

The Correlation of Playing Role-Playing Games and Students' Reading Comprehension of Narrative Text

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses background of the research, statement of the problem, aims of the research, significance of the research, research methodology, clarification of related terms, and organization of the research.

1.1 Background

The effects of playing video games have been widely studied and debated among researchers. The research on positive and negative effects of video games clearly shows that video games are effective teachers that can affect players in multiple ways simultaneously (Prot et al., 2012, p. 653).

Video games have been successfully used to teach children and adolescents a variety of topics, such as reading skills (Prot et al., 2012, p. 652). Spache and Spache, (Cited in A. Tinker & M. McCullough, 1975) define reading under a variety of headings: reading as a skill development, as a visual act, as a perceptual act, as a reflection of cultural background, as a thinking process. Gray (1960) defines meaningful use of reading as a problem-solving tool. It means that students in language learning should get meaning or the context of the text to solve the problems that come from a question or an instruction related with the text.

Appropriate video games like action games could improve visual-spatial skill, educational games successfully teach specific skills, Exergames (Exercise games) can improve physical activity level, and Prosocial games (those in which the primary purpose of the player is to help other game characters) increase empathy and helping (Prot et al., 2012, p. 648). Accordingly, there are also positive effects that are conveyed by proper type of video games into educational field.

On the other hand, video games do not only bring positive effects to the player, but also come with negative impacts. Any negative findings (cited in Ip et al., 2008) such as gaming addiction (Fisher, 1994), aggression (Bensley & Van Eenwyk, 2001), and violent content (Kirsh, 2003; Anderson, 2004) become harmful effects for the players. It is important to respond to it wisely. Shapiro (2013) states that:

Like all technologies, video games have the capacity to influence players in both positive and negative ways. It is foolish to study only the negative impact. Understanding the positive ways that games are involved in the development of citizens will enable us to use them to create a better world.

This research is focused and limited to explore RPG (Role-Playing Game) related with students' reading comprehension of narrative text. Role-playing game is one of the genres or types in video games. Mackay (2001) defines Role-playing game as:

Episodic and participatory story-creation system that includes a set of quantified rules that assist a group of players and a game master in determining how their fictional characters' spontaneous interactions are resolved.

From the definitions above, in order to play Role-playing game appropriately, players should know what they should do as the main character in the game. They have to read the text as the narrative story from the game. Text is an important component of video games culture (Gee, 2003; Leander, & Lovvorn, 2006; Steinkuehler, 2007). It provides the players to make meaningful connections for the stories by interacting with the game master. Players have to think and solve the problem in the game and do the task for completing the part of games so they can continue and end the game.

The topic of video games related with the education has become interesting topic recently. This research is expected to become one of the studies that could bring new information about the video games topic especially the link between Role-playing game (as one of genres in video games) and students' reading comprehension of narrative text.

1.2 Statement of The Problem

The research on the effect of playing video games have been widely studied. It is important to respond to it wisely. Like all technologies, video games could bring negative or positive impacts in daily life as well as in language learning.

This study purposes to answer the following question:

Is there any correlation between frequencies of playing role-playing video games (RPG) video games with students' reading comprehension of narrative text?

1.3 Aims of The Study

Based on the phenomena elaborated above, the aim of this research is to investigate the correlation of role-playing games and reading comprehension of narrative text: whether or not there is a link between the frequency of playing role-playing video games and students' reading comprehension of narrative text.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This research is expected to give an input to teachers, students, and researchers. The outcome is expected to give contribution regardless the finding of this study, whether frequency of playing role-playing game is positively related with students' reading comprehension or not.

Theoretically, teaching english using video games has been widely studied and this research is expected to help teachers to find another method in teaching English. For other researchers, this study is expected to be an additional source in language learning related with video games especially RPG video games

For the students, this research practically seek to help them in choosing the appropriate type of video games from which they can get positive impact from playing video games.

1.5 Research Methodology

This section is about the short explanation about the methodology, which is applied in this research. Further explanation about research methodology will be exclusively elaborated on chapter 3 of this research.

A quantitative approach and descriptive method are used in this study since the main purpose of this study is to find out whether there is any correlation between students' frequency in playing role-playing game and students' reading comprehension. Correlation research design is used in this study in order to find out the tendency of relation between students' frequency in playing role-playing game and their reading comprehension of narrative text (Creswell, 2012).

The participants of this research are 30 students of junior high school in Bandung. Two instruments are used in this present research. Students' reading comprehension of narrative text score and their amount of playing frequency are used for the data source in this research.

Quantitative data analysis is engaged. Reading it carefully, and dealing with the data in order to achieve the understanding of it. The data found then is calculated and interpreted carefully.

1.6 Clarification of Related Terms

- Video games: any type of digital or electronic (i.e. non-mechanical) games, regardless of whether they are played on a desktop computer, video game console, mobile phone, tablet computer or any other platform (Uuskoski, 2011)
- Role-Playing Game: One of the popular genres in video games / computer games with strong narrative storyline (Kacmarcik, 2005; Mackay, 2003; Hitchens and Drachens, 2009; Fritts, 2013).
- Reading Comprehension: Readers' ability in understanding the text (Cameron, 2001; Grabe and Stoller, 2002)
- Narrative text: Story with the sequence of events (Potter, 2008; Tickoo, 1995)

1.7 Organization of The Study

This research is organized into five chapters as follows:

First chapter is introduction. This chapter contains introduction that explains background of the research, statement of the problem, aims of the research, significance of the research, and organization of the research.

Second chapter is theoretical foundation. This chapter contains of literature review, relevant theories as a base for investigating the reserach.

Third chapter is research methodology. This chapter explains the methodology of research. It provides the information about research design, site and participants, the procedures of collecting and analyzing the data.

Fourth chapter is findings and discussion. It delivers research findings and research result of the study.

Last chapter is conclusions. It contains conclusions and reccomendations for further research in accordance with the result of the research.