

Discovering Student English Vocabulary Improvement through Mobile Legend Game

Putriana Devi¹, Ana Maghfiroh², Siti Asiyah³, Niken Reti Indriastuti⁴, Diyah Atiek Mustikawati⁵

¹²³⁴⁵ English Education Department, Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo, Indonesia.

ABSTRACT

The research investigates how playing the online game Mobile Legends contributes to the English vocabulary development of students. Utilizing a descriptive qualitative approach, data was collected through observations, questionnaires, and documentation from six respondents who are 4th-semester students in the English Education Department at Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo during the 2023/2024 academic year. The findings indicate a positive perception among respondents, who agreed that their vocabulary knowledge expanded while playing Mobile Legends. Participants noted that engaging with the game allowed them to learn new vocabulary, particularly through interactions with foreign players, primarily in English. This exposure was crucial as it motivated them to enhance their English skills for better communication and teamwork within the game. The study highlights that the game serves as an effective medium for language learning, as students not only enjoy the gameplay but also gain valuable language skills. The results suggest that integrating online games like Mobile Legends into educational practices could significantly benefit vocabulary acquisition among students.

KEYWORDS: student english vocabulary, online game, mobile legends, english skill development.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Mobile Legends has a huge community these days, and it is one of the most played video games, in southeast Asia. Moonton announced that in the last quarter of 2020, the number of Mobile Legends games downloads has exceeded 1 billion. Very fantastic amount for an online game. In addition, (Pratnyawan & Rachmanta, 2021) stated that by 2021, about 70 million players from Southeast Asia and almost 50 percent from Indonesia. According to iNews.id, Indonesia ranks first with 190 million downloads, followed by the Philippines with 77 million and Brazil with 32 million. Next is Malaysia with 27 million, and fifth is Thailand with 25 million. Indonesia ranks first in the Mobile Legend game downloads, with a total of 190 million. According to data from the Directorate-General of Population and Civil Records of the Ministry of the Interior, the population of Indonesia reached 273.87 million as of December 31, 2021 (Kusnandar, 2022). The presentation of mobile game downloads legend of the Indonesian population by 2021 is 69%, which means more than half of the population in Indonesia.

Playing Mobile Legends can have negative impacts on students' studies. Research has shown that students who play Mobile Legends intensively tend to have lower self-regulated learning abilities, leading to a decrease in their academic performance (Maulana Putra, Ervina, and Sari 2023). Additionally, the game's addictive nature can result in students becoming emotionally invested, affecting their everyday life and potentially causing them to neglect their academic responsibilities (Hidayat 2023). Moreover, the game's requirement for prolonged focus and time



commitment can lead to a waste of valuable study time and may disrupt students' sleep patterns, impacting their overall academic performance and well-being. Another negative impact is that students who are addicted to playing mobile legends games on the Internet, are lazy in school, spend more time playing games than learning, their concentration will decrease or pay less attention to what the teacher teaches, students who lack sleep will quickly feel tired, and students will have difficulty understanding what teachers teach (Sarongsong et al. 2024).

However, (Oetomo and Fahyuni 2022) also mentions the positive impact of increasing English, which is supported by (Amalia and Aunillah Naya 2023), who says that when students play Mobile Legend games, students get a new English vocabulary. (Ananda and Hasibuan 2023a) also mentioned that students who play mobile Legend games have more English vocabularies than students who don't. (Arjay et al. 2024) revealed that Mobile Legend games are an innovative platform with the ability to actively involve users in the development of broad skills in the digital age. Research by (Prihandini, Sudana, and Kurniawan 2022) also shows that online games with features that use English can improve Students English vocabulary.

Playing Mobile Legends has shown various impacts on students' motivation to learn English language. Research conducted on elementary school students in Medan Denai District found that most students became lazy to learn after engaging with online games like Mobile Legends (Sahid, Azhar, and Zuhriah 2023). On the other hand, a study focusing on UMSU students revealed that playing Mobile Legends can have positive impacts, such as making new friends outside their immediate environment (Hidayat 2023). Additionally, a research project aimed at increasing vocabulary and learning activeness in fifth-grade students showed improvements in students' vocabulary and learning activeness through classroom action research cycles (Sadiqin and Syahri n.d.). Moreover, a study on high school students in Tangerang and South Jakarta indicated that students had a positive perception of Mobile Legends in enhancing their English vocabulary acquisition.

On the Mobile Legend game app there are features that use English such as options on the game, the audio the game releases, and the type of hero and the weapons used by the user. Students who often play Mobile Legend games will be accustomed to the English-language feature provided by the mobile legend game. And indirectly students add to their knowledge of English vocabulary through the game. The research question that supports this study is: (i) What vocabulary did students gain through playing Mobile Legend games? (ii) did the vocabulary students obtained through playing Mobile Legend games help them in improving students' English language?

2.0 METHODOLOGY

This study is qualitative research and uses observations, questionnaires, and documentation as data collection techniques. Observations were used to see how the student, as a Mobile Legend game player, got the English vocabulary from the game's content while playing it. Questionnaire was distributed to 6 respondents of the students about the English vocabulary they acquired, whether they wanted to know the meaning of the English vocabulary in a Mobile Legend game that they had not understood, and whether getting the English words through mobile Legend games could help in improving their English language skills. While the documentation was derived from the students' evaluation results.

The respondents in this study involved six students from the Department of English Language Education at Muhammadiyah Ponorogo University as Mobile Legend players. Respondents were selected as sample research using purposive non probability sampling techniques where the samples are the only ones who play mobile legends (Anon n.d.). The respondents were fourth semester students aged 19-23 who played mobile legend games for at least two years. From time to time playing mobile legends of different games researchers can

analyze whether the vocabulary obtained is different, more or less than the others. The data was collected by giving the respondents a questionnaire containing statements surrounding the feature on the mobile legend game that helps respondents in improving English vocabulary.

Table 1: Detail of Respondets

Respondent	Time of play in years	Study Program
1	2	English Education Department
2	2	
3	6	
4	7	
5	3	
6	4	

The results of the respondents will be presented and combined with other relevant information to answer two research questions related to: (1) What vocabulary do students gain through playing Mobile Legend games? (2) Did the vocabulary students acquired through playing Mobile Legend games help them improve their English? Data analysis is carried out by the author using descriptive statistical techniques, which then describe the data and theories obtained by the researcher.

3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 English vocabularies gained by playing Mobile Legend

The data was obtained by presenting a questionnaire to respondents consisting of two segments. The first was a presentation of the English vocabulary found in the feature of the mobile game Legend, and in the second segment there were respondents' opinions about the English vocabulary they found in the Mobile legend game's features that helped improve their English skills. In the first segment, the researcher presented the 44-word English vocabulary taken from the English-language features in the Mobile Legends game. The 44 English vocabularies can be seen in table 2.

Table 1: 44 English vocabularies taken from features in Mobile Legend game

Heroes	Roster	Abilities	Playstyles	Tanks
Supports	Match	Battles	Elements	Objectives
Rank	Mythic	Legend	Epic	Grandmaster
Lucky Draws	Diamonds	Esports	Tournaments	Community Events
Teams	Battle Mode	Brawl Mode	Survival Mode	Game Rewards
Optimization	Updates	Bug Fixes	Assassins	Stars
Friend List	Invites	Marksman	Competitive Ladder	Skins
Social Features	Mages	Mode	Warrior	Guilds
Exclusive Hero Skins	Game Events	Chat		

The tables marked in green are unknown words for some respondents, while the unmarked words are known words for six respondents. Of the 44 words, there are nine words that some do not know. The 9 vocabularies are Roster, Playstyles, Match, Objectives, Community Events, Optimization, Bug Fixes, Competitive Ladder and Guilds. From the first segment the researchers obtained data from the six respondents that can be seen from the following chart.

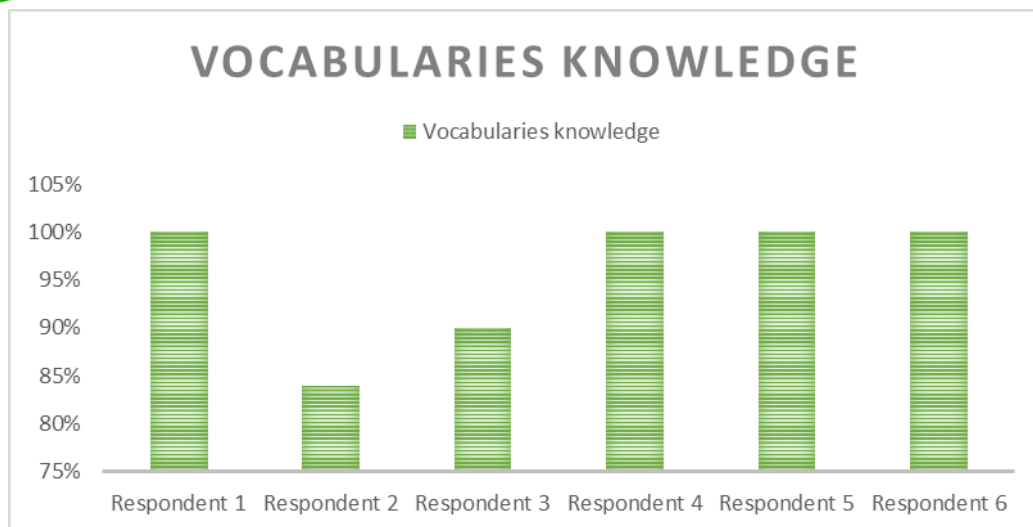


Figure 1. Vocabulary Knowledge

Four out of six respondents knew all 44 English words in the Mobile Legend games' feature presented by the researchers. It shows a positive result that, with playing many mobile-legend games that use English-language features, students' knowledge of English vocabulary increases. Studies conducted in various locations, such as Tangerang, Jakarta Selatan (Jurnal et al. 2023), Insan Mandiri Cendekia Palembang (Sadiqin and Syahri n.d.), and Vocational High School Number 1 Kota Jambi (Rhodiwa Adha and Aisyah n.d.), have demonstrated improvements in vocabulary learning through the use of mobile games. For instance, a study in SMP Muhammadiyah 17 Desa Pon found a significant effect on students' vocabulary mastery when using Mobile Legends as a learning tool (Ananda and Hasibuan 2023b). These findings suggest that incorporating mobile games into educational settings can enhance students' vocabulary acquisition and overall language learning experience, making learning more engaging and effective.

3.2 Improving English skill through Mobile legend game

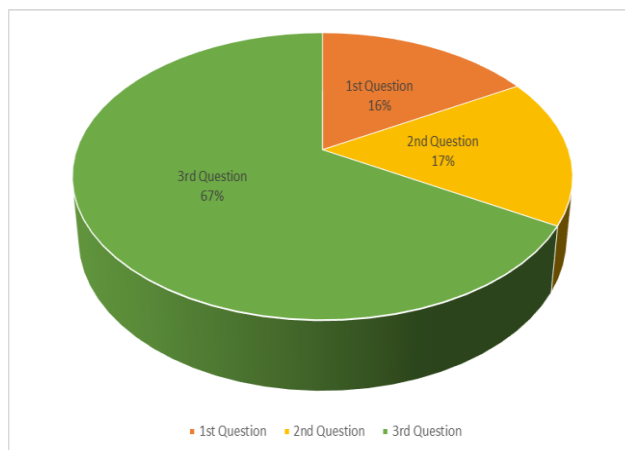
Then, in the second segment, data was obtained respondents' opinions about the English vocabulary they found in the Mobile legend game's features that helped improve their English skills. The data can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2: Respondets' Answer

Research Question	The respondents	Respondents' Answers	
		Yes	No
Did the English vocabulary you got when you played mobile legend games help you improve your English skills?	Respondent 1	✓	-
	Respondent 2	✓	-
	Respondent 3	✓	-
	Respondent 4	✓	-
	Respondent 5	✓	-
	Respondent 6	✓	-

The six respondents had the same answer, that is, agreed that playing Mobile Legend games could add English vocabulary knowledge that could help them improve their English language skills. From the vocabulary obtained by the sixth respondents, there was a question that researchers asked in the second segment to the respondents about how they absorbed the English

vocabulary they obtained through Mobile Legend game play. In the questionnaire, the researchers presented the answers as three options: 1) because I often hear the vocabulary in everyday life; 2) because I don't know the meaning and then find out the meaning; 3) because I frequently hear the word in daily life, and if I do not know what it means, I intend to find out its meaning later. Data from the results of this question can be seen in the chart below.



Majority of respondents chose the 3rd answer, which concluded that the English vocabulary they absorbed from playing Mobile Legend is because they often hear it in their daily lives. From that, they feel familiar with the vocabulary that is in the Mobile Legend game, and some of the vocabularies that are in the Mobile Legend game are felt less familiar by respondents as mobile player legend games. Some of that vocabulary in the Mobile Legend game is unknown to the respondents, but they intend to find out after playing the game.

The end of the discussion, everything is fun in games though it can reduce learning achievement by spending more time on playing game but from that perspective people could learn something which supported with (Dananjaya and Kusumastuti 2019) stated when play a game has an effect to English acquisition based on increasing vocabulary use.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The results of the study, which included a questionnaire, may suggest that students' perceptions of the online game Mobile Legends in terms of vocabulary development are positive. The outcome is demonstrating a favourable opinion. According to the statistics, the respondents all agreed that they had acquired a lot of new vocabulary, utilized the words in their everyday lives, and even learned how to spell and pronounce them via the game's system and other helpful individuals. They said that their vocabulary was growing as a result of playing Mobile Legends. The majority of English vocabulary obtained by respondents includes: Heroes, Abilities, Tanks, Supports, Battles, Elements, Rank, Mythic, Legend, Epic, Grandmaster, Lucky Draws, Diamonds, Esports, Tournaments, Teams, Battle Mode, Brawl Mode, Survival Mode, Game Rewards, Updates, Assassins, Stars, Friend List, Invites, Marksman, Skins, Social Features, Mages, Mode, Warrior, Exclusive Hero Skins, Game Events and Chat. With this game, students may practice their English while also having fun. This research has a limitation in its focus, which is focused only on improving English vocabulary through Mobile Legend games. On future research requires deeper investigation through quantitative or qualitative research in exploring research focus on other aspects to improve students' English language skills.



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