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Implementation of video games into ELT and its effect on development of language competencies of lower-secondary students

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Annotation

This study investigates the integration of digital games into English language teaching (ELT) by analysing data collected from interviews, pre-surveys, and questionnaires targeting learners and teachers of English as a foreign language. The findings show that video games play a significant role in contemporary children's lives, indicating their potential for enhancing student engagement in educational contexts. The pre-survey results confirm the widespread familiarity of students and teachers with digital games, suggesting that their incorporation into lessons could be beneficial if implemented thoughtfully. Video games incorporated in the lesson activities are perceived by most of the questioned learners as a helpful means for English language practice. While the majority of teachers express interest in using video games as a motivational tool, many lack the necessary knowledge and resources to implement them effectively in the process of education. Comparative analysis with existing academic literature highlights a generational divide in video game familiarity among educators, with younger teachers more inclined to embrace digital games in their teaching practices. The study identifies key themes, including the importance of selecting appropriate games, the necessity for teacher training in this field, and the preference expressed by the asked teachers for occasional use of games as a complement or alternative to traditional methods. Ultimately, this research suggests that a strategic approach to game-based and game-enhanced learning should be considered, emphasizing the need for structured guidelines that can help teachers facilitate the meaningful integration of digital games into English language teaching and thereby enrich the language learning experiences for students.

Key words

Language skills, video games, game-based learning, game-enhanced learning, experiential learning, English language teaching (ELT), communicative skills, motivation, visual aids

Klíčová slova

Jazykové dovednosti, videohry, učení podpořené edukativními videohrami, učení podpořené komerčními videohrami, zkušenostní/zážitkové učení, výuka anglického jazyka, komunikativní dovednosti, motivace, vizuální/názorné pomůcky

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Introduction

It seems evident that education always needs to reflect in some way the current situation and trends of the real world, in order to prepare its objects of interest (i.e., the pupils/the students) for the challenges they might encounter in their everyday lives as effectively as possible. English language still has the essential role in fields of science, business, technology, popular culture and its status of lingua franca remains true, especially in the present-day globalised world. Therefore it is without a doubt important to teach English language in order for the people to be more adequately suited for the current needs of today's world.

Videogames could definitely be perceived as one of the trends of today's world, having reached popularity across the world with approximately 3.2 billion video gamers, which is more than a third of the today's worldwide population, according to Statista, PlayToday.co, Academy of Animated Art or DataProt. However, the question is whether it would be possible to implement videogames in some way into the process of language teaching, learning or practising. How could this be done so that the pupils would be learning and enjoying the process at the same time? Additionally, would the implementation of videogames into the lesson be even effective?

Many researchers have already studied effects of videogames on learning, many of them specifically with the emphasis on learning a foreign language (FL), and as many of the studies show, playing videogames can be beneficial in many areas of language learning such as learning vocabulary, listening and reading comprehension, speaking skills and possibly more (Parsayi and Soyoof, 2018). That is in accordance with the data from Power of Play Global Report 2023 which showed that 57% of 12,847 weekly active gamers from 12 different countries of the world deem video games as a positive influence on their language skills (Entertainment Software Association, 2023). Additionally, these findings are also in line with the results from my previous work which was focused on opinions of Czech gamers regarding the influence of video games on their level of language.

This Diploma thesis should serve as a continuation of my Bachelor's thesis, which focused on the influence of video games on the foreign language learning in the Czech context. In this paper, the data from many relevant studies as well as the data from the mentioned Bachelor's thesis are to be considered and utilized in an attempt to find a way of using video games as an instrument for teaching, learning, and practicing FL in the classroom. This thesis's research compares data gathered from multiple sources – (1) the pupils who experienced

learning with video game implementation, (2) the teacher who observed lessons where video game implementation was used, (3) current and future English teachers – with the hope to discover findings that would enrich this field of study.

Theoretical part

1 Video games and Foreign Language Learning

Video games are with people for over 60 years, now, and it is since 1980s that researchers began to study gaming with regards to its potential positive impact in the field of education (Peterson, Yamazaki & Thomas, 2021, p. 16). The amount of studies aimed at the topic of digital games in education has only been increased in the last two decades since the popularity of virtual games has been growing constantly with every year. And one of the studied areas on which digital games may have a positive impact is foreign language learning. After all, the role of language is significant in most of the video game genres, either for instructing the players, providing them with goals, rules and feedback, or for creating a narrative (i.e. representation of story) that captivates players' attention and increases their motivation and overall investment in the video game. Therefore, many of the studies show a number of benefits that digital games may bring to a learner of L2.

1.1 Discovered potential benefits of video games for L2 learners

After inspecting numerous studies focused on the digital game-based learning (DGBL) of L2, a few common benefits were agreed on among the authors. One of the main benefits, as many of the researchers argue, is the effectiveness of video games for the learners' vocabulary acquisition (Klimova & Kacetl, 2018, p. 29). The results of a study conducted by Vasileiadou and Makrina (2017) on the learners of 4th grade provided data which showed that learning new vocabulary with the use of computer games proved to be effective, motivational and enjoyable for the learners. Authors like Calvo-Ferrer (2017), Ashraf et al. (2014), Müller et al. (2018) or Wei et al. (2018) suggest the same notion that computer games are an effective means for vocabulary acquisition.

According to Zou et al. (2021), all 11 studies that investigated the short-term vocabulary learning via DGBL agreed that digital games proved to be more effective than other more traditional teaching and learning approaches. As for long-term retention of vocabulary, Zou et al. (2021) states that 8 out of 11 studies, in which the impact of virtual games on learning vocabulary was also inspected, conclude that use of digital games was more effective than the traditional teaching approaches. In addition, for many learners it is an interesting and fun experience to learn vocabulary through video games (Letchumanan, Bee Hoon, 2012). Finally,

Hron (2022, p. 31) in his research states that 99% of respondents agreed that playing videogames had a positive impact on their vocabulary knowledge and learning.

The second benefit which is commonly noted in many studies is that video games affect learners interest and engagement and thus increase learners' motivation. This aspects are very important in the classroom environment and therefore it is not surprising that popularity of DGBL, which could foster these aspects, has risen in the last years. For instance, serious video games (i.e., video games with specific purpose other than to entertain – to educate, for example) were found to increase cooperation skills, scaffolding and motivation of foreign language learners (Bado & Franklin, 2014).

Similarly, a study by Mahayanti et al. (2019), focused on the connection between DGBL and self-regulated learning (SRL), reported that as a byproduct of playing a digital game learners unintentionally develop motivation and other elements essential for self-regulated learning. Additionally, in the case study by Vasileiadou and Makrina (2017, p. 147), it was concluded that "computer games are a motivating and effective means of assisting young learners in improving their English vocabulary", however, it was emphasized that the results of their research should not be overgeneralised for there are not yet enough data to confirm that conclusion with an absolute certainty.

Based on the analysis of 27 studies focusing on the problematic of computer assisted language learning (CALL), Mark Peterson reports in his book *Computer Games and Language Learning* (2013) that virtual games may have positive implications on a number of language skills, namely: reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, writing and speaking skills. Reinhardt (2013), on the other hand, points out in his meta-analysis that video games may support development of learners' literacy, autonomous learning ability and may increase the willingness of the learners to communicate because of the anonymity that in-game environment offers.

Moreover, numerous studies also show other benefits which may prove to be helpful in foreign language learning. Based on the findings of researchers such as Liang (2012) or Thorne, Fisher and Lu (2012), digital games may provide players/learners with various written and spoken language and, as Squire (2008) and Reinhardt (2013) report, authentic texts which are arguably preferred among language learners. Another advantage for language learning is that around many digital games a community of avid players from different parts of the world is formed (e.g., Reinhardt & Zander, 2011; Peterson, 2013) and this creates opportunities for

language socialisation (e.g., Piirainen-Marsh & Tainio, 2009; Zheng et al., 2009) and intercultural learning (e.g., Thorne, 2008). Especially, in online competitive multiplayer video games or massively multiplayer online role-playing games (e.g., World of Warcraft) the need to communicate with other players in the game is significant.

Lastly, recent surveys and studies also emphasize the impact that digital games have on mental state of people. According to survey by Entertainment Software Association (2023), majority of 12,847 active gamers from 12 different countries play video games to relief stress or relax, view video games as a means to reduce anxiety or feelings of isolation, and more than half of the respondents stated that videogames help them get through difficult times in their life. For instance, digital puzzle games such as *Angry Birds* or *Bejewled II* were observed to help players improve their mood, promote relaxed state of mind and decrease levels of anxiety (Russoniello et al., 2009). Additionally, it has been reported that people who occasionally play video games have significantly lower depressed mood than excessive video game players or people who never play video games (Durkin & Barber, 2002).

Overall, existing research on the impact of digital games on emotional state of gamers indicates that occasional gameplay may lead to increase of positive emotions (Ryan et al., 2006; Kutner and Olson, 2008; Allahverdipour et al., 2010) which may lead to generally more stable emotional state (Przybylski et al., 2012).

To conclude, this subchapter provided multiple evidence on the benefits that digital games proved to have on the players based on the findings and results of studies, meta-analyses and research conducted so far, with the emphasis on the impact that video games may have on learning and teaching second language. One of the most commonly reported benefits of virtual games on the L2 learning was facilitation of vocabulary acquisition (e.g., Calvo-Ferrer, 2017; Ashraf et al., 2014; Müller et al., 2018; Wei et al., 2018; Zou et al., 2021; Peterson, 2013) and stimulation of engagement and motivation (e.g., Bado & Franklin, 2014; Mahayanti et al., 2019; Vasileiadou and Makrina, 2017).

Besides those, other benefits have been reported in various studies, concluding that digital games may prove to be helpful to players in more than just the field of education. However, all these benefits should not be generalised as facts, yet, because as many authors point out, not enough empirical research has been conducted, so far, and too many variables may be in play when observing and testing the impact of video game playing on language learning (e.g., the learners L2 proficiency, knowledge of the game, experience with gameplay

mechanics). Moreover, deHaan et al. (2010) even reports that computer games may have negative impact on learning L2 vocabulary if the interactivity of the video game is too high.

1.2 Limitations of digital games in the classroom environment

Although some teachers are already trying to implement DGBL into their school's curricula, this new approach to teaching and learning foreign languages does not appear to be popular among the pedagogical circles and certainly did not make a sudden breakthrough in the ways language teachers approach the L2 teaching. In fact, in spite of all the potential benefits, implementation of digital games into the language lessons might be still considered experimental by majority of the language teachers, which is not surprising given the fact that comprehensible game-based learning pedagogy for teachers is insufficient (Klimova & Kacetl, 2018, p. 28). Furthermore, in the present day, teachers of FL usually do not have lots of experience with playing video games and, therefore, lack the digital game literacy which may be among the reasons why they are reluctant to use digital games in the classroom (Chandler, 2013; Karadag, 2015). In addition, Alyaz and Genc (2016) note that some teachers, although open for the use of digital games, are, however, still worried about the implementation of these games into the lessons due to the various technical, financial, sociological, pedagogical and instructional limitations.

It is important to mention that even if the teacher chooses an appropriate video game for the learners, which is crucial because as deHaan (2010) claims, not every video game proves to be useful for L2 learning, there is still a lot of preparation and planning that the teacher needs to do in order to ensure that the use of that video game in the classroom will be beneficial for the learners (Ashraf et al., 2014). All in all, it is apparent that digital game based language learning (DGBLL) could be a fresh way of approaching language learning and teaching, however, for that to become reality, more thorough studies need to be conducted and, as Alyaz and Genc (2016) maintain, support for teachers in form of teacher training courses to educate teachers and give them the opportunity of experiencing the digital games first hand needs to be provided, as well.

1.3 Types of digital games for L2 learning

Nowadays, the broad spectrum of digital games one can choose from raises the question what types of digital games may be considered suitable for L2 learning. Existing research on videogame genres shows that learning outcomes might vary depending on the specific video game type/genre. For example, Chen & Yang (2013) investigated the impact of adventure video game *BONE* on FL learning, concluding that adventure video games with similar characteristics to the game BONE create learning opportunities for vocabulary learning, enhance reading and listening skills, and support learners' motivation.

Similarly, simulation video games (e.g., The SIMS or Food Force) show great potential for L2 vocabulary learning, providing context-rich and cognitively engaging virtual environments, as some researchers suggest (Ranalli, 2008; Miller & Hegelheimer, 2006; Hitosugi & Schmidt & Hayashi, 2014). Other video game genres have been studied, as well, with the focus on language learning opportunities, such as massively multiplayer online role-play games – MMORPGs (e.g. World of Warcraft) in which researchers accentuate the need for English communication that happens between players from different parts of the world which is important for progressing in the game (Zheng, Newgarden, Young, 2012).

1.3.1 Sandbox genre

The concept of the "sandbox" originates largely within technological discourse and has become especially relevant in the domain of video games, where it typically refers to features such as extensive player freedom, open-ended and loosely structured environments, and a rejection of traditional, linear gameplay models (OpenAI, 2023) Additionally, O. Arlt (2023) affirms that the sandbox genre has significantly progressed, expanding beyond its original niche status to include a wide range of diverse titles.

These games often provide players with minimal direction and goals that are loosely defined, which gives players freedom to express creatively in the virtual world. This characteristic aspect of sandbox genre is also supported by variety of optional in-game tasks that can be completed in numerous ways instead of following structured storylines. This design promotes immersive experiences that encourage exploration and the use of novel, sometimes unconventional, gameplay mechanics (Arlt, 2023).

Sandbox games are also noted for their potential to embody high levels of abstraction, often omitting familiar gameplay conventions (OpenAI, 2023). Arlt (2023) identifies the game

Elite (1984) as an early exemplar of this genre, distinguished by its minimalist structure and gameplay focused on space combat, exploration, and trading. Importantly, *Elite* pioneered the use of procedural generation, a foundational feature for many future sandbox games.

Titles such as *The Sims* have since been increasingly acknowledged as part of the sandbox genre, alongside globally recognized franchises like *Minecraft* and *Grand Theft Auto* (Pavlovic, 2020). Perhaps Castillo García (2024) makes a valid statement that as virtual game worlds continue to grow in both scale and narrative complexity, it is anticipated that the sandbox genre will further intersect with and influence other categories of digital games.

Many today's sandbox games feature multiplayer modes, where collaboration is key to achieving large-scale objectives. In educational contexts, this fosters teamwork, planning, and peer learning (Morgan, 2015; Hébert & Jenson, 2020). Learners work together to build shared virtual spaces, solve problems, and manage resources, mirroring real-world collaborative projects.

A study by Kervin et al. (2015) emphasized that young learners working in Minecraft environments developed enhanced communication skills and peer teaching habits, particularly when navigating shared challenges or designing structures together. Furthermore, studies have shown that learners – particularly English language learners – develop new vocabulary and conversational fluency while engaging in cooperative gameplay (Li, 2019). Although the focus in Li's study is on MOBA games, similar findings have emerged in sandbox environments where language use is contextual and essential to gameplay.

Therefore it can be deduced that when sandbox games are played in multiplayer settings, especially international servers, learners are exposed to diverse languages and forms of expression, which is beneficial for FL learning. Players often read and write instructions, chat with teammates, or follow in-game narratives, which may support reading comprehension and language acquisition.

In conclusion, sandbox games are not just digital playgrounds; they are possible educational platforms that can promote creativity, collaboration, language learning, and other important competencies. With increasing research support, these games are now being integrated into formal education and informal learning settings alike. As tools for experiential learning, sandbox games align with modern pedagogical approaches and have the potential to shape how future generations learn and interact with digital content.

1.3.2 Action shooter genre

Based on Pavlovic et al. (2020), the action shooter genre has evolved significantly from its early beginnings, branching into two main sub-genres: first-person shooters (FPS) and third-person shooters (TPS). Many modern games now allow players to switch fluidly between these two viewpoints. This adaptability is evident in the battle royale sub-genre, where popular games like *Fortnite* and *PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds* primarily operate as either FPS or TPS experiences (Castillo García, 2024).

The primary difference between FPS and TPS lies in the player's viewpoint. According to Pavlovic et al. (2020), TPS games pull the camera back to show the character and their surroundings, as demonstrated by franchises such as *Uncharted* and *Tom Clancy's The Division*. In contrast, FPS games simulate the character's direct line of sight, offering a first-person visual experience, as seen in series like *Battlefield*, *Call of Duty*, and *DOOM*.

Though the core gameplay of shooters appears simple, it has been reimagined in numerous ways over time. Pavlovic et al. (2020) note that veteran gamers may recall early arcade and rail shooters, known for their linear paths and basic mechanics. Additionally, sub-genres like shoot-'em-ups and bullet-hell games emphasize fast reflexes and precise control amid intense gunfire (Castillo García, 2024).

While shooter games are generally classified as either FPS or TPS, discussions often place these elements within more expansive gameplay contexts (Pavlovic, 2020). For example, Castillo García (2024) comments that *Grand Theft Auto V* blends TPS mechanics with the freedom of open-world sandbox games, even offering a first-person mode.

Many shooter games are globally popular and available in multiple languages. Players engaging in international online communities are exposed to authentic language use, slang, and cultural references. For non-native speakers, this can promote incidental vocabulary acquisition and cross-cultural understanding, especially when in-game communication is essential for success. For instance, Pavlovic et al. (2020) highlight that games like Fortnite and PUBG create opportunities for second language learners to practice English in meaningful, context-rich environments. And similar opportunities for language practice may be present in other popular team-based shooters, such as Counter Strike 2 or Valorant.

While shooter games continue to generate debate due to concerns over violent content, emerging research indicates that they also offer a range of educational benefits, among others

enhancement of teamwork (Kowert and Quandt, 2016) and communication skills. Moreover, players are engaged in rich, interactive environments that can support learning and development. Therefore, when integrated thoughtfully into educational contexts or studied as learning tools, these games have the potential to contribute meaningfully to 21st-century skill-building (OpenAI, 2023).

1.3.3 Role-playing genre

Role-playing games (RPGs) are a foundational and long-standing part of gaming (OpenAI, 2023). The core idea behind RPGs is simple and widely applicable across gaming: players create or accept a character and progress by gaining experience points to enhance their abilities. As Pavlovic (2020) notes, an overview of the most common RPG sub-genres includes the following:

1. **RPG (General)**: This broad category includes everything from classic tabletop games with dice and cards, like *Dungeons & Dragons*, to digital RPGs such as *The Elder Scrolls: Skyrim*.
2. **CRPG (Computer RPG)**: Typically Western-developed for PC platforms, CRPGs include titles like the original *Fallout* games.
3. **ARPG (Action RPG)**: These games combine fast-paced combat with traditional RPG elements. *The Witcher 3* is a leading example.
4. **TRPG (Tactical RPG)**: These games are strategy-focused, requiring careful planning and tactical decisions, as seen in the *XCOM* series.
5. **MMORPG (Massively Multiplayer Online RPG)**: These games blend large-scale online interaction with RPG mechanics, with notable examples including *World of Warcraft*, and *Elder Scrolls Online*.
6. **Roguelike**: Known for turn-based mechanics, permadeath, tile-based graphics, and procedurally generated levels. Modern versions like *The Binding of Isaac* and *Spelunky* retain the genre's spirit while emphasizing action and platforming.
7. **Roguelite**: These games deviate from traditional roguelike elements, often omitting features like permadeath. *Rogue Legacy* is a key example of this flexible sub-genre.

Although many terms related to RPGs appear in gaming discussions, these categories are among the most widely recognized and influential.

Role-playing games are particularly valuable in language learning. In digital RPGs, players are exposed to rich vocabularies, narrative structures, and dialogue systems. In a ReCALL paper, Peterson (2012, p. 361 – 365) has shown that MMORPGs like *World of Warcraft* create immersive linguistic environments that improve reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and conversational fluency. Jonathan deHaan (2005, p. 5), on the other hand, highlights the abundance of aural and textual language presented to the player by the RPGs via various in-game means (e.g., signs, notes, conversations, diaries), however, maintaining that less competent language users might be discouraged by the overall difficulty of presented language that does not allow for interactive practice, for example via pausing the dialogues in the cinematic cut-scenes.

In ESL/EFL contexts, RPGs have been used successfully to simulate real-life scenarios, encouraging learners to practice speaking in dynamic, low-stakes environments (Chen & Yang, 2013). Additionally, RPGs are a rich source of authentic target language (TL), therefore showing potential for L2 learning, as results from many research studies indicate (e.g., Hron, 2022; Zheng, Newgarden & Young, 2012; Liang, 2012; Peterson, 2012; Validi & Movahed, 2024; Horowitz, 2019).

One of the most cited benefits of RPGs in education is their capacity to motivate learners (OpenAI, 2023). The mechanics of RPGs—levelling up, rewards, storytelling, and autonomy—align closely with principles of intrinsic motivation outlined in self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2013). Students engaged in role-playing often report greater enthusiasm and a stronger sense of ownership over their learning (Gee, 2003).

Finally, gamified learning environments modelled after RPG structures have been used to enhance student participation, reduce anxiety, and encourage persistence, particularly among learners who struggle with traditional educational formats (Domínguez et al., 2013, pp. 8 – 12).

The educational value of role-playing games is supported by a growing body of interdisciplinary research. RPGs offer diverse, learner-centered experiences that extend well beyond the game world, and as education continues to evolve in the digital age, RPGs might appear as promising tools to make learning more meaningful, interactive, and inclusive to the learners.

1.3.4 Multiplayer Online Battle Arena (MOBA) genre

According to Castillo García (2024), multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) games are a rapidly growing subgenre within gaming which blends elements from several other styles, particularly sharing many features with real-time strategy (RTS) games. As noted by Pavlovic et al. (2020), these similarities include a top-down view that emphasizes map awareness, strategic control of space, and real-time player competition.

Despite these overlaps, Pavlovic (2020) emphasizes a key difference between MOBAs and RTS games: the player's role. In MOBAs, each player typically controls a single character aligned with a team or faction, incorporating some foundational RTS mechanics. This contrasts with traditional RTS games, where players manage entire groups of units and focus on building infrastructure and commanding armies.

Dominated by titles like *Dota 2* and *League of Legends*, MOBA games also strongly prioritize multiplayer and cooperative gameplay (Li, 2019). Furthermore, while some games include AI elements, such as non-playable characters (NPCs), most of the gameplay focuses on human-versus-human interaction where teams compete to achieve specific win conditions. Additionally, research by Chen and Chang (2019) emphasizes that MOBA games promote collaborative learning, as players engage in peer-to-peer communication, negotiation, and real-time feedback.

MOBA games are often played in international contexts, offering a rich environment for language practice. Li (2019) noted that many non-native English speakers improve their English vocabulary, comprehension, and conversational skills through in-game communication. Players must issue commands, negotiate strategies, and interpret objectives quickly, often in English, which accelerates language acquisition through authentic use. This has particular relevance in ESL/EFL education, where MOBA games can be leveraged as informal yet immersive language learning tools.

MOBA games are highly motivating due to their competitive structure, social interaction, and sense of progression. Drawing on self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2013), researchers argue that MOBA games support key psychological needs: competence, autonomy, and relatedness. These features make them particularly engaging for learners who may struggle with traditional educational methods (Turkay et al., 2014).

Although traditionally viewed through the lens of competition and eSports, MOBA games may offer considerable educational value. As educational paradigms shift toward more experiential and technology-enhanced models, integrating MOBA elements—or even the games themselves—into learning environments could unlock new ways of engaging, teaching, and empowering students (OpenAI, 2023).

Using genres to classify video games is a great way to find similarities between certain game types, which can then be studied closely for any connections between the specific genre and possible impact on language learning. Another way to sort games was suggested by Mingfong Jan and Matthew Gaydos (2016) in their article *"What Is Game-Based Learning? Past, Present, and Future"*, distinguishing motivation, drill and practice, content mastery, and 21st century competency games, based on the four major reasons games have been used and promoted for in learning.

1.3.5 Motivation Games

According to Jan and Gaydos (2016), *"Motivation games refer to games that engage students in the behaviour of learning desirable content or information."* The elements in games that are conductive to motivation of the learners are claimed to be *fantasy*, *curiosity, challenge*, and *competition*. For example, empirical study by Tüzün et al. (2009) even suggest that higher intrinsic motivations, which are important for the joy and meaningfulness that pupils/students can gain from learning, may be fostered by playing games and participating in activities in a game-based environment. However, the question is whether if only features of video games were used during the lesson (e.g., gameplay videos, screenshots from a video game, etc.), would the impact on learners' motivation still be sufficient?

1.3.6 Drill and Practice Games

As Jan and Gaydos (2016) maintain, drill and practice games are essentially digital or non-digital instruments that teachers can use to foster the acquisition of content, concepts, or information which the teacher presented to and taught the learners prior to using the drill or practice games. Such games then serve as means to practise specific topic of the lesson utilizing repetition and drilling and thus increasing learners exact knowledge, or skill. Unlike content mastery games or 21st CC games, drill and practice games mostly do not facilitate higher-order thinking skills nor are used to present new learning material, however, teachers who are interested in game-based learning (GBL) tend to prefer them and often use them in the classroom, according to Jan and Gaydos (2016).

1.3.7 Content Mastery Games

Simulation games are arguably one of the video game genres that fits into the category of content mastery games. This category is described by Jan and Gaydos (2016) as "games that facilitate the mastery of information, facts, concepts, or canonical knowledge." Hence, the learners can learn to understand complex ideas, develop abstract and intuitive thinking, and master more complex skills. Similarly to drill and practice games, content mastery games are usually in an accordance with mainstream curricula and thus may be utilized at schools as a component of GBL (Jan & Gaydos, 2016).

1.3.8 21st Century Competency games

The last category that Jan and Gaydos (2016) specified is for the games that aside from higher-order thinking skills also promote in learners social skills which are relevant and useful in the modern society of the 21st century, such as problem-solving, argumentation, collaboration, system thinking, and inquiry. The essential part of such games is an authentic situation in which the learner/player is placed to deal with a problem that could happen in real life. In order to ensure deeper learning outcomes of these types of games, guidance from teachers might be needed, however, so far many teachers lack the knowledge and experience to properly utilize 21st competency games.

1.4 Types of learning approaches

Another possible way to categorize video games is by the initial purpose that game developers have in mind before creating a video game. From this point of view, researchers have distinguished two types of videogames, so far, with one of them supposedly having stronger connection to the idea of using digital games in education than the other. Based on this two different video game types, two mutually complementing learning approaches have been described (Reinhardt & Sykes, 2012).

1.4.1 Game-based learning

In game-based learning the pupils are expected to be immersed in a virtual environment that is provided by video games which aim to educate or have learning as their chief purpose (Reinhardt & Sykes, 2017). Video games that are designed to help educate the learners are also called "*serious*" games (Nazri & Romano, 2017). Game-based learning (GBL) in foreign language classes was reported to have number of advantages, such as, precise focus on the target language or on the specific elements of the language, and easier modification of the game to

suit the learners needs because the game-based environment of such digital games is created to be customizable and focused on language content (Reinhardt & Sykes, 2012, p. 42). On the other hand, there is not a wide spectrum of various serious games, at the moment, so the learner or the teacher do not have as many options to choose from, as opposed to the huge number of commercial games, which are not only more diverse in types and genres, but also arguably more entertaining.

1.4.2 Game-enhanced learning

Generally, the use of commercial video games during the process of learning to facilitate the acquisition of any kind of skill or knowledge is called game-enhanced learning (Reinhardt & Sykes, 2014). These *vernacular* digital games, as some researchers tend to call them, are simply available online or in the game stores and are designed to entertain the players. Research of game-enhanced learning brings to consideration multiple benefits that off-the-shelf video games might have, specifically with regards to the second language acquisition (SLA).

First, games designed for entertainment include plenty of authentic language that the player comes to contact with during the gameplay (Peterson, 2012), and as cultural products the vernacular games may be a possible source of authentic cultural texts (Squire, 2008; Reinhardt, 2013). Second, especially with online multiplayer games, the player is exposed to diverse text and voice communication of various complexity (Thorne, Fisher & Lu, 2012), as well as language socialization (e.g., Piiranen-Marsh & Tainio, 2009). Finally, certain types of commercial video games (e.g., MMORPGs) have a massive online community built around them which again creates opportunities for language learning (Peterson, 2012), and also intercultural learning (Thorne, 2008). However, implementation of vernacular games into the regular school curriculum is not an easy task and numerous factors need to be considered (e.g. pedagogical mediation, learner and teacher attitudes, content appropriateness) beforehand (Reinhardt & Sykes, 2014), making the preparation of the lesson more time-consuming for the teachers which is less the case with serious games applied in L2 classes through GBL.

1.5 Influence of digital games on mood and motivation

As it was prefaced in one of the previous chapters, one of the positive findings in this field of study is that certain digital games can promote positive emotions which consequently create relaxed and joyful attitude that can be directed towards learning which should then become more effective, according to multiple research studies (Lamb et al., 2018; Zhonggen, 2019). This subchapter will focus on discovered findings related to the influence of video games

on the motivation and overall mood of the learners in more detail, since the research part of this thesis will be closely related to the motivational aspects of videogame elements and their potential use in the classroom environment.

1.5.1 How video games motivate learners

To this date, many researchers who conducted studies in the field of Computer Assisted Language Learning have reported that the influence of digital games on learners' motivation is an element which is worth looking into with regards to it's potential for enhancing language learning (e.g., Wrzesien & Raya, 2010; Calvo-Ferrer, 2017; Peterson, Yamazaki, Thomas, 2021; Klimova & Kacetl, 2018; Newcombe & Brick, 2017; Wichadee, Pattanapiche, 2018). One of the characteristic video game features which is reported to potentially have an impact on learners' motivation is, for instance, the challenging aspect of video games (Newcombe & Brick, 2017). According to Lee (2008), the element of *challenge* in digital games may be important because the players' desire to solve a problem or overcome an obstacle (i.e. a challenge) may be a great motivator for language learning, for example, in case that the successful solution to the challenge presented to the players in the video game consists of learning new vocabulary, phrase, or simply becoming aware of the meaning of a sentence (e.g. question or command).

Another aspect potentially beneficial to the motivation of learners is the *interactivity* of computer games because the players have the opportunity to not only notice and learn new expressions, but also apply and practise their knowledge of the foreign language in different situations and contexts creatively through interacting with the story via the non-playable characters, or the in-game environment (e.g., signs, pictures with descriptions, post cards, messages, notes, journal entries). Certain video games even afford players to change how the main story of the game unfolds through decision making which may give the players instant feedback on how they understood the language in that specific moment and whether their decision based on their level of understanding of the situation was in line of what they would want to happen in the game (Lee, 2008; Gee, 2013). Ultimately, when players play video games, they can be the regulators of their own learning who create their own learning experience while trying to progress in the game, which might further increase their level of motivation, since experiential learning is considered to be highly motivating for the learners (Gee, 2007; Gee, 2013).

There are also other features of digital games which were found to have a positive impact on learners participation and motivation. According to Armstrong and Landers (2017), the *narrative* (i.e., story or storytelling) that usually surrounds a task or a goal, in most of the video games, can be a strong stimulant for the players/learners also in the classroom environment which makes narrative another possible video game element that might be beneficial in L2 learning and teaching. Having the opportunity to complete the in-game tasks at a *pace that fits the learner* is another feature of video games that may lead to increased motivation (Janebi and Haghighatpasand, 2019) and can help create lessons that are more learner-oriented and more satisfactory for the learners' needs.

Rewards are the next documented elements which are characteristic of games and are supposed to foster motivation in players/learners by being a visual representation of a successful achievement of a set goal (Peterson & Yamazaki & Thomas, 2021), while also giving players/learners the reason to complete the task, or in other words, making the task meaningful for the learners and thus ensuring positive learning experience (Sailer et al., 2017).

Lastly, multiple studies point to the fact that digital game *avatars*, specifically the bond between the player and the avatar, may contribute to the rise in players' motivation (Peterson & Yamazaki & Thomas, 2021), since the avatar functions as a virtual representation of the player and therefore the emotional connection towards the avatar, arguably, creates stronger experience of play (Ratan & Sah, 2015) and makes the player more invested in the video game.

1.5.2 Video games as motivational strategy for learning

Entertaining digital media, such as video games, create a safe space for the players, and that is also an important precondition for effective learning. As Letchumanan and Hoon (2012) or Gee (2007) claim, the non-threatening environment that digital games create helps learners to express themselves without feelings of anxiety and shyness, helps them to be more relaxed and ready to participate on classroom activities (e. g., discussions, practice of the target language). Utilizing this effect of video games in a classroom thus seems like a potentially promising motivational strategy that teachers might want to try out in their lessons.

1.5.3 Impact of video games on players'/learners' mood

Generally, it might seem obvious that a positive state of mind would contribute to a more efficient process of gaining new knowledge or skills, partly because such a mind should be more welcoming to new ideas and more flexible to change in order to fit newly shaped views.

Similarly to the learners' motivation, the emotional state of learners (i.e. mood) is also considered a major facilitator of learning and as Dirkx (2001) points out, the desire to continue learning new things relates closely to the current emotional state of the learner which makes the learners' mood a determining element of their motivation to learn. This claim was also supported, for example, by Perry (2006) in a study focused on trauma-related factors in the adult education process, indicating that negative emotions and states felt either before, during, or even after the educational activity cause a decrease in learners' motivation.

In a study, conducted by Nazry & Romano (2017), it was found that even serious games that do not always offer some of the traditional video game features that might contribute to the increase of the players' motivation (e.g. narrative, elements of competition and feedback – scores, winner charts) still can positively influence players'/learners' overall mood. The results indicated that, generally, the learners who felt happier completed the tasks with higher scores. One may argue this enhancement in learning efficiency might be even greater if commercial off-the-shelf video games (COTS) were used instead of the serious video games because of their entertaining and thus stimulating nature, however, Mitchell & Savill-Smith (2004) also add that negative emotions can be induced, too, when certain commercial video games are played excessively, especially in a young age.

In conclusion, a growing body of research in the field of Computer Assisted Language Learning highlights the motivational potential of digital games for language learners. Key game elements such as challenge, interactivity, narrative, autonomy, rewards, and avatar identification have all been shown to enhance learner engagement and support effective language acquisition. Digital games not only allow learners to actively use and experiment with the target language in meaningful, context-rich environments, but they also provide opportunities for self-paced and personalized learning, which is often more satisfying and learner-centred. Furthermore, the emotionally safe and entertaining atmosphere created by games can help reduce anxiety and foster a more positive emotional state – both of which are crucial for sustaining motivation and improving learning outcomes. Given these multifaceted benefits, integrating well-designed digital games into language education appears to be a promising strategy for fostering motivation, enhancing mood, and ultimately improving language proficiency.

2 Experiential learning (EL)

Experiential learning reconceptualizes the educational approach by moving away from traditional teacher-centered paradigms which is often characterized by one-way instruction and low student engagement (Kolb, 1984). It could be characterized as more flexible, interactive, and learner-centred learning model (OpenAI, 2023). Additionally, this approach emphasizes collaborative learning through authentic, real-world experiences, and foster active participation as well as mutual gaining of knowledge among students. Within this framework, the teacher assumes the role of a facilitator, guiding and supporting learners rather than directing their educational trajectory (Kolb & Kolb, 2009).

2.1 Theoretical foundation of EL

According to David A. Kolb (1984), experiential learning is grounded in a robust theoretical tradition that integrates insights from constructivist, humanist, and pragmatist philosophies. Its development has been significantly shaped by thinkers such as John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, Carl Rogers, and David Kolb, each of whom contributed foundational perspectives on how individuals learn through experience (OpenAI, 2023).

Dewey in his book Experience and Education (1938, pp. 82 – 89) claimed that education should be based on real-life situations and that learners construct meaning through active engagement with their environment. *Jean Piaget*, on the other hand, contributed to experiential learning through his theory of cognitive development, which posits that learners actively construct knowledge through interaction with their surroundings. His stages of development emphasize the importance of firsthand discovery and problem-solving, which align with experiential learning's emphasis on learner autonomy and real-world relevance (Piaget, 1952, pp. 19 – 23).

Building on constructivist theory, *Lev Vygotsky & Michael Cole* (1978) in their book highlighted the social dimension of learning. Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) emphasizes that learners achieve deeper understanding through collaborative experiences and guided interaction (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978, p. 86). Vygotsky's work supports and reinforces the importance of educational practices, such as peer learning and teacher facilitation, which are core principles of experiential education (OpenAI, 2023).

The humanist psychologist *Carl Rogers* accentuated the role of the learner's personal experience in the educational process. In *Freedom to Learn* (1969, pp. 160 – 162), Rogers

advocated for student-centred learning where individuals are encouraged to take responsibility for their own education in a supportive, non-threatening environment. This approach corelates with experiential learning's focus on autonomy, self-reflection, and meaningful engagement.

David Kolb (1984) synthesized these foundational theories into a cohesive model known as the Experiential Learning Theory (OpenAI, 2023). Kolb in his book (1984, p. 21) presents a four-stage learning cycle – (1) concrete experience, (2) reflective observation, (3) abstract conceptualization, and (4) active experimentation – which offers a systematic framework for understanding how individuals learn from direct experience. Furthermore, Kolb adds that effective learning occurs when individuals move through this cycle, integrating new knowledge into their cognitive frameworks through reflection and application (Kolb, 1984, p. 21).

2.2 Applications of EL in formal education

Experiential learning is applied across a wide range of educational contexts, notably in higher education where it can include fieldwork, internships, project-based learning, and simulation-based instruction (Bartle, 2015). The author further describes how, in science education, for instance, students engage in laboratory experiments and field studies to apply theoretical knowledge, and how, in business schools, case studies and role-playing are widely used to simulate real-world challenges (Bartle, 2015). Additionally, a study by Yardley et al. (2012) concluded that experiential learning methods lead to better knowledge retention and skill development, particularly in professional education (e.g., medical education).

2.3 EL in digital age

With the rise of digital technologies, experiential learning has expanded into virtual simulations, game-based learning, and interactive media (De Freitas & Neumann, 2009). Virtual reality (VR), sandbox games like Minecraft, and simulation tools such as Flight Simulator or SimCity offer immersive environments for experiential learning in education, training, and professional development (Jarman & Mcclune, 2002; Schott, 2017; Wright, Bunting & Wilson, 2002). Furthermore, research by Gee (2007, pp. 64 – 68) supports the view that well-designed games act as experiential systems where players learn by doing, experimenting, and reflecting, thus mirroring Kolb's model.

2.4 Benefits of EL

As it was implied above, the experiential learning has been linked to numerous educational benefits, such as deeper understanding and retention of concepts (Kolb, 1984), greater learner engagement and motivation (Rogers, 1969, p. 5), development of soft skills, such as teamwork, problem-solving, and reflective thinking through immersion in virtual environments (De Freitas & Neumann, 2009), or fostering transfer of learning to real-world settings (Dewey, 1938, pp. 20 – 21).

Additionally, Sutherland and Markauskaite (2012) conducted a study in which they implemented an immersive, experiential environment – an online discussion forum – where future teachers engaged in authentic, reflective discussions. The study highlighted the importance of authenticity, reflection, and collaboration that occur in such environments during experiential learning.

2.5 Limitations of EL

While experiential learning is widely praised, it also faces criticism. One concern is that unstructured experiences may not always lead to meaningful learning without proper guidance or reflection (Wilson & Beard, 2013, p. 22). Additionally, Moon (2004, pp. 149 – 150) identifies possible problematic aspects that can limit the effective implementation of experiential learning such as time consumption, insufficient institutional support, resource requirements, and assessment difficulties. Similarly, Smith & Knapp (2011) highlight logistical demands, facility access issues, and evaluation challenges as key impediments in experiential education settings.

To address these issues, Kolb and Fry (1975) in a chapter *Towards an Applied Theory of Experiential Learning* emphasized two elements of educational process to ensure that experiences translate into learning. First, the importance of skilled facilitation as a component of group learning, and then on pages 34 – 35 they stress the need for guided reflection via reflective observation.

In conclusion, experiential learning represents a dynamic and effective educational approach that aligns with how people naturally learn through firsthand interaction, reflecting, and applying. In that sense, it is inherently connected to game-based and game-enhanced learning, which displays the same characteristics of learning process (e.g., immediate interaction in a virtual environment that provide meaningful context). Ultimately, as teachers and learners navigate the complexities of the modern world, experiential learning remains a vital tool for cultivating not just knowledge, but wisdom and adaptability (OpenAI, 2023).

3 Visual Aids and Language Learning

It has been known for a while, now, that using visual aids helps learners understand simple objects as well as more complex phenomena and ideas. Visual aids are essentially tools that increase the effectiveness of learning by clarifying the image learners make in their minds through physical objects, pictures, or other representative materials (Kinder, 1942), which can nowadays also be digital or virtual.

One of the modern types of visual aids that could be effectively used in the classroom might be digital games. Similarly to films, games can offer not only a graphic but also an auditory representation, which may prove useful, especially in language learning. For example, in a study conducted by Noha Halwani (2017), the usefulness of visual aids and multimedia in second language acquisition has been explored, concluding that cognitive processes, such as attention and perception, have been improved by the use of multimedia and visual aids. Furthermore, the study confirmed that reading, speaking and writing was enhanced, as well, when visual aids were used in the classroom, reporting that increase in self-confidence among the learners became a factor for greater involvement in discussions and teacher-learner interaction when the students were provided with scaffolding in a form of a picture, video or other visual aids (Halwani, 2017).

Digital games are audio-visual, interactive, and entertaining products of the modern age, showing potential for language learning affordances and facilitation of SLA. Additionally, unlike books or films, video games can offer an interactive experience that enhances the motivation of the player/learner and therefore may contribute to more effective learning. For example, the two videogame elements perceived by the majority of the 200 respondents as having the most significant impact on their motivation to play a videogame and thus further expose themselves to the potential incidental or intentional in-game language learning were *immersive story* and *enjoyable gameplay* (Hron, 2022, p. 39). In addition, one of the Gee's learning principles that connects closely to the audio-visual, interactive essence of video games is "Meaning as Action Image" which accentuate the fact that humans learn best through experience, and by using our experiences we also attribute meaning to things because it is the experience of flying by airplane, not just the word "flight", that gives the word it's meaning and enhances our understanding of that word, for instance (Gee, 2013).

Another research indicates that supplementing learning with non-linguistic information (e.g., audio-visual information) has an impact on learning and retaining new vocabulary. In other words, for example, using videos or videogames to supply audiovisual context during the process of learning was found to be beneficial as the brain, according to the research, seems to be able to process both linguistic and non-linguistic information available at the time of active learning which leads to increased ability to memorize, retain and recall newly learned vocabulary (Takashima, Bakker, van Hell, Janzen, & McQueen, 2014).

Generally, the research on this topic shows many positive findings related to using digital media for language learning and teaching (e.g., Ahmad, 2012; King, 2002; Danan, 2004; Shaffer et al., 2005). For example, it was found that language learners might benefit from the exposure to the language presented in video games because the audio-visual context supports the language delivery and thus the learner might have higher chances of understanding small nuances in dialogues, jokes, informal language, idiomatic expressions (King, 2002, p. 516-517), and on the cognitive level the learner might become more aware of how context provides meaning to sentences, how phrases are formed, or how, via video game playing, learning more effective strategies for processing written or spoken information can increase their level of language comprehension (Danan, 2004).

The visual scenes in digital game environment can be helpful in language learning, according to Ahmad (2012), because of the possibility of highlighting specific components of language (e.g., grammatical structures, words, phrases), and thus encouraging in learners so called "active viewing" which is vital for noticing the details in language and hence learning the language. Ultimately, it is the simultaneous on-display presentation of the written and spoken language (e.g., words, phrases, sentences), and the graphics that promote greater understanding in the learners by helping them to make the connections between the words and the images or actions (Shaffer et al., 2005).

On the other hand, studies point out that using highly immersive video game environments in classes might become counterproductive to learning outcomes (Schrader & Bastiaens, 2012). Therefore, it may be suggested that implementing digital games into the learning process could be potentially beneficial so long as it does not overwhelm the learners with too many sensory stimuli (Franciosi, 2017).

In summary, the integration of visual aids, particularly digital games, into language learning presents a compelling opportunity to enhance comprehension, engagement, and retention. As multimedia tools, video games provide a dynamic blend of audio-visual input and interactivity, offering learners contextualized language experiences that go beyond traditional text-based methods. Research consistently supports the idea that visual and non-linguistic information can strengthen cognitive processes like attention, perception, and memory, while also fostering confidence and participation in language tasks. Digital games, with their immersive narratives and engaging gameplay, support learners in forming deeper semantic connections by linking words to actions and contexts, as emphasized by Gee's learning principles. However, while the motivational and cognitive benefits are promising, educators must be cautious not to overload students with excessive sensory input that may hinder learning. When thoughtfully implemented, digital games can serve as powerful visual aids that support active learning, meaningful language use, and long-term retention—making them a valuable addition to modern language education.

4 Videogames and language skills

As was mentioned before, many authors conducting research in DGBLL or digital game-enhanced language learning (DGELL) provided evidence of positive influence of video games, especially, on vocabulary learning (e.g., Sundqvuist, 2019; Klimova & Kacetl, 2018; Calvo-Ferrer, 2017; Ashraf et al., 2014; Müller et al., 2018; Wei et al., 2018). Moreover, Peterson (2010) suggests the exposure to the target language, during gameplay, combined with the authentic context that video games provide, might promote positive changes in learners' ability to write, speak, read and comprehend spoken word in L2. Pitarch (2017) supports Peterson's claim, confirming in his study that playing video games is a valid resource for increasing the level of FL skills. This chapter will focus on the findings related to the possible correlation between video games and development of essential language skills.

4.1 Writing competence

One of the two productive skills, writing, is essential for communication in the modern world of mobile phones and social media. Expressing ourselves through text is what everybody does every day, whether it is writing emails, messages, posts, or else. In terms of English language skills, today's world offers many opportunities for learning, which is an advantage for any learner of English. As for writing competency, it is believed to be the most difficult skill to master because of its requirements for correct spelling, word order, punctuation, grammar, and other writing rules (Putri, 2015). The Benefit of the modern world is that one can absorb the basics from the internet, most often from social media. However, any media can potentially help develop the writing skills of the user/learner, whether it is a film or a video game.

Audio-visual media, such as digital games, might be potentially beneficial as educational tools for learning language skills, and writing belongs among them. Although the influence of video game playing on the development of writing competencies is not overly researched at the moment, it might be a promising topic for a future study. For instance, in 2021, Maxime Gagné compared two groups of native French students in his research. One group consisted of gamers and the other consisted of non-gamers. All students wrote a text, which was later analysed for linguistic accuracy and errors. The results showed gamers wrote texts with a lower error rate than non-gamers. Thus, the linguistic accuracy of a gamer was higher than that of a non-gamer (Gagné, 2021).

Another study, conducted in 2013 by Joseph Bing, focused on enhancing narrative writing skills through a video game, *Uncharted: Among Thieves*, which is a narrative-based action-adventure game from a third-person perspective, famous for its well-written story and characters. The study compared essays written by the participants before playing the video game with essays written after three weeks of playing the game. The results indicated that the players' exposure to the video game story may have developed their narrative writing skills. This was also confirmed by the participants themselves, who thought their post-gameplay essay was written better than the pre-gameplay essay (Bing, 2013).

On the other hand, Boland (2021) in his study came to a conclusion that playing online digital game Quandary did not significantly affect the quality of argumentative writing of the English foreign language (EFL) students. However, while control group learnt the rules for writing argumentative essay from the textbook, the experimental group acquired the knowledge from playing the video game. Surprisingly, the argumentative essays from both groups were similar in quality, which makes the result interesting.

To summarize, video game playing shows potential for development of writing competencies, as the above-mentioned examples demonstrate. However, the research gap on this topic is too big to assess this problematic objectively. More studies on this topic are needed, which provide space for future research.

4.2 Speaking competence

Significantly more researchers focused on the connection between video game playing and the development of communicative competency. Studies show promising results in that matter, emphasizing the role of multiplayer video games where players from different parts of the world meet in one place, which then ultimately leads to conversational encounters. For example, Deterding (2020) suggested that multiplayer digital games, in which players utilize voice-chat or text-chat to communicate (e.g., provide warnings, give instructions, and praise) with teammates, may enhance players' communicative skills. Moreover, due to the character of certain competitive video games (e.g., Counter Strike, Valorant, Overwatch, Rainbow Six: Siege), there is an emphasis on fast but precise communication between the players of one team, thus promoting quick thinking and clear articulation of ideas (Deterding, 2020).

Multiplayer games may not only provide opportunities for enjoyable encounters with other players, but as Horowitz & Kenneth (2019) or Soyoof & McLay (2019) maintain, they also provide a safe, stress-free space where players can feel comfortable using the FL to

communicate with others without the fear of making mistakes. The impact of digital games on stress relief is also supported by Azman & Dollsaid (2018), who highlight the positive effects of anxiety-free environments of MMORPGs on communicative skills of the players. Additionally, the opportunities for meaningful socialization enriched by the context provided by these kinds of video games may be another notable reason for believing in the positive impact of MMORPGs on the communicative competence of the players (Azman & Dollsaid, 2018). Furthermore, as the research by Toufik & Hanane (2021) shows, the conversational opportunities in online multiplayer video games do not enhance speaking competence in isolation, but rather develop listening and speaking skills together.

Research in this field also indicates that potential for the development of speaking skills lies in certain singleplayer video games as well. According to a study by David Checa & Andres Bustillo (2020), immersive story-driven singleplayer games, where players can explore vast fictional world, provide an abundance of opportunities for language learning via exposure to the events, dialogues, and the story in the game, thus indirectly enhancing communicative abilities.

To conclude, the growing body of research underscores the potential of video games to enhance communicative competency. The findings indicate that by fostering interactive communication, language acquisition, and providing safe environment for practise, video games offer a dynamic and engaging medium for learning and personal development.

4.3 Reading competence

The relationship between video games and reading competence has become an increasingly significant topic in educational research. Historically, video games were often viewed as potential distractions that could detract from academic performance. However, recent studies suggest that certain types of video games, especially those that involve rich narratives or interactive storytelling, can actually enhance reading skills and comprehension (e.g., Mullen and McLaughlin, 2017).

One of the most well-documented ways in which video games can influence reading competence is through the enhancement of reading comprehension. Games with complex narratives, particularly RPGs and adventure games, require players to follow detailed storylines, engage with written dialogue, and solve puzzles that often involve reading and interpreting text. These elements provide players with frequent opportunities to practice and improve their reading skills in a dynamic context (Gee, 2003).

Moreover, research by Mullen and McLaughlin (2017) highlights that games requiring the navigation of digital environments through reading and understanding instructions can foster important reading skills, particularly in younger players. They argue that engaging with game instructions, clues, and texts can provide a more interactive and rewarding form of reading practice compared to traditional classroom settings.

Furthermore, video games that involve frequent interaction with text-based elements, such as reading instructions, solving riddles, or deciphering complex narratives, can contribute to faster reading fluency, according to Darvenkumar and Devi (2022). By interacting with text in high-engagement contexts, players develop quicker recognition of words and phrases, which is essential for reading fluency (Bavelier et al., 2012).

While there are significant positive outcomes associated with video gaming and reading competence, some researchers point out potential drawbacks. One concern is that excessive video game use, especially games that prioritize action and fast-paced gameplay, may encourage "shallow" reading habits, according to University of Utah Health (2021). Players may become accustomed to skimming through text or relying on visuals and dialogue rather than engaging deeply with the material (Levin, 2014). This could potentially diminish their ability to engage with complex texts outside the gaming context.

Additionally, games that are heavily focused on action (e.g., *Call of Duty* or *Fortnite*) may not offer the same kind of reading practice that narrative or story-driven games provide. These games often emphasize rapid, action-oriented play and may not require the same level of engagement with reading as games that feature more in-depth storytelling. As a result, players who predominantly engage with action games may not experience the same benefits in terms of reading competence as those who play more narrative-driven games (Granic et al., 2014).

Overall, video games, particularly those that involve rich narratives, puzzles, and strategy, have the potential to significantly enhance reading competence, including comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and reading fluency. However, the extent of these benefits depends on the type of game and the nature of the player's engagement. Games that emphasize text and story-driven content offer valuable learning opportunities for developing reading skills, while action-oriented games may not provide the same level of cognitive engagement.

4.4 Listening competence

Listening comprehension is a fundamental skill in EFL education, and as Zang & Graham (2020) claim, it is essential for effective communication. For second language learners, building strong listening comprehension skills is particularly important (Syafii et al., 2020). However, traditional listening exercises may not sufficiently motivate students or provide the contextual richness necessary for effective learning (Berry, 2021). In this context, digital video games emerge as a promising tool, offering immersive, interactive environments that can enhance listening skills through authentic language exposure and increased learner engagement (Gee, 2007; Peterson, Yamazaki and Thomas, 2021).

Digital games often incorporate rich audio elements, including dialogues, instructions, and sound effects, which require players to process spoken language in real-time (Medina-Gray, 2021). This interactive auditory engagement can improve learners' ability to comprehend spoken English in various contexts. For instance, Berry (2021) conducted a study using the mobile game *Spaceteam: ESL* and found that participants who engaged with the game showed greater improvements in listening comprehension compared to those who did not, attributing this to the game's requirement for players to listen and respond to spoken commands under time constraints (Berry, 2021).

According to Jimmi, Kusuma & Yastanti (2024), numerous online and offline video games now incorporate narrative-driven stories and enable player interaction. To follow the storyline, players must pay attention to and comprehend character dialogues, which encourages the development of listening comprehension skills in an indirect yet meaningful way (Aiken et al., 2022). Furthermore, in the study by Jimmi, Kusuma & Yastanti (2024), the authors investigated, among other things, the effects of video game *Alan Wake's 2* cutscenes and character interactions on the development of listening skills, concluding that both of the above-mentioned video game elements may enhance the listening competency of the players.

Additionally, the immersive quality of games helps learners stay engaged, and this sustained attention can enhance listening performance. Mohamed et al. (2024) found that students were more willing to focus on listening tasks within a game environment due to reduced anxiety and greater interest, ultimately improving their retention of spoken English. Moreover, studies highlight that video games offer incidental learning opportunities, where players are not always consciously focused on learning but still absorb language skills while engaging with the content (Peterson, Yamazaki and Thomas, 2021). Listening comprehension,

in particular, benefits from this exposure because players frequently need to process and understand spoken language in order to progress in the game.

On the other hand, Schrader and Bastiaens (2012) point out that overly immersive environments might overwhelm learners with auditory and visual stimuli, especially those with lower proficiency levels. Therefore, educators must carefully select games appropriate for learners' language skills and ensure that gameplay remains a supportive, not distracting, learning tool.

In summary, the integration of video games into EFL instruction offers a dynamic way to develop listening comprehension skills. By presenting authentic, context-rich audio input and maintaining high levels of learner engagement, games can bridge the gap between traditional classroom listening tasks and real-world listening demands. While more empirical research is still needed to refine the pedagogical use of games, current studies suggest that carefully selected digital games can serve as valuable supplements to conventional listening instruction, particularly when combined with well-structured learning activities.

Research part

5 Aim of the research

The idea behind this master's thesis was to continue the investigation on the potentially beneficial use of digital games in English Language Teaching (ELT), based on the findings from numerous research papers, monographs, studies, and meta-studies, published mostly in recent years and it was intended as a continuation to the bachelor's thesis, also written by me, which gathered some potentially useful data that would be applicable for this research.

The aim of the research was to investigate whether it would be possible to implement video games into the English lessons in an effective and meaningful way. In order to achieve the intended goal, the learners should be *motivated* to learn or practise the foreign language and should prove *knowledgeable* of the topic that was taught or practised with the support of the video game elements. Additionally, suppose the research was successful in proving that it is possible to include video game elements into ELT effectively and meaningfully, it might provide teachers with tips or instructions for potential implementation into their own lessons.

6 Methodology

The practical part consisted of several stages that were designed to ensure the right conditions for a valid research. First, an online pre-survey in Survio was conducted, which was meant to gather data from the learners about their preferences, experiences, and opinions with regards to digital games. The idea was to take the gathered data from the pre-survey, which formed the background knowledge of the learners in this field, and use it to create attractive and meaningful lesson activities, incorporating video game elements based on the learners' digital game preferences.

Second, lesson activities that were focused on learning new English topic or on the practice of already learned subject matter were prepared with respect to the background information which was gained through the pre-survey. In total, four different lesson activities with implemented video game elements were prepared and used in three different classes, namely in 6th, 8th, and 9th grade of elementary school. The activities were focused on grammatical topics, productive language skills (i.e., speaking and writing), and listening comprehension. The vernacular video games chosen as learning tools and support for the

specific activities were *Minecraft*, *The Sims*, *Uncharted 3: Drake's Deception*, *Marvel's Spider-man 2*, *GTA 5*, and *Hogwarts Legacy*.

Third, the assessment stage that was supposed to gather data from three separate sample groups, which would then be compared and their evaluations analysed. To start, a feedback on the activities was made by the learners via short, four-question, anonymous survey, providing honest opinions regarding the effectivity, meaningfulness, usefulness, and joyfulness of the specific activities. After that, a structured interview with the teacher, who was also present during the lessons in which the specific video game activities were used, was conducted, arguing their honest views on using such activities in English lessons. Lastly, the third sample group was formed from future or present English teachers who presented their views on the implementation of video games (or video game elements) into the ELT through an online questionnaire.

The research was done at a single elementary school in Czech Republic and the total of 44 pupils participated in the research.

7 Analysis and results

This chapter will provide a detailed analysis and results of each research stage in the order in which they were realized in practice.

7.1 Pre-survey

The pre-survey gathered data from 44 respondents of different ages and genders, who were studying elementary school in 6th, 8^{th,} or 9th grade. The survey was created at the online website, Survio, and the pupils accessed it by scanning the quick response (QR) code with their mobile phones. In total, the pre-survey consisted of 11 questions, which were meant to create a clear picture of respondents' relationship with video games and offer insight into learners' video game experiences and preferences. The questions were written in the Czech language in order to ensure respondents' understanding of what they were being asked. The questions were as follows:

1. Do You play video games?
2. How often do You spend time playing video games?
3. Approximately how much time do You spend playing videogames per day?
4. What language settings do You most often play video games with?

5. Do You think that playing video games has had a positive impact on Your current level of English?
6. If Your answer to the previous question was “Yes”, state the reasons for giving that answer.
7. If Your answer to the previous question was “No”, state the reasons for giving that answer.
8. If You were to choose one or multiple specific video games which, in Your opinion, enhanced Your level of English language the most, which video games would You choose?
9. Which aspects of the English language did playing video games most likely help You develop?
10. What is Your age?
11. What is Your sex?

7.2 Pre-survey results

The pre-survey results supported the notion that digital games are popular among the young since only five respondents mentioned that they do not play video games at all (*Figure 1*), and the majority of the respondents play either every day or twice to six times a week (*Figure 2*). That is in accordance with the results from research conducted by Hron (2022) where it was concluded that video game playing is a significant part of the respondents’ lives as majority stated they play video games on a daily basis or multiple times per week.

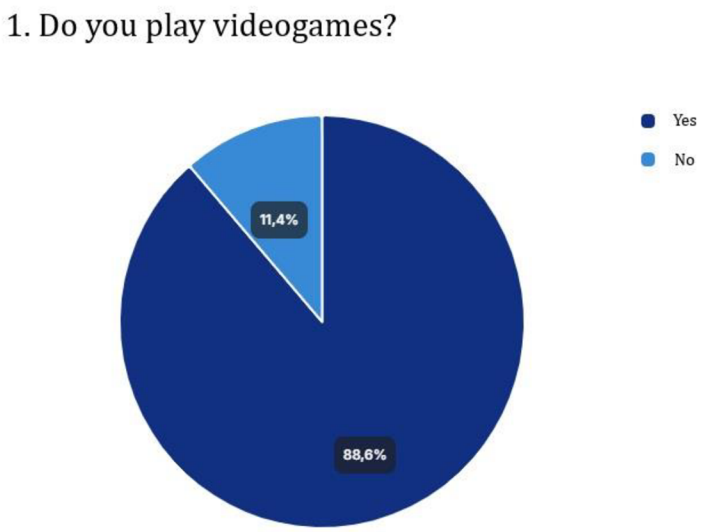

Figure 1 source: https://my.survio.com/

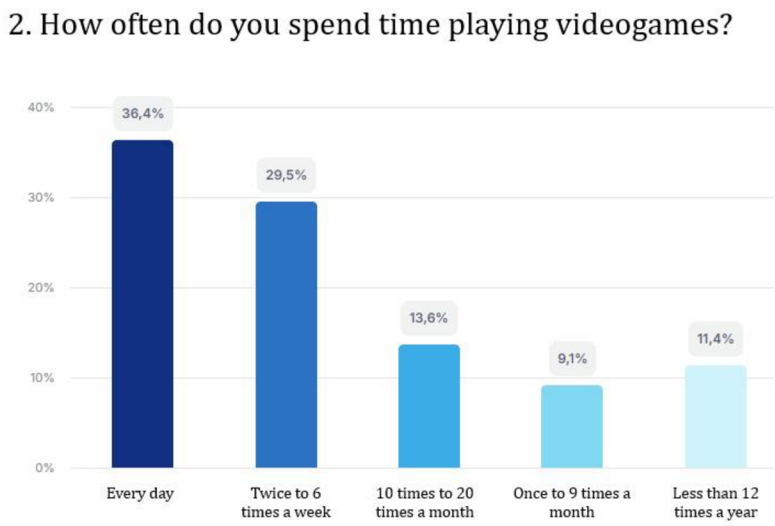

Figure 2 source: https://my.survio.com/

In addition, almost half of the respondents (47.7%) stated that they spent approximately two to three hours playing video games every day (*Figure 3*) which again supports the claim that video games are an undeniable influence in modern society and are, as Hron (2022) states, comparable to other hobbies which are realized on a regular basis. As *Figure 3* also indicates, a minority of the respondents (6.8%) spend more than three hours per day playing video games. On the other hand, 20.5% of the learners stated that they do not play video games on a daily basis, which is a slightly higher percentage compared to the results in the survey conducted by Hron (2022).

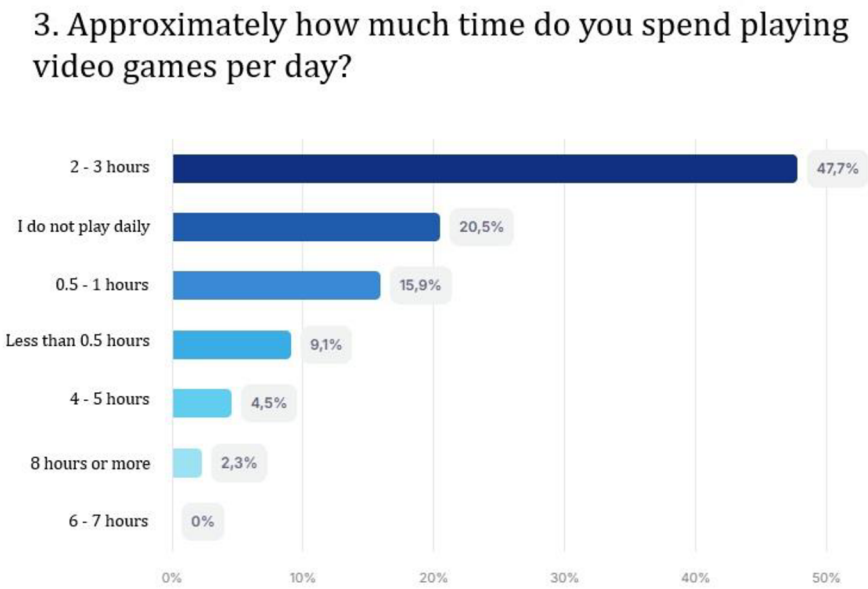

Figure 3 source: https://my.survio.com/

Surprisingly, the pre-survey showed that more than half of the respondents (52.3%) preferred playing video games in the English language without any subtitles and only twelve respondents preferred playing with Czech or English subtitles (*Figure 4*), which was in contradiction for example with the results of the survey from Hron (2022) where 48% of the respondents preferred playing with the English language and English subtitles setting. Furthermore, the Hron's (2022) survey showed a 99.5% agreement among the respondents, indicating that subtitles in video games are meaningful and valuable. However, this contradiction may have arisen from different age groups involved in the two questionnaires since the current research was focused solely on the students of elementary school, unlike the former research, which focus was more broad and elementary education students made only 4.5% of all the respondents. Generally, the learners seemed to prioritize video game playing without captions, which is unexpected given the age of the learners and therefore their overall level of English language skills.

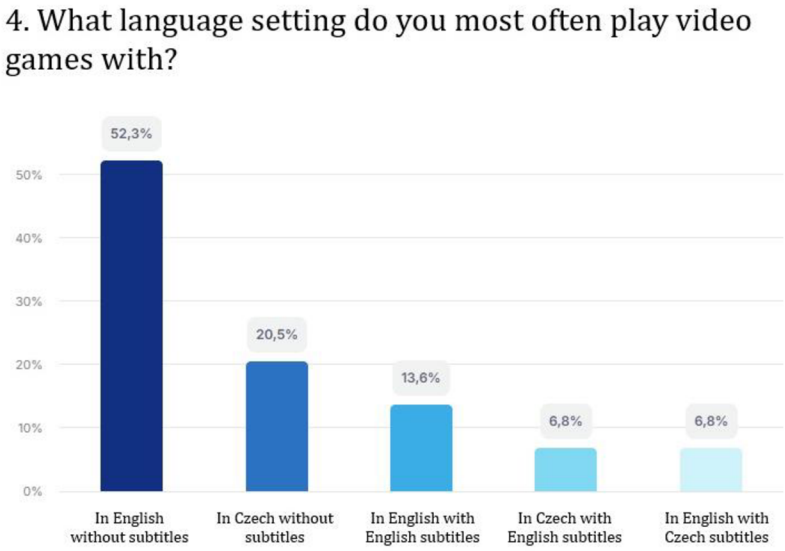

Figure 4 source: https://my.survio.com/

A total of 28 respondents (63.6%) think that playing video games has enhanced their level of English language (*Figure 5*). The pupils mentioned multiple reasons, one was that games can easily and comprehensively present new vocabulary to the players. Second reason happened to be the communicative aspect of multiplayer video games where the players can communicate via in-game chat with other players/foreigners. Third most repeated reason was that the games are simply in English and thus provide many opportunities for language learning (e.g., pronunciation, spelling, grammar, English collocations, translations).

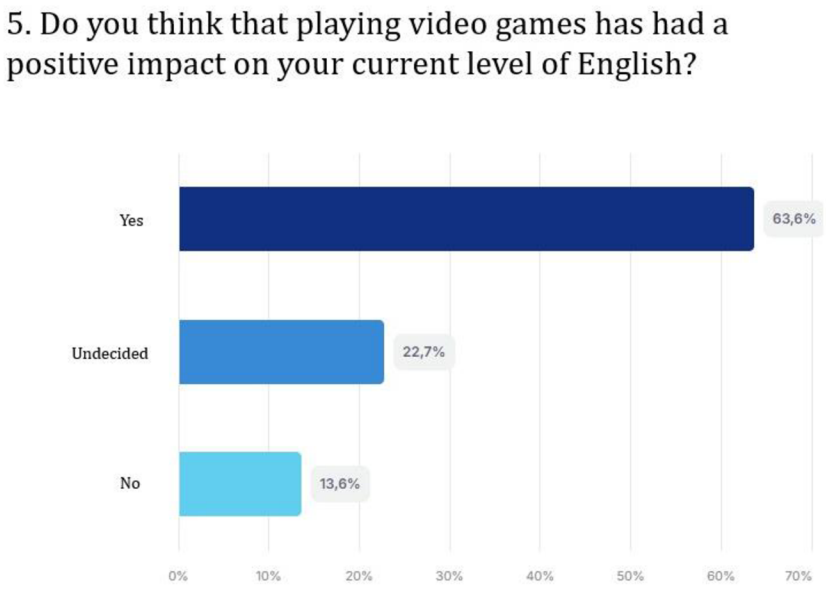

Figure 5 source: https://my.survio.com/

Minecraft and Fortnite were the most picked video games that respondents viewed as having the highest influence on the development of their level of English. Good results had also competitive multiplayer digital games such as Valorant, Counter-Strike: Global Offensive, and Fortnite. As *Figure 6* indicates, the majority of respondents (48.5%) agreed on the fact that video game playing probably developed their vocabulary the most. On the other hand, 8.8% of the learners thought that video game playing did not develop any of the aspects of English language given in the options (i.e., *Vocabulary, Spelling, Knowledge of English collocations and idioms, Pronunciation*).

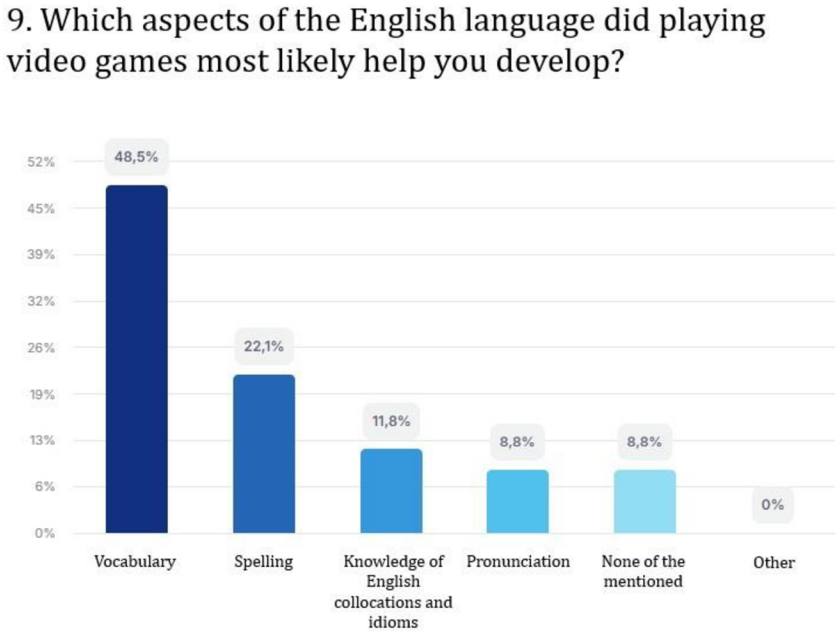

Figure 6 source: https://my.survio.com/

Additionally, the demographic questions showed that the ratio of males (22) and females (19) in this survey was almost the same, while three respondents did not choose either male or female option (*Figure 7*).

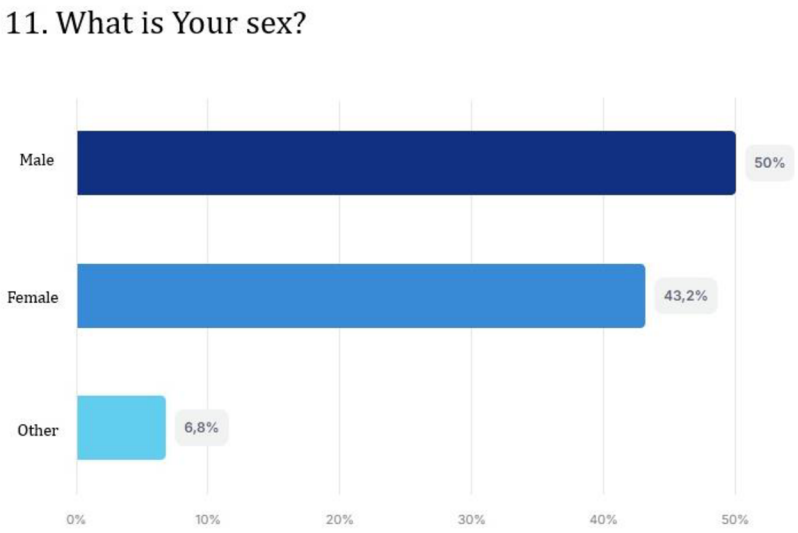

Figure 7 source: https://my.survio.com/

Finally, the age of the respondents was between eleven and fifteen years. Based on the results of this pre-survey, specific video games were chosen as a support for English learning and practice in the second stage of the research.

7.3 Implementation of video games into the English lesson

The idea was to choose a video game that would suit the specific class's preferences and implement parts of the game into the lesson activities to enhance learners' motivation, concentration, and learning. The pre-survey indicated which video games could potentially be the best choice for implementation in this specific context, however, since not every digital game offers the same learning opportunities, the researcher had to choose such video games that would appeal to the majority of the learners while also offering the required study material for that specific lesson. For that reason, the video games chosen for the implementation into ELT were: *Minecraft, The Sims, GTA 5, Hogwarts Legacy, Marvel's Spider-Man 2, and Uncharted*.

7.3.1 Using video games in the 9th grade

The first attempt to implement video game elements into the English lesson happened in the 9th grade, where it was intended to provide audio-visual and contextual support for the practice of recognition of different future tenses and in what situations these tenses might occur.

Here, the implementation of digital games functioned as a means to practise and internalize a specific grammatical topic.

Description of the lesson activity:

1) Uncharted

- Teacher (T) shows Pupils (Ps) screen shots from the in-game cinematic where characters use WILL to express spontaneous decisions (what will happen).

- Ps will try to order the screenshots and also try to explain why the characters used only WILL.

- T then plays the actual cutscene

source: UNCHARTED 3 PS5 REMASTERED Gameplay Walkthrough FULL GAME [41:45]

2) Marvel's Spider-man 2

- T shows Ps screen shots from the in-game cutscene where characters use GOING TO and PRESENT PROGRESSIVE to express the gradually increasing probability of something happening.

- Ps will try to explain the meaning of the cut scene without seeing it just from the two pictures that should provide enough context for the Ps to uncover the meaning behind it.

- T then plays the actual cut scene

source: SPIDER-MAN 2 PS5 Gameplay Walkthrough Part 1 FULL GAME [5:40]

7.3.2 Using video games in the 8th grade

The second and third video game implementations happened in the 8th grade. The First, was intended to provide visual and contextual support for a practice of recognition of the past simple and the past progressive tense and in which situations are these tenses used, and apart from focusing on the grammatical topic, the learners should practise productive language skills (i.e., speaking and writing), as well as cooperative competencies emerging from work in groups. In the second, the implementation of the video game elements aimed to provide audio-visual, meaningful context on which the learners were to react and based on which they were to create sentences using the appropriate form of the past tense and thus practise the specific grammatical topic.

Description of the lesson activity:

- Practise of past simple and past progressive

- The activities are focused on grammatical topics of past simple and past progressive. It develops speaking skills and understanding of the usage of past simple and past progressive in specific situations.

a) Minecraft [Source: Minecraft Relaxing Longplay - Building a Peaceful Ocean Home (No Commentary)]

- T instructs Ps to watch carefully what the in-game character is doing and possibly make notes about it so that they can later recall those actions more easily.

- After the first video, T asks "*What did Steve do?*" or *"What did you see Steve do?"* [2:15 – 3:00]

Possible answers: *He swam; he crafted an axe and pickaxe; he cut down a tree* etc.

- After the second video, T asks differently: *"What WAS STEVE DOING?"* [1:19:50 – 1:20:25]

The answer should be: *He was building a house*.

b) The SIMS

- Ps are divided into groups of 3-4 and are handed pictures from the game The Sims. In these pictures are shown people/characters doing certain activities.

- The task is to discuss in groups what they can see in those pictures and write down as many sentences as they can, using the past progressive and describing the actions and events displayed in the pictures.

- We can do more rounds and the groups can swap their pictures.

- Then we check together.

Description of the lesson activity:

- with the help of 3 games (Hogwarts Legacy, GTA 5 and Marvel's Spider-man 2) we will practise past simple and past progressive which appear in the same situation. The 3 games give us meaningful context. Ps will try to come up with the appropriate sentence that would express meaningfully the actions in the cut scenes. T also stops the videos or in any other way hints what actions are the ones Ps need to comment on (create a sentence from).

a) Hogwarts Legacy [1:00 – 2:25]

- "The teacher and the student WERE TALKING when another wizard TELEPORTED next to them."

- "They WERE TALKING when the bell STARTED ringing."

Source: *HOGWARTS LEGACY Gameplay Walkthrough Part 1 FULL GAME [4K 60FPS] - No Commentary*

b) GTA 5 [4:25:20 – 4:25:28]

- "They WERE ARGUING when we ARRIVED."

Source: *GTA 5 Gameplay Walkthrough Part 1 FULL GAME - ULTRA REALISTIC GRAPHICS [4K 60FPS PC] No Commentary*

c) Spider Man 2 [5:40 – 6:02]

- "Peter WAS TEACHING when Miles RUSHED in the class."

Source: *SPIDER-MAN 2 Gameplay Walkthrough Part 1 [4K 60FPS PS5] - No Commentary (FULL GAME)*

7.3.3 Using video games in the 6th grade

The last implementation of the video game elements was introduced in the 6th grade and the aim was to practise WH- questions and answers in the present tense. The activity was intended to also provide opportunities for spontaneous language use with the support of the video game elements that should have stimulated the conversation between the learners by providing context that was meant to be meaningful, and attractive.

Description of the lesson activity:

The Sims

- Ps are organised into pairs or groups of 3 and are handed pictures from the game The Sims. In these pictures are shown people/characters doing certain activities.

- The task is to ask your partner/classmate in your group Qs about the characters or a scene in the picture and he/she will give you an answer. Ps use mainly WH- questions and Qs in present tense, generally.

- We can do more rounds and the pairs can swap their pictures.

The activities which implemented video game elements into the ELT were part of the whole lesson plan and were designed to supplement the other activities prepared for that specific lesson. During the research, the experimental activities were usually placed in the revision phase of the lesson where it functioned as refreshing, alternative way to revise and practise the subject matter.

7.4 The learners' feedback

In order to gather the most honest and fresh opinions on the experimental lesson activities, a short paper feedback form was prepared to be distributed among the learners, ideally at the end of the lesson. The respondents could remain anonymous, and the questions, written in the Czech language, were as follows:

1. How did you like the implementation of video game elements into the lesson?
2. Would you welcome similar refreshing lesson activities more often?
3. Did the activity help you in any way with understanding of the topic? How?
4. Do you have any suggestions how to improve the activity?

The answers to the open-ended questions gathered from the learners' feedback were processed and analysed manually by the researcher for any recurring themes. The results showed that 41 out of the 44 pupils liked the implementation of the video game elements into the ELT, praising mostly the refreshing impact that the presented lesson activities had on the respondents, which brought diversification and change into the lesson. Three respondents stated they did not like the implementation of video game elements into the ELT and one of the three shared their opinion that the activities supported with video game context were not interesting to the respondent, and were perceived as boring. Additionally, two out of these three respondents answered negatively to all the questions; on the other hand, the remaining respondent stated that even though they disliked the video game aspect in such activities, they felt that it helped them with understanding the studied matter in that lesson.

The feedback also showed that 34 out of the 41 pupils who liked the activities would gladly welcome a more frequent use of video game implementation in their English classes. In contrast, the other six pupils were rather hypothetically inclined towards the idea of having such

activities in the language lessons more often, and one pupil even disliked the idea of more frequent use of video game-based activities, even though this exact respondent enjoyed the activity the first time. Furthermore, 26 pupils maintained that the activities with implemented video game elements significantly facilitated understanding (or, in one case, revision) of the studied topic, and eight pupils agreed to a slight increase in their understanding of the studied topic. Three respondents were undecided about this matter, and five respondents claimed that the specific activities had little to no effect on their level of understanding of the studied language topic.

7.5 Interview with the teacher

During every lesson where the implementation of the video game elements was introduced to the learners by different activities, one teacher was present in the class to monitor the lesson, make notes, notice the atmosphere in the class, evaluate the learners' reactions to the experimental activities and make an opinion regarding the use of video games in the lessons of English. The teacher shared their views in a structured interview, which was conducted via e-mail correspondence. The questions and the teacher's responses in the interview were as follows:

1. What is Your opinion on the activities with implemented video game elements that I used in the English lessons?

   "I have no knowledge of video games, but I could see that some pupils knew them and that it was a pleasant refreshment of the traditional learning of English."

2. Do You think that pupils appreciated the activities? Do You think that the activities were meaningful and useful for the learners?

   "In my opinion, the learners appreciated the activities and it was a change from the traditional ways of English learning and teaching. The activities were good, overall."

3. Have You noticed any potential problems in such an approach to the ELT? What advantages and disadvantages can such activities bring, in Your opinion?

   "The advantage was definitely the familiarity with the video games because they knew them from home. In my eyes, it is a great alternative for a once-in-a-while use, however, it should not be overused, otherwise, it would be a hindrance to English learning, in my eyes."

4. Can You imagine incorporating video games in any form into your lessons? If yes, would be Your approach to the use of video games in the lesson different to mine?

"I can imagine incorporating video games into my lessons, besides, we already incorporate videos into the English lesson. I would yet have to think about how to engage most of the pupils in such activities because it is possible that some of the learners might not understand English in the video games."

5. Do You know about any other teachers who are trying to implement video games in any way into the ELT?

   "That I do not know. I know that they use various apps, but I have not heard about any teacher who would use video games in their lessons. I think a lot of teachers do not know any of these digital games."

6. What are Your views on implementing video games into the ELT, in general? Does it make sense, in Your mind?

   "In my mind, it makes sense because it is familiar and attractive to the learners. Nowadays, digital games are everywhere around the learners, and using this aspect of familiarity in the ELT brings a fresh change to the lesson."

7. If You have other comments or remarks with regards to the use of digital games in the ELT, please, do share it here.

   "I have heard that in Northern countries, the teachers may be slowly abandoning some of the trends that come with the use of Information Technology in teaching because it may negatively affect the learners' concentration. In my opinion, why not use video games in the lessons? However, we should find a balance and not overuse them."

The interviewed teacher's responses indicate that the implementation of video games into ELT might be a positive change to more traditional teaching approaches, confirming that the learners' reactions to the activities with video game implementation conducted by the researcher were generally positive, and that the learners appreciated the refreshment that such activities bring. The interviewee highlighted the close relationship between learners and videogames as an advantage of this teaching method, which can consequently elicit learners' motivation and engagement in learning. However, in the teacher's mind, such learning activities should be incorporated into ELT only occasionally, as overuse of these activities might hinder the FL learning. Additionally, the preparation of such activities is considerably time-consuming, which may be a factor for teachers to acknowledge, and therefore the occasional use may be preferable. Ultimately, the interviewee could imagine implementing similar activities into his/her lessons, even though their knowledge of video games is limited, however,

the ways in which the learners would be equally involved in activities had to be considered, in the teacher's point of view.

7.6 Present and future teachers' questionnaire

As it was mentioned above, this online questionnaire was aimed to gather responses from current English teachers and University students of English language teaching considering their views on implementing video games or video game elements into the English lessons. The questionnaire consisted of eight close-ended obligatory questions and one open-ended supplementary question. The respondents were asked to offer their honest opinions, especially regarding the methods of video game implementation used by the researcher himself in the elementary school environment. The total number of respondents amounted to 45, and the questionnaire has been gathering responses for fourteen days. The respondents were approached online via specific Facebook pages dedicated to teachers and University students of pedagogy.

As for the practical examples of video game implementation on which the respondents were meant to give their honest opinion, the total of three lesson activities were described in the online questionnaire in order to provide reasonable context, based on which the respondents could make their mind about the effectivity, meaningfulness and appropriateness of the presented methods. These lesson activities can be found in the Appendices of this paper.

7.7 Results of the present and future teachers' questionnaire

As it is indicated by *Figure 8*, the majority of the respondents (66.7%) were female which is not surprising, considering the current ratio of female and male representation in the teaching profession. Furthermore, according to *Figure 9*, the number of respondents from among the students of ELT was the same as the number of respondents from among the high school teachers (35.6% each).

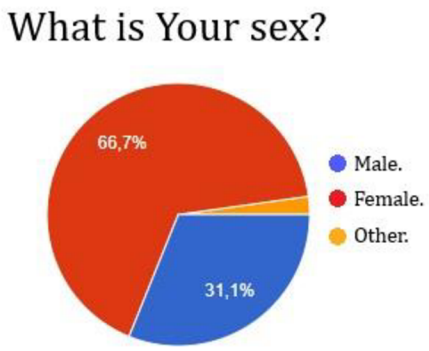

Figure 8
source: https://docs.google.com/forms/u/0/

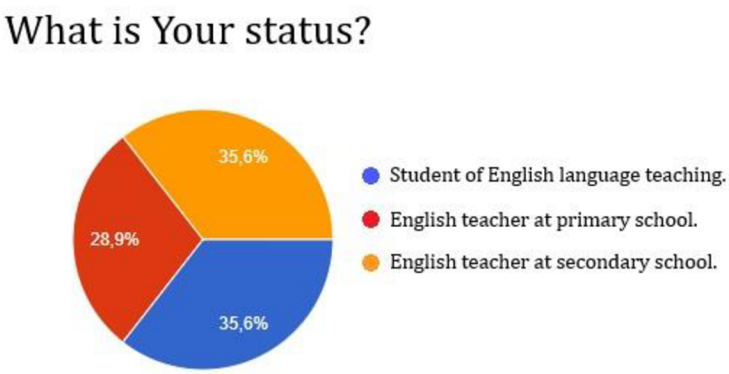

Figure 9
source: https://docs.google.com/forms/u/0/

Moreover, it is evident from *Figure 10* that 91.1% of the respondents would occasionally incorporate video games in some way into their English lessons, and only two respondents expressed opposition to the video game implementation overall. These results show that video games are perceived as useful tools by the majority of the questioned current or future teachers, and that occasional use of video games in ELT is a possibility in the minds of those teachers.

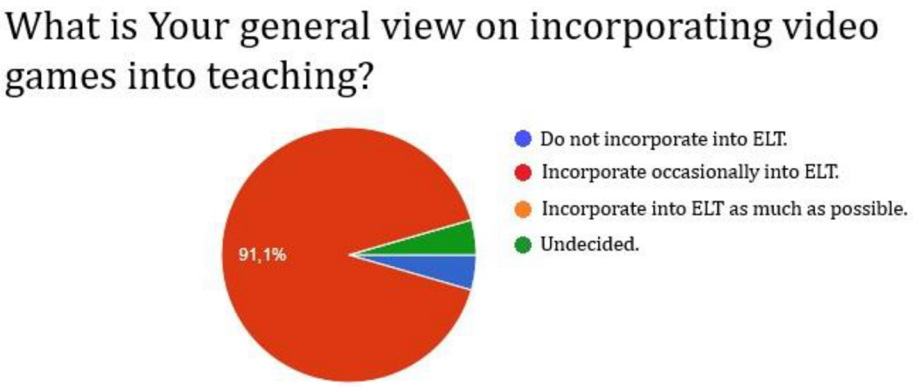

Figure 10 source: https://docs.google.com/forms/u/0/

Regarding the relationship of the respondents to video games, it was found that 20% of the respondents have never played a single video game, and the remaining 80% did have a personal experience with playing video games (*Figure 11*). That result supports the apparent interconnectedness of video games with the lives of people of any age (e.g., children, teenagers, young adults, adults) and might be a promising indicator for more frequent implementation of video games into the ELT in the future.

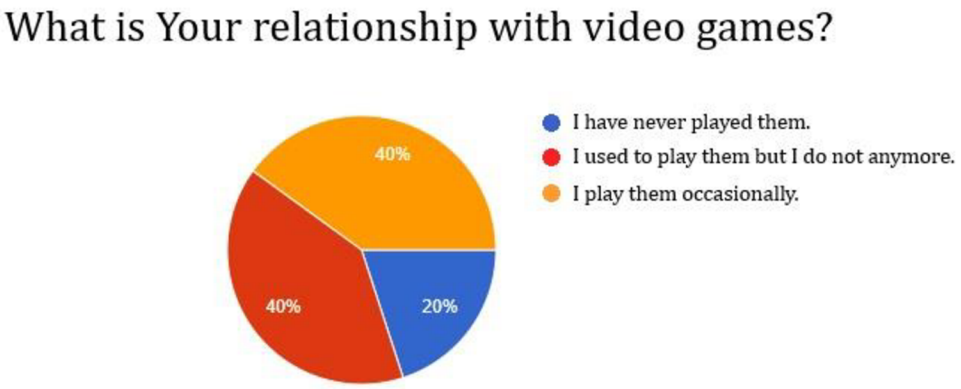

Figure 11 source: https://docs.google.com/forms/u/0/

Additionally, as *Figure 12* displays, 37.8% of the respondents viewed video game playing as rather positive, 33.3% expressed undecided in that matter, 15.6% saw video game playing as rather negative, positive opinion on playing digital games had 11.1%, and only 1 responder viewed video game playing as negative, in general. These findings imply that current and future teachers recognize benefits of video game playing as well as possible negatives, which supports the previously expressed preference for rather occasional use of video games in the ELT as a pleasant alternative to traditional teaching methods. Moreover, it may also support the claims of Alyaz and Genc (2016) that some teachers, despite their overall positive views on video games, may be reluctant to implement video games into their lessons due to the number of complications (e.g., technical, pedagogical, financial), resulting in general intolerance of the educational system for these kinds of methods.

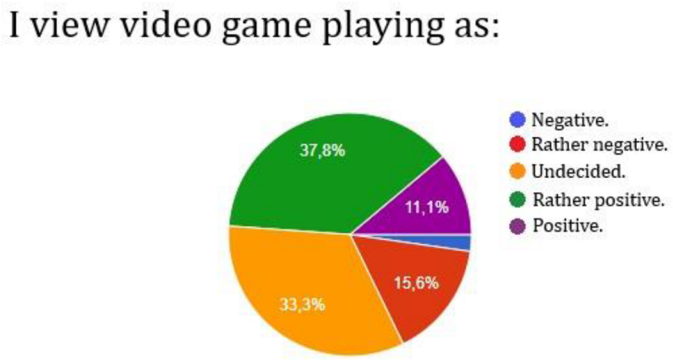

Figure 12 source: https://docs.google.com/forms/u/0/

The reactions of the respondents to the experimental lesson activities, which implemented video game elements and were used in English lessons, show that 46.7% of the respondents could imagine using such methods/lesson activities in their English lessons, 35.6% were inclined to the possibility of trying such methods/lesson activities in their lessons, 11.1% were somewhat sceptical about that idea, 4.4% could not imagine such methods/lesson activities in their lessons, and one person remained undecided in that matter. *Figure 13* shows those results, with more than 82% agreement among the respondents on the possible implementation of video games into their lessons.

Figure 13 source: https://docs.google.com/forms/u/0/

In addition, a similar percentage of the respondents (82.2%) viewed the presented experimental lesson activities as a possibly effective method to practice and to revise the chosen topic, and only two respondents (4.4%) expressed rather negative views on that matter (*Figure 14*). Such results indicate that the implementation of video games into ELT is meaningful for the currently practicing teachers as well as for the students of English language teaching.

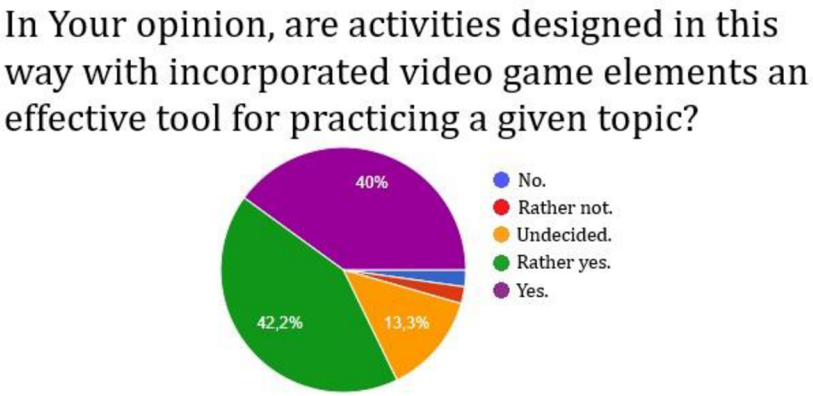

Figure 14 source: https://docs.google.com/forms/u/0/

Ultimately, 66.7% of the respondents stated they would incorporate video games into their English lessons similarly as it was experimentally incorporated into the lessons by the researcher, 22.2% would not incorporate video games into their English lessons at all, and 11.1% would choose a different approach to implementing video games into their lessons (*Figure 15*). Based on those findings, it could be claimed that if teachers were properly instructed and provided with materials and guidance, they would likely be less reluctant to incorporate video games or video game elements into their lessons. Additionally, a similar claim was made by Klimova & Kacetl (2018), who called for a supportive framework for teachers that would enable them to incorporate game-based or game-enhanced teaching into their lessons.

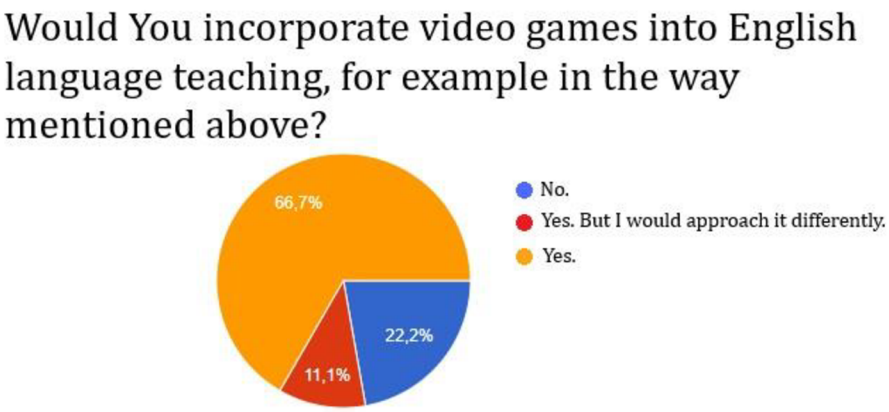

Figure 15 source: https://docs.google.com/forms/u/0/

Moreover, five alternative ideas regarding the implementation of video games into the English lessons were described by the respondents, giving a different perspective on the topic, offering a constructive critique of the researcher's approach, and perhaps suggesting tips for future research in this area of study. The following are the alternative options described by the respondents:

1. "I would also focus on the opposite approach: e.g., With games like Minecraft/The Sims let the pupils play the game and be creative, based on the instructions, and thus utilizing the potential of the video games. The presented lesson activities can be done with more or less any video, in my opinion."
2. "I would skip extensive discussions about grammatical phenomena in English lessons. They might be too complex for teaching at the level of elementary school English."
3. "Activity number 3 reminds me of the classic description of a scene in a picture/photo, which is often included in almost every textbook; therefore, I would probably skip this discipline. The other two seem good to me and interesting for practicing certain grammatical issues."
4. "Personally, I would focus more on the game called Scribblenauts, which emphasizes vocabulary and problem-solving skills."
5. "I might let the students actively play the game as well. I would change the activity so that the students could give instructions in English to the individual playing the game about what to do."

8 Discussion

This research reached multiple findings based on the data gathered from the interviewee and all the respondents whose opinions were registered in the pre-survey, the learners' feedback form, and the present and future teachers' questionnaire. This chapter comments on those findings, compares the findings to the results from other research papers, and tries to suggest possibilities for future research.

In general, the pre-survey confirmed the fact that video games are an integral part of current children's lives, which is in accordance with the results of video game popularity surveys that can be found on websites such as *Statista*, *Entertainment Software Association*, *Academy of Animated Art*, and many others. It is the huge popularity of digital games that would make the video game implementation into ELT potentially rewarding in terms of students' engagement in the lesson. The interviewed teacher specifically mentioned the effect of familiarity with the video games that becomes a great motivator for the pupils. That is also the reason why the pre-survey of the pupils' video game preferences was conducted, so that the pupils would work with a video game that is familiar to them and thus potentially more motivating. However, an argument could be made that using any video game in the lesson would be refreshing and therefore motivating for the pupils.

What more, the present and future teacher's questionnaire results showed that 80% of the respondents are also familiar with digital games and playing video games still is or at some point was a preferred hobby of the respondents. This only supports the findings of other surveys, which conclude that, among other things, the age of an average gamer is higher than one would thought and it might fluctuate between 35 and 44 years, according to websites *playtoday.co* and *dataprot.net*. The statistics from Statista (2025) even show that the average age of computer game players in Germany in 2024 was around 38 years. This only proves that familiarity with digital games already exists among some of the present-day teachers, and the trend indicates that the upcoming new teachers might be increasingly more familiar with various video games, and perhaps the willingness to incorporate these popular digital media into ELT might become more frequent. This means that statements from Chandler (2013) or Karadag (2015) about the video game illiteracy among present-day teachers might slowly lose validity as new teachers who grew up with digital games are starting their careers. However, as the findings from a nationwide survey conducted by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport in 2019 show, the average age of a teacher at elementary, middle, and high schools altogether in the Czech

Republic is approximately 47.6 years, which may suggest that the average Czech teacher still might be rather uneducated with regards to video games and their potential benefit for ELT. That would also be in accordance with the statements the interviewed teacher made, mentioning their very limited knowledge about the video games and that nobody from among the said teacher's colleagues tries to implement video games into the lessons. The reason for that might be related to the claims by Klimova & Kacetl (2018), who maintained that teachers are still in need of a comprehensible guide for efficient video game implementation into the lessons.

A positive sign can be seen from the results of the present and future teachers' questionnaire, signalling that teachers might seriously consider using digital games in their lessons if the procedure, the expected outputs, and other requirements for meaningful implementation of digital games into the lesson were explained to them. This notion is supported by the responses displayed by *Figure 13*, showing that 46.7% of the respondents could imagine incorporating the video games in the same manner as the researcher described, and 35.6% were inclined to that possibility. Or by *Figure 14*, where 40% of the respondents evaluated the activities with implemented video games described by the researcher as effective tool for practice/revision of the given topic, and 42.2% were again inclined to that possibility. Finally, *Figure 15* points to the same results by indicating that even though 33.3% of the respondents were undecided about the overall impact of playing digital games on the learners, 66.7% of all the respondents in that questionnaire would implement digital games into their English lessons, for instance in a way that was presented by the researcher. These findings not only support the claims of Klimova & Kacetl (2018) about the teachers still being uneducated, under-prepared, and without guidance to try using digital games in lessons, but also demonstrate that the teachers would be interested in trying these new methods if they were instructed and guided.

The survey of the present and future teachers' opinions showed that 91.1% would implement digital games into their lessons occasionally, and a similar response was registered from the interviewed teacher, confirming that occasional incorporation of video games into the English lessons might benefit the learners by refreshing and changing the traditional teaching methods and by possibly providing the pupils with extra motivation, while overuse of such alternative methods would become counterproductive, in the eyes of the aforementioned teacher. These results reveal that the implementation of digital games into English lessons might be an interesting topic to discuss further in the sphere of education, since, as the data indicate, the teachers could use certain games as effective tools in their classes as a meaningful change

to already applied practices, such as using literature, songs, videos, or films, provided the teachers are educated in this area. Moreover, the respondents (i.e., English teachers and students of pedagogy with a focus on English teaching) unanimously agreed on not overusing the digital games, which might again imply that the respondents would prefer having the video games as an option to choose when it fits into their lesson plan.

One particular result from the pre-survey shows that 28 out of 44 pupils (63.6%) believe that video game playing has had a positive impact on their knowledge of the English language. This result, while still being the majority opinion in this case, is not as decisive as the result from Hron's bachelor's thesis, which displayed almost unanimous agreement (99%) of the respondents with regards to the notion that playing digital games, among other things, has had a positive influence on their current level of English (Hron, 2022). However, the different pool of respondents needs to be considered before making any assumptions about the discrepancy between the results of the two questionnaires. Additionally, the rate of undecided opinions in this specific question in the pre-survey was considerably high (22.7%).

On the other hand, multiple common themes can be found between this research and the bachelor's thesis research, especially with regards to the reasons why respondents deem video game playing as beneficial to their foreign language skills and knowledge. In general, the respondents agreed on the positive impact video game playing has had on their vocabulary knowledge, stating that digital games create many opportunities for learning the foreign language in meaningful contexts in which the learner can acquire appropriate pronunciation, learn correct spelling of words, understand certain grammatical principles, and uncover phrases and collocations typical for given situations. Another agreement could be found with regards to learning opportunities in multiplayer video games, where the main benefit to language learning emerge from communication with team members or other players online through voice-chat or text-chat which, as Hron (2022) claims, might provide learners with provocative environment to develop productive and receptive English skills (specifically speaking and listening or reading comprehension). Additionally, these findings are supported by other researchers globally. For example, the positive effect of playing digital games on vocabulary acquisition is confirmed by researchers such as Islam et al. (2025), Zou et al. (2021), Klimova & Kacetl (2018), Wei et al. (2018), Müller et al. (2018), Vasileiadou and Makrina (2017), Calvo-Ferrer (2017), Ashraf et al. (2014). On the other hand, researchers such as Peterson (2012), Thorne, Fisher & Lu (2012), Validi & Movahed (2024), Piirainen-Marsh & Tainio (2009), Zheng et al. (2009), and others have highlighted the benefits of playing online multiplayer video games.

They argue that these games benefit the development of the players' foreign languages because of the communicative situations that emerge during gameplay.

Many of the supportive comments about the potential positive impact of multiplayer games on foreign language learning are connected with research of MMORPGs, however, this genre was ignored in the pre-survey responses, and the respondents rather picked Competitive first-person tactical online shooter games (e.g., *Valorant, Counter-Strike*), Battle Royale MMO games (e.g., *PUBG: Battlegrounds, Fortnite*), or MMO sandbox games (e.g., *Roblox*). This might be caused by the varying popularity of certain genres of games among specific age groups, suggesting that MMORPGs are not overly favoured among today's teenagers. That is consistent with data presented by Nick Yee (2004) which indicate that teenagers compose about 25% of the MMORPG active fan base, and the average MMORPG player was estimated to be around 26 years old.

The pre-survey also asked what the respondents' favoured video game is with regard to its impact on the respondents' development of the L2. Therefore, the results can be compared with those from Hron's (2022) research. In contrast to the previous agreements between the two research papers, the findings here provide a different perspective. Hron's (2022) research suggests that the most influential video game genre for FL learning might be, according to the majority of the responses in the survey, *RPGs* and *Action* games. This is in contrast with the results in the pre-survey, which show survival *sandbox* (e.g., Minecraft) and *battle royal* (e.g. Fortnite) as the most influential genres for the respondents' development of the FL.

On the one hand, a solid case could be made for a positive impact of *Minecraft*. Apart from being on the list of the best-selling video games to this day (Nebel, Schneider & Rey, 2016), Minecraft has been the point of focus among many researchers with regards to its potential benefits in education with actual trials to implement the game in multiple different school subjects, such as Chemistry, Mathematics, Informatics, or Language and Literacy (Hancl, 2013; Forster, 2012; Wagner, 2015; Bebbington, 2014). By all odds, Minecraft has the potential for language learning, therefore, it is surprising that the respondents in Hron's (2022) survey did not seem to acknowledge that.

On the other hand, Fortnite has not been scientifically investigated for educational benefits as heavily as Minecraft, however, the video game was still considered a useful learning medium by respondents of the pre-survey. The potential use of Fortnite for educational purposes has so far been rather neglected, and might be an interesting topic for future research,

considering the influence it might have, especially on children, judging by the popularity of the game among the young. For example, Ausejo et al. (2024) investigated Fortnite's educational value as an instrument for learning about the historical period – ancient Greece – concluding that the video game's depiction of that period is far from accurate to be presented as a learning material as it stands. However, the authors claim that the success of this video game might be used by teachers as a way to engage students in discussions, facilitate critical thinking, and motivate pupils to learn about history (Ausejo et al., 2024).

Nevertheless, the reason for the different video game choices in the pre-survey and the survey by Hron (2022) might be 1) a different age of the respondents (i.e., RPGs and Action games have older player base than games like Fortnite and Minecraft); 2) the absence of battle royale and sandbox video game genres in the questionnaire by Hron (2022), however, respondents could add any other genre or video game of their liking to their response, and only two mentioned Minecraft and battle royale was mentioned once; 3) a possible confusion of the genres by the respondents who could classify Minecraft as a survival simulator game, and Fortnite as Action game.

As was mentioned, 66.7% of the respondents from among the current and future teachers of English would incorporate the video game elements similarly to the researcher, however, 11.1% (i.e., five respondents) would approach the implementation differently. Based on the feedback from these five respondents, four major ideas that could improve the lesson activities with implemented video game elements described by the researcher emerged:

1. Using a different video game

   One respondent recommended using a different digital game, called *Scribblenauts Unlimited*, which is a logical sandbox computer game that allows for highly creative gameplay. According to the respondent, this game could promote vocabulary learning and problem-solving skills.

   To comment on that suggestion, the appropriateness of the computer games which are to be incorporated into lessons depends on the potential of said video game to meet the specific educational expectations of the teacher, and it depends on the learners. This means that the respondent's remark is valid and that *Scribblenauts Unlimited* might be a good choice to make when the teacher aims at teaching new vocabulary, developing problem-solving skills of their students, or possibly other skills. Moreover, multiple studies highlight the learning benefits of *Scribblenauts*

Unlimited, emphasising not only the impact of the game on learning new vocabulary and promotion of critical thinking (Kusuma, Padmadewi & Saputra, 2024;), which would support the respondent's claims, but also other benefits for ELT, such as improving grammar skills (Triwibowo, 2023) or enhancing reading comprehension of third-grade students (Parker, 2015).

To conclude this commentary, many video games might do a good job of aiding the students with learning English, but choosing the right game that fits the context and the requirements is essential. The effect of familiarity with a certain video game is also an aspect that might be considered since it may influence the motivation of the learners.

2. Playing the video game in the lesson

Two respondents agreed that it might be more encouraging for the learners if they actively played the video game. According to the respondents, the potential of the video game would be utilized better if the pupils were engaged in active gameplay, where the teacher or group of pupils could give instructions based on which the player/learner would play the video game.

In general, that idea is possible and, with a high degree of certainty, would promote greater engagement and motivation among the learners which is one of the main benefits of the implementation of video games into the education, according to the research in the field of DGBL so far. However, in order to be able to play a video game in a lesson, certain conditions must be met, otherwise, the implementation of the digital game would lose its entertaining nature, which draws people in the first place.

Perhaps the most crucial issue is that the technical conditions of the classroom must meet certain standards. These include: a) school computer with hardware strong enough to reach, at least, the minimal technical requirements of the chosen video game, b) data projector or TV to display visual imagery to broader audience, c) sound system (i.e. speakers). If these three criteria were met, there would be no problem, in theory, to implement video games into the lesson in a way the above-mentioned two respondents suggest; however, that is rarely the case in the Czech schools, and as Hébert et al. (2021) maintains, one of the main hindrances to using digital games in education is the lack of student access to appropriate technology.

On the other hand, requirements *b)* and *c)* might be met in a higher number of schools, which leaves only requirement *a)* to resolve. Provided that the teacher owns a laptop with better hardware than what is in the school computer, bringing the laptop to the lesson and letting the learners play the video game on that laptop might solve this issue, although other possible difficulties might occur. Another solution would be moving the class to a specialized computer lab once in a while, provided the school has one, however, that might also be difficult for some teachers. In other words, the idea of actively playing the video game as a learner in a controlled environment where players can enjoy the activity and learn in the same time, is the ideal scenario that can be achieved in certain situations and with specific games, as was described in the study by Kusuma, Padmadewi & Saputra (2024), for instance. Nevertheless, the conditions for such an approach do not always exist, which of course does not mean that the video games cannot be implemented in lessons in other ways, as this research demonstrates.

3. To avoid targeting inappropriately difficult topics

It is important for a teacher to assess how detailed they want the learners' knowledge of certain study topics to be, and objectively estimate the difficulty of the learning process. Every teacher should abide by the rule of appropriateness regarding their learners' abilities, age, and other specific needs. Thus it is fair that one respondent suggested avoiding broad discussions about topics, such as grammar, in English lessons.

Making this comment, the respondent challenges one of the lesson activities with the video game implementation described by the researcher in the present and future teachers' questionnaire. The activity includes cutscenes from a digital game, which are used as a contextual scaffolding for the learners who are told to discuss the meaning of the grammatical phenomenon that occurs in those cutscenes and is displayed in a textual context through subtitles.

In the eyes of the researcher, what made this lesson activity appropriate, was the age of the learners, who were all students in the ninth grade, and the overall higher performance of that class in English lessons. On top of that, the activity was focused on revising the rules for the occurrence of that certain grammatical phenomenon, which was explained and practised in the previous lesson. The intention was to give

the learners just enough hints to find the correct answer on their own, combining what they had already learnt and what they could see in front of themselves. Nevertheless, such lesson activities should be carefully assessed before including them in the lesson plan because the demand for learners' comprehension of the linguistic material and logical thinking is increased.

To conclude, the respondent made a valid point in saying that this specific activity is, by all means, inappropriate to primary education students, and might not be necessarily valuable even for students of lower-secondary education. However, classes with promising results in the lower and upper-secondary levels of education might benefit from such practices, especially if the meaningful context for the activities is provided.

4. To avoid duplicating already existing methods

The last opinion on how to improve the methods of video game implementation described by the researcher considered the futility of lesson activities, which are analogous to existing traditional teaching methods. The respondent explicitly mentions activity number three in the survey of present and future teachers, stating that the activity closely resembles a well-known teaching method – description of a scene – which is used by most textbooks. For that reason, the activity was not attractive for the respondent, and they would not use it in their lessons.

The respondent's argument is not entirely wrong; after all, many pupils might react in a similar way, i.e., be uninterested in the activity. However, every group of students is different, and what might seem like an effective activity in one class may not work as well in another, and vice versa. On the other hand, the fact that it is the student's favourite video game in that picture instead of a random scene from a textbook might help the student enjoy the activity more and possibly increase their interest and motivation. Again, the aspect of familiarity proves to be helpful in learning, as was mentioned multiple times in the learners' feedback to the lesson activities, and confirmed also by the interviewed teacher who observed the experimental lessons.

This chapter focused on the comparison of the findings that emerged from the individual stages in the research part of this study and discussed its potential outcomes. Comparing the found results with each other but also with results from other studies has led to multiple conclusions, which might help to extend our understanding in the field of DGBL.

It was discovered that the learner's familiarity or unfamiliarity with the video game, chosen to aid the learning process, might influence the effectiveness of the whole learning method. The survey also indicated that 80% of the respondents from among the current or future teachers have a personal experience with playing digital games, which results in their open-minded approach to teaching with the help of video games, provided that systematic guidelines for the video game implementation into school lessons are created for them. Furthermore, "occasional" incorporation of video games into English lessons was preferred over "frequent" and "none at all" options, which suggests that this method would be mainly used as an enjoyable revision activity or an entertaining way to practise a topic, similar to other lesson activities that utilize literature, magazines, videos, or songs. In addition, the recurring claims regarding the positive influence of digital games on vocabulary acquisition and communicative competencies made by many authors (e.g., Validi & Movahed 2024; Zou et al., 2021; Islam et al., 2025; Müller et al. 2018; Wei et al. 2018; Calvo-Ferrer 2017; Peterson, 2012; Piirainen-Marsh & Tainio, 2009; Zheng et al., 2009) have been supported by the respondents of the pre-survey in this research, and comparing the data with the author's previous research (Hron, 2022) also displayed agreement on multiple questions.

On the other hand, the differences appearing after comparison with Hron's (2022) research showed that the age of the learner/player might play an important role in the overall popularity of certain video game genres, which the teacher may need to consider before deciding to use a digital game in their lesson. This finding is also supported by different video game genre picks by the respondents of these two research papers, suggesting that older audience view *Action games* and *RPGs* as the most influential for the development of their L2, whereas younger players feel sandbox and MMO games have the most significant impact in that matter.

Lastly, based on the suggestions from five respondents, tips for possible improvement of the experimental lesson activities were noted. First, choosing a suitable video game to fit the teacher's and learners' needs is essential. Therefore, video games that allow for a high degree of creativity, such as *Minecraft* or *Scribblenauts Unlimited*, may be a good choice. Second, implementing a video game into the English lesson in a way that the learners can play the game and simultaneously learn or practise the studied topic is a goal to always strive for. However,

there are ways to incorporate digital games with less demanding technical and economic requirements, which can still be effective and motivating. Third, always consider the appropriateness of the activity with regard to the age, level of knowledge, abilities, and other individual characteristics of the learners. Finally, it might be taken into account that the close resemblance of any activity with video game implementation to another teaching method, which is notoriously known to the learners, may lead to learners' disinterest in the lesson activity.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this thesis aimed to investigate the possibilities for the implementation of digital games in ELT, with regard to the current state of educational reality. The goal was to determine whether it is possible to implement video games or videogame elements into English lessons in an effective and meaningful way for the teacher and the learners. The study accentuate the connections between digital games and English language teaching, revealing both the potential benefits and challenges associated with the implementation of digital games into educational settings. The findings underscore that video games are not only a prevalent aspect of children's lives but also a tool that can enhance engagement and motivation among learners when used thoughtfully.

The data collected in the research part of this study suggest that a significant portion of current and future teachers recognize the value of incorporating digital games into their lessons; however, many seem to be discouraged by a number of complicating factors, including insufficient technological equipment and pedagogical framework, or lack of knowledge about video games. This critical gap in video game literacy among many educators, particularly those who are older and less familiar with gaming culture, is identified by multiple authors of different studies and may hinder the effective integration of games into the curriculum. That is why the need for comprehensive training and resources for teachers is suggested in this study as one way of promoting teachers' interest in the video game implementation, and the importance of adapting video game activities to align with educational objectives, student capabilities and preferences, as well as technological affordances available in classrooms is emphasized.

The agreement among respondents regarding the positive impact of video games, particularly on vocabulary acquisition but also on communication skills and other aspects of the English language (e.g., spelling, pronunciation, awareness of English collocations and idioms) mirrors findings from previous studies, reinforcing the notion that digital games can facilitate meaningful language learning. Results of this study indicated that single-player videogames and multiplayer videogames both facilitate English language learning by creating opportunities for learning language in meaningful and attractive contexts. The former video game type was found to help develop learners' foreign language with the focus on vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling, listening, and reading comprehension. The latter was identified as having greater impact specifically on communication skills.

The research uncovered that familiarity of the learner with a certain video game is a notable aspect that can promote learners' motivation and might positively or negatively influence the effectiveness of the teaching method with video game implementation. Moreover, the comparison of this research with the previous research done by Hron (2022) revealed that the varying preferences for game genres based on age highlight the necessity for educators to consider their students' gaming backgrounds and interests when selecting digital games for their lessons. The findings showed that Competitive first-person tactical online shooter games like *Valorant*, Battle Royale MMO games like *Fortnite*, or MMO sandbox games like *Roblox* were the most popular multiplayer video games, in the eyes of the teenage learners. On the other hand, the research indicated that *Minecraft* (survival sandbox genre video game) was deemed as the most influential video game for the development of the learners' FL, together with *Fortnite*.

Ultimately, the special activities designed to implement video games into ELT with the intent to practice certain topics were deemed as meaningful and enjoyable by the majority of the learners, and viewed as generally attractive modern alternative to traditional teaching methods. The majority consensus was found among the questioned and interviewed current and future teachers, which advocated for a balanced approach to using digital games in ELT, where the incorporation of video games serves as a complementary method rather than a replacement for traditional teaching strategies. Furthermore, occasional incorporation of digital games into the lessons suggests that the main goal of such learning activities would be preferably to revise or practice a topic in an enjoyable and entertaining fashion. In that way, the use of such activities would not be different from other similar activities which utilize songs, videos, literature, magazines, or films. Additionally, as educators become more skilled in integrating these tools into their lessons, the potential for digital games to enrich language learning experiences and to foster a more engaging classroom environment becomes increasingly promising. Future research should continue to explore innovative ways to incorporate different vernacular digital games or their elements into the ELT.

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List of abbreviations

ELT – English language teaching

FL – Foreign language

L2 – Second language

DGBL – Digital game-based learning

SRL – Self-regulated learning

CALL – Computer assisted language learning

DGBLL – Digital game-based language learning

DGELL – Digital game-enhanced language learning

MMO – Massively multiplayer online (game)

MMORPG - Massively multiplayer online role-playing games

RPG – Role-playing game

CRPG – Computer role-playing game

ARPG – Action role-playing game

TRPG – Tactical role-playing game

MOBA – Multiplayer online battle arena

RTS – Real-time strategy (game)

FPS – First-person shooter (game)

TPS – Third-person shooter (game)

ESL – English as a second language

EFL – English as a foreign language

NPC – Non-playable character

GBL – Game-based learning

SLA – Second language acquisition

COTS – Commercial off-the-shelf (games)

EL – Experiential learning

ZPD – Zone of proximal distance

VR – Virtual reality

QR – Quick response (code)

TL – Target language

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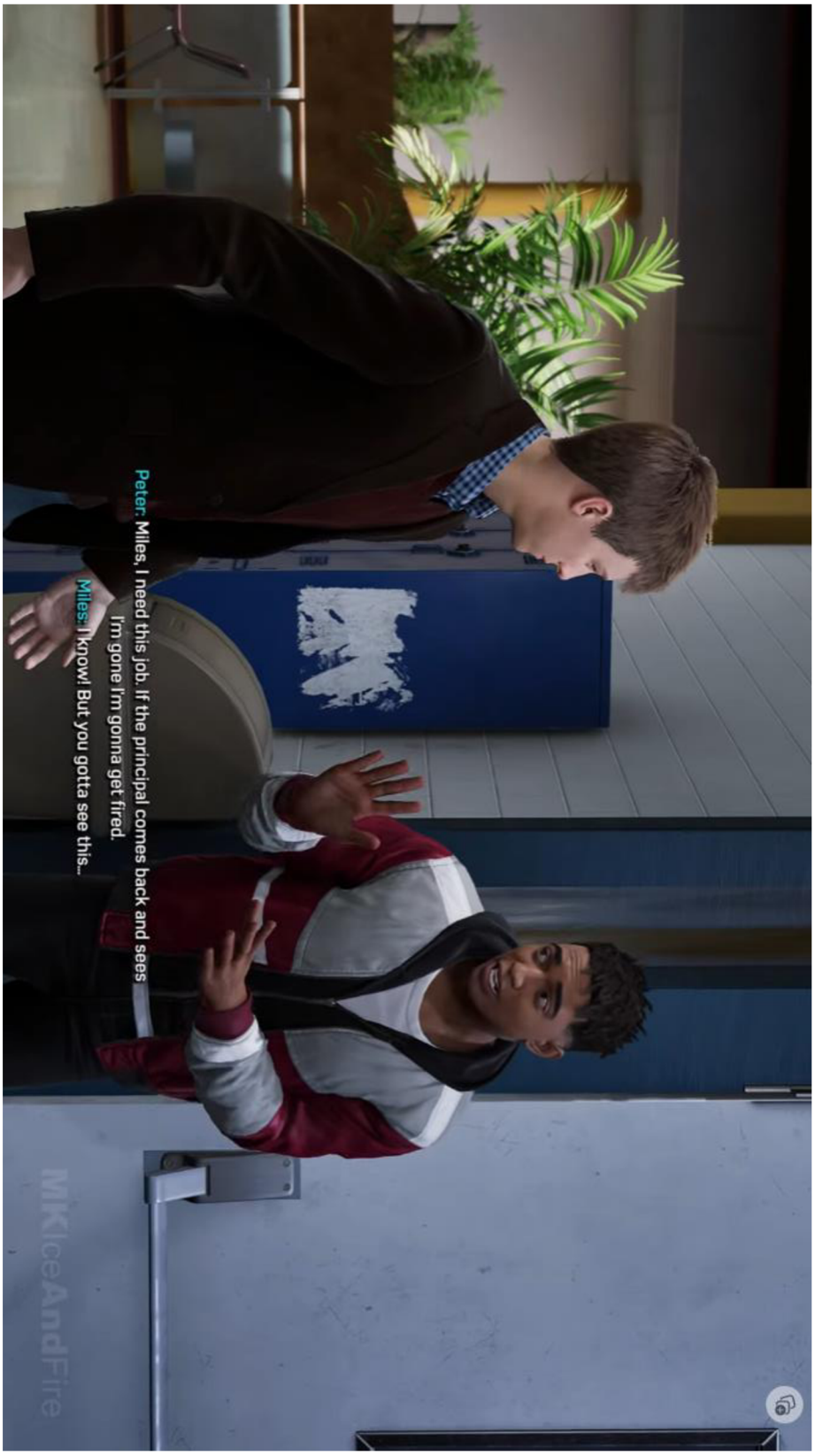
Appendix A

The supplementary material for implementing digital games into ELT

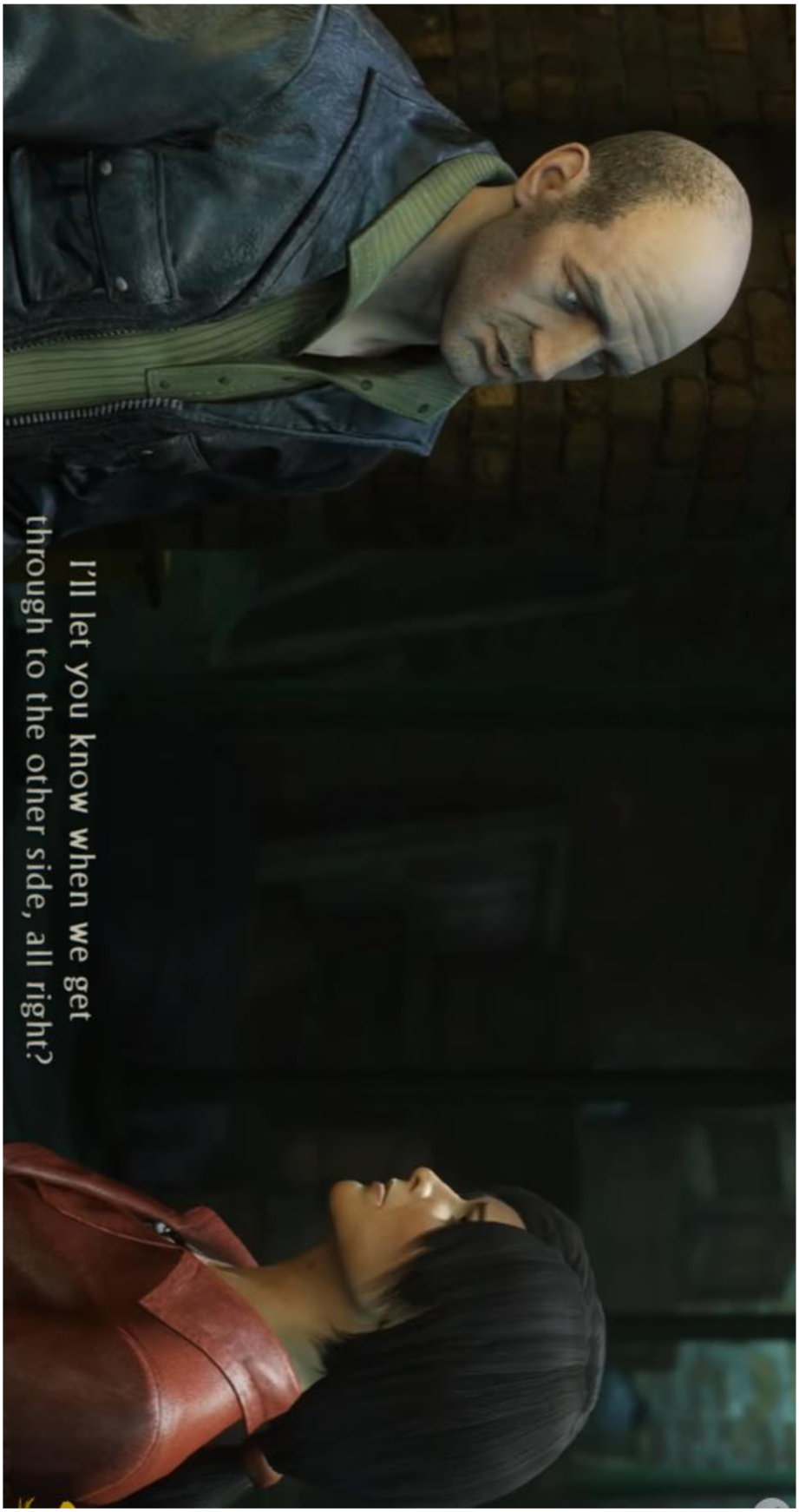
The SIMS

Spider-Man 2


Peter: Miles, I need this job. If the principal comes back and sees
I'm gone I'm gonna get fired.
Miles: I know! But you gotta see this...
MIKIceAndFire

Peter: I am SO getting fired...

Uncharted 3: Drake's Deception



We'll track the car, you head back to the van.

We'll try and stay in radio contact.

The learner's feedback

ZPĚTNÁ VAZBA PRO UČITELE – zapojení videoherních elementů do výuky AJ

Jak se Vám líbilo zapojení videoherních elementů do výuky?

Uvítali byste podobné zpestření hodiny častěji?

Pomohla Vám aktivita se zapojením videoherních elementů s pochopením učiva?

Měli jste k aktivitě nějaké výhrady/připomínky?

Pre-survey of learner's previous knowledge of videogames

1. Hrajete video hry?
    a. Ano
    b. Ne
2. Jak často trávíte čas hraním videoher?
    a. Každý den
    b. 2 krát až 6 krát do týdne
    c. 10 krát až 20 krát do měsíce
    d. 1 krát až 9 do měsíce
    e. Méně než 12 krát do roka
3. Přibližně kolik času strávíte denně hraním videoher?
    a. Denně nehraji
    b. Méně než 0,5h
    c. 0,5h až 1h
    d. 2h až 3h
    e. 4h až 5h
    f. 6h až 7h
    g. 8h a více
4. S jakým jazykovým nastavením hrajete nejčastěji videohry?
    a. V českém jazyce a bez titulků
    b. V českém jazyce s anglickými titulky
    c. V anglickém jazyce s českými titulky
    d. V anglickém jazyce s anglickými titulky
    e. V anglickém jazyce a bez titulků
5. Myslíte si, že na Vaši momentální úroveň anglického jazyka mělo pozitivní vliv také hraní videoher?
    a. Ano
    b. Ne
    c. Nedokážu posoudit
6. Pokud jste u předchozí otázky zvolili odpověď „Ano", uveďte důvody, proč jste tak učinili. (V čem konkrétně Vám hraní videoher pomohlo zlepšit Vaši úroveň anglického jazyka?)
    a. _____
7. Pokud jste u předchozí otázky zvolili odpověď „Ne", uveďte důvody, proč jste tak učinili.
    a. _____

8. Kdybyste měli vybrat jednu nebo více konkrétních videoher, o kterých si myslíte, že nejvíce zlepšily Vaši úroveň anglického jazyka, které by to byly? (Která konkrétní videohra Vám nejvíce pomohla zlepšit se v anglickém jazyce?)
    a. _____
9. Které aspekty anglického jazyka Vám hraní videoher nejspíše pomohlo rozvinout?
    a. Slovní zásoba
    b. Výslovnost
    c. Znalost anglických frází
    d. Znalost pravopisu slov (spelling)
    e. Žádnou z výše uvedených možností
    f. Jiná:_____
10. Jaký je Váš věk?
    a. _____
11. Jaké je Vaše pohlaví?
    a. Muž
    b. Žena
    c. Jiné

Present and future teachers‘ questionnaire

1. Jaký je Váš vztah k videohrám?
    a. Nikdy jsem je nehrál.
    b. Hrával jsem je, ale už je nehraji.
    c. Občas si je zahraji.
2. Hraní videoher vnímám jako:
    a. Negativní.
    b. Spíše negativní.
    c. Nedokážu posoudit.
    d. Spíše pozitivní.
    e. Pozitivní.
3. **Praktický příklad implementace videoher do výuky anglického jazyka.**

V následující sekci Vám bude stručně odprezentováno pár možností jak by začlenění videoher do výuky anglického jazyka mohlo vypadat. V této sekci, prosím, **uveďte Váš názor** nebo zaklikněte možnost nejvíce se blížící Vašemu názoru na danou otázku. Následující aktivity byly využity v edukační praxi.

<u>Aktivita č. 1</u>

- Je založená na využití určité filmové pasáže z videohry, v jejíchž dialozích se vyskytuje požadovaný gramatický jev (např. budoucí čas). Filmová pasáž je učitelem rozdělena na několik částí (obrázků).
- Žáci mají za úkol podle kontextu na němých obrázcích a podle anglických titulků, které zobrazují dialog postav, vydedukovat pořadí daných obrázků a pokusit se vysvětlit PROČ v dialozích zaznívá daný gramatický jev (např. Will, Going to,...).
- Po krátké diskusi učitel pustí na videu danou filmovou pasáž a žáci si tak zkontrolují správnost svých domněnek.

<u>Aktivita č. 2</u>

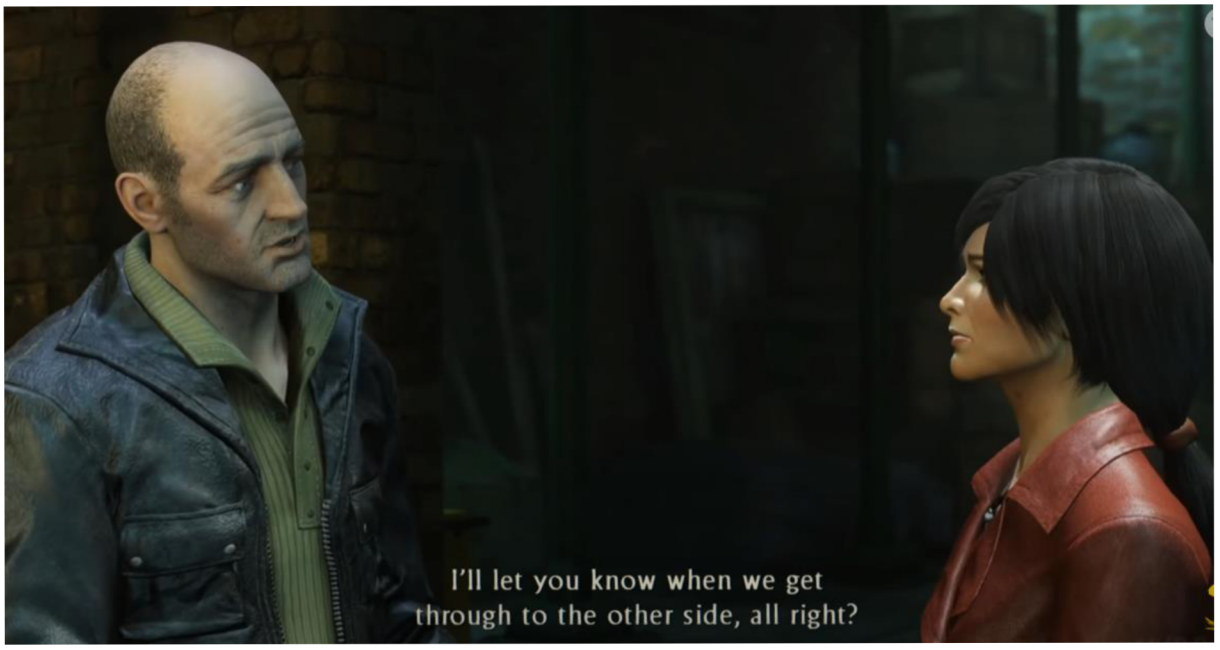
- Žáci sledují několika sekundový gameplay dané hry (např. Minecraft), kde herní postava dělá určité úkony. Cílem je zapamatovat si co nejvíce činností, které postava ve videohře udělala a dokázat je ústně nebo písemně reprodukovat.
- Takto žáci mohou procvičovat anglická slovesa ve větách, které sami vytvoří nebo si mohou procvičit i tvorbu otázek tím, že se vzájemně budou ptát na úkony dané postavy ve videohře.

<u>Aktivita č. 3</u>

- Ve skupinách po 3–4 mají žáci vždy 1 obrázek z videohry The Sims, zachycující herní postavičky při nějakém úkonu. Cílem žáků je vzájemná diskuse na téma, co všechno vidí na obrázku herní postavy dělat.

- Žáci kladou otázky a odpovídají na ně. Takto lze procvičovat i různé gramatické jevy (např. minulý čas průběhový/přítomný čas průběhový)
- Obrázky si skupinky mohou posléze vyměnit. Učitel kontroluje, pomáhá, obchází jednotlivé skupiny.

Jeden z obrázků k aktivitě č. 1



Jeden z obrázků k aktivitě č. 3

4. Dokázali byste si představit takovýto přístup k začleňování videoher do výuky anglického jazyka i ve Vaší výuce?
    a. Ne.
    b. Spíše ne.
    c. Nedokážu posoudit.
    d. Spíše ano.
    e. Ano.
5. Jsou podle Vás takto navržené aktivity se začleněnými videoherními elementy efektivním nástrojem k procvičení daného tématu?
    a. Ne.
    b. Spíše ne.
    c. Nedokážu posoudit.
    d. Spíše ano.
    e. Ano.
6. Začlenili byste videohry do výuky anglického jazyka, například výše uvedeným způsobem?
    a. Ne.
    b. Ano, ale pojal(a) bych to jinak.
    c. Ano.
7. (Doplňující otázka) V případě, že by Vaše pojetí začlenění videoher do výuky anglického jazyka bylo jiné, jak konkrétně by se lišilo od výše uvedených příkladů?
    a. _____
8. Jaký je Váš obecný pohled na začleňování videoher do výuky?
    a. Nezačleňovat.
    b. Začleňovat příležitostně.
    c. Začleňovat co nejvíce to jde.
    d. Nemám na to názor.
9. Jaký je Váš status?
    a. Student učitelství anglického jazyka.
    b. Učitel anglického jazyka na ZŠ.
    c. Učitel anglického jazyka na SŠ.
10. Jaké je Vaše pohlaví?
    a. Muž.
    b. Žena.
    c. Jiné.