how he or she can make sure that the young learners are fully involved in the learning process, how he or she achieves the learning objectives, and how about students' respond.

Game as one of young learners teaching technique can make young learners enjoy the learning process since its colorful animated games as well as having amazing background music. Games are supposed to make students enjoy the learning process, as well as easier to understand the meaning of certain vocabulary. For the teachers, however, need more convincing reasons to achieve what they have planned, and the goals or objective of learning. Therefore, teachers need to consider which games will use, when to use it, how to link them up with the syllabus, textbook or programs and how, more specifically, different games will benefit students in different ways.

There are several articles related to computer games to increase EYL language ability that conducted by some researcher. Turgut and Irgin (2009), through their article: "Young Learners' Language Learning via computer games" found that online computer games promote language learning and especially vocabulary skills. Furthermore, Harmer (2007) said that most students, particularly young ones, have a

short attention span, and they quickly lose interest. Monotonous lessons decrease students' enthusiasm for learning. He also suggests that teachers need to prepare what he refers to as "a rich diet of learning experiences" in which students can learn from a variety of sources. Therefore, using online games are needed to make students fun and enjoy through the learning process.

Okaz (2014) noted that the reason of using online games as a useful tool that is because most online games for young learners are free and easy to access. The internet has a good grasp of topics, which are suitable for fostering and enhancing language learning. Also, every time students know they are going to the computer lab, they usually get excited and motivated. The physical movement itself is a stimulus. While playing, students will focus on the games and hence absorb the target language subconsciously. Moreover, Lee in Okaz (2013) stated "online games increase cooperation and teamwork, and at the same time they trigger friendly competition. They can even encourage introvert students to interact easily with others and contribute towards their independence."

From the reasons that have been explained from previous research above, we can conclude that online games can give benefit for teaching and learning, especially in teaching vocabulary. There are several sources of online games that we can utilize in teaching vocabulary for young learners, it depends on the topic or material of learning. It also includes the timer and scoring which will be helpful for both students and teachers. In brief, online games are more practical and effective in English for Young Learners' class.

As described in introduction before, the use of technology is very important nowadays. The using of computer technology as a media to assist our learning process is very helpful to make students enjoy in learning, and make the environment class livelier for the students. If those kinds of conditions support our learning process, it is expected to help students achieve the better performance and of course the objective learning.

One of technology that the teachers can use is online games. Why should use online games? Based on the field on this topic is teaching vocabulary for young learners is appropriate for them to learn English vocabulary in an interesting way. Using online games in teaching vocabulary for young learners have some purposes: to help student when they give new words in English as foreign language; enrich their vocabulary, and help them to memorize those vocabulary easily.

There are many websites that provide online games, those are depends on what kind of topics that will discuss or given to our students . The online games must be related with the topic or materials, and of course it must appropriate for students. We can use more than one source of online games since there are a lot of online games that provided by website. The online games usually provide what level of difficulties (that suitable with beginner or young learners), kinds of topic, for example school, food, holiday, etc. give direct feedback, and also score too. Therefore, online games can be use as a media in teaching, especially teaching vocabulary. In table I is the list of online game websites that can be used by the teachers in vocabulary class.

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