

# The Impact Of Online Video Games On Language Skills Among Tlemcen University Efl Students In Algeria

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## **Abstract**

Playing video games has gained popularity all over the globe since the last two decades. This coupled with technology advancements which paved the way for a tremendous gaming industry, yielding in its turn various types of games, among which online video games are prevailing. Consequently, people all over the globe, mainly youth, are highly exposed to this type of gaming using English as a medium to interact with both English native and non-native speakers and which might have an impact on the development of English language skills in a relaxing and entertaining environment. The present study investigates the impact of playing online video games on English language skills among EFL learners in the English department of Abou Bekr University of Tlemcen, Algeria. By means of a mixed method approach, a structured questionnaire was administered to 40 male and female EFL learners, as well as an interview with ten male participants. Data analysis revealed that online video gaming is a double-edged sword; while it influences learners' English language skills, particularly speaking and listening, it has a negative impact on vocabulary acquisition. This is because learners are exposed to a great number of slang and taboo words as well as numerous abbreviated forms which may negatively affect their writing skills. Moreover, the interview findings revealed that personal and cognitive as well as emotional and psychological benefits emerged from online gaming.

**Keywords:** online video games; English language; language skills; EFL learners.

## **1. Introduction**

Recent advanced technology has influenced both language learning and video games across the globe. This has been evident in the growing popularity of video games among people, especially youngsters and adults. Video gaming appeared in the 1950s with the prevailing technology of that time making playing solely for entertainment. In the 1980s, significant advancements in technology helped improve video games always with the aim of relaxation and enjoyment. It was only in the 1990s that video games gained widespread popularity which coupled with the spread of English as a medium of instruction specifically with some types of games. Subsequently, all games started to involve dialogues and narration events in both oral and written forms. With this newly

born type of games, players began to have a new experience in acquiring the English language through long hours of playing. Eventually, with the present-day technology, video gaming, through using English, reached the peak of popularity and compelled scholars to investigate its effects on language acquisition and language skills. In the past few years, a limited number of studies unveiled the benefits and disadvantages that might result from the impact of video games and second language (L2) learning. Even though this impact is not yet fully investigated, research in this area is still in progress trying to reveal all video gaming aspects and their effects on English language skills and proficiency.

In an Algerian context, the present study sought to unveil the positive and negative impact of

online video games on the acquisition of English among learners of the English department of Abou Bekr Belkaid University. We formulated the following three research questions:

1. Do online video games have any impact on the language proficiency of EFL learners? if so, then
2. To what extent can online video gaming be advantageous or disadvantageous for EFL learners?
3. What challenges or obstacles do EFL learners face when gaming?

## 2. Literature Review

Over the past two decades, there has been a notable rise in interest regarding the effects of technology on second language learning. Making use of the internet allows individuals to leverage technological resources, enabling access to authentic target language content through multimedia websites featuring texts, audio, and visual materials related to language and culture (Chun, 2016). As far as second language acquisition is concerned, language skills can be facilitated using technology. For example, automatic speech recognition has proved to be useful for pronunciation training (Hirata, 2004). This technique helps EFL learners to be involved in oral chat and speech interactions leading to improved oral proficiency. The investigation of Lomicka (1998) on reading comprehension online has demonstrated that the use of L2 reading software with multimedia annotations improves reading comprehension. Technology has also improved the listening skill by providing software such as captioned videos (Grgurović and Hegelheimer, 2007). Some video games which use captions or subtitles to display the speech included in the game proved also to be beneficial for understanding the speech of non-native speakers.

Recent advanced technology has influenced both language learning and video games popularity across the globe. This has been

evident in the growing popularity of video games among people, especially teenagers. This phenomenon has compelled scholars to investigate the effects of gaming on language acquisition. Earlier studies unveiled the benefits and disadvantages that might result from the impact of video games and second language (L2) learning. Even though this impact is not yet fully investigated, research in this area is still in progress. The following two paragraphs will discuss some recent research on the relationship between language proficiency and video games.

In his work "Overview of research on the educational use of video games," Simon Egenfeldt-Nielsen (2006) highlights the many learning approaches of video games that might be applicable in education. He found out that the use of video games as teaching tools is beneficial. Reinders and Wattana (2011), in an attempt to ascertain the effects of digital games on foreign language interaction and communication readiness, highlighted some studies; The first one was conducted in 2010 by DeHaan, Reed, and Kuwada and the second one was conducted by Chen and Johnson in 2004. They reached the conclusion that video games are compatible with language acquisition in these two discussed studies. Reinders and Wattana (2011) put the conclusion to their study that the willingness to engage in communication is essential for acquiring a second language, and one effective approach is to enhance opportunities for language use beyond academic settings, fostering more natural interactions. These studies also showed that video games help and motivate students to practice language skills.

R. G. da Silva categorized the four English language skills into receptive skills (reading and listening) and expressive skills (writing and speaking). He (2014) examined how learners can use video games to develop their proficiency across these two types of skills. His findings highlighted that both types of skills are fostered and developed through

playing games which enable learners to acquire new vocabulary in real context and learn different accents as well. Another survey was conducted by Rudis and Poštić (2018) in a trial to find the connection between playing video games and acquiring English as a second language. The findings of the survey validated a firm correlation between video games and English language learning as learners benefited widely from video gaming by promoting their English proficiency. Other research has pinpointed potential improvements in L2 (second language) proficiency, citing the works of Peterson (2012) and Sundqvist (2011) as references. Xu et al. (2020), on their part, investigated the impact of digital games on English language learning and found that vocabulary was the most excellent practiced language skill followed by learners' overall English language proficiency, pragmatics, grammar, writing, and speaking.

Gee (2008) emphasizes how language is naturally incorporated into video games through dialogue, experience, pictures, and actions, providing verbal information only when needed rather than overloading players with words that are presented without relevance to the context. Going further to show the positive impact of gaming, Gee (2008) stresses the need to define language as a social practice to reveal the various aspects of discourses: behaviour, interaction, values, thoughts, beliefs, speaking, and often reading and writing. Social languages, as claimed by Gee (2008), should go beyond mere verbal expression (uttering words and sentences only) to align with social and historical activities. Thus, he proposes that language should be embedded and integrated in discourse, otherwise, it would be meaningless. Ultimately, the theoretical framework of research on the influence of video games on language learning can be quite helpful in language instruction. The evidence above suggests that playing video games can help students improve their English language skills.

### **3. Methodology of Research**

#### **3.1 Participants**

The participants involved in this study are EFL learners from the University of Tlemcen, Algeria. A total of forty EFL learners were selected on the basis of their engagement in online gaming activities outside the traditional academic contexts. These learners regularly engage themselves in various video games during their leisure time. The sample includes 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and master's 1st year EFL learners who play online games using English as a medium of instruction with English native and non-native speakers. It also consists of male (87%) and female (13%) learners, aged between eighteen and thirty.

#### **3.2 Instruments of Data Collection**

To adequately address the research questions mentioned above, a mixed methods approach was chosen for data collection. This involved using a structured questionnaire which was designed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data by including both closed-ended (yes/no questions and multiple-choice questions) for quantitative data and open-ended questions for qualitative data. We have also made use of the interview for its importance in providing rich qualitative data. Ten students, primarily learners in my classes, were interviewed regarding the topic of this study. The interview took place in the English department at Abou Bekr Belkaid University of Tlemcen. The questions were, purposefully, structured in order to get qualitative data and gain insights into participants' experiences in a flexible manner and express their opinions freely. Six interview questions were introduced to ten participants, with each participant allotted approximately forty-five minutes. All in all, the present study primarily used two sources of data, namely, questionnaire and interview because they offer a complete analysis of the topic addressed, integrate numerical data, and expose detailed, descriptive responses.

### **4. Data Analysis**

The results obtained from the questionnaire are organized according to its questions and, hence, the statistical data are presented accordingly. Additionally, the interview data will also be analysed to obtain more in-depth information about the topic addressed.

#### 4.1 The Questionnaire

The initial two questions in the questionnaire centred around gathering information on the participants' age and gender. Therefore, game players fall within the age range of 18 to 30 where 87% are males and only 13% are females. 1- On average, how many hours per week do you spend playing video games?

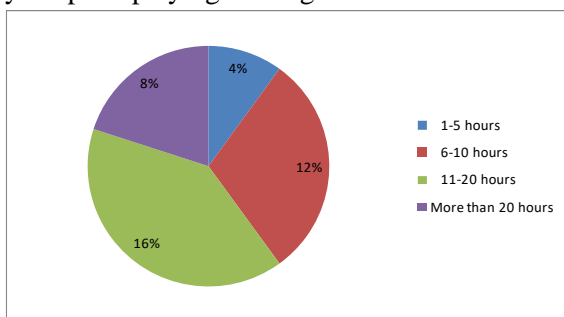


Figure 1. Average Weekly Gaming Hours

As figure (1) shows, the highest proportion of respondents claimed that they spend between 11- and 20-hours playing video games, while the lowest proportion claimed the lowest duration which is less than 5 hours with a score of only 4%. In between these two extremes, 12% claimed spending between 6 to 10 hours, and others (8%) claimed that they have a weekly gaming of more than 20 hours. The overall conclusion of the data displayed is that a significant portion of respondents play video games moderately (11 to 20 hours) while the least portion devotes less time to gaming (less than 5 hours). Regarding this question, four respondents, three of whom added the information that they have started gaming since childhood, while the remaining one said: “almost my entire life, I started gaming as soon as I became aware of my surroundings”.

2- In your experience, do online video games generally have positive or negative effects?

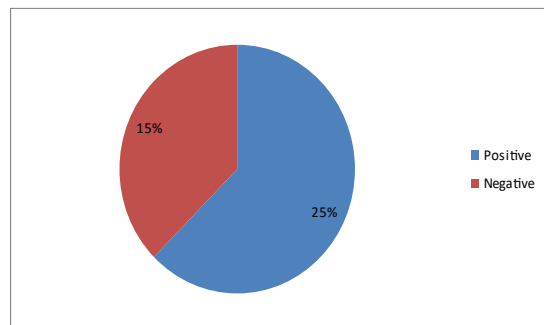


Figure 2. Positive or Negative Effects of Online Video Games

When considering both positive and negative effects, the advantages of online gaming on English language skills in EFL learners are notably greater. As clearly shown in figure (2), 62.5% of the respondents acknowledged online gaming advantages, while 37.5% claimed that it has a negative impact.

3- To what extent do you think you have improved your language skills in English through online gaming? You can choose more than one skill, ranking these in the table.

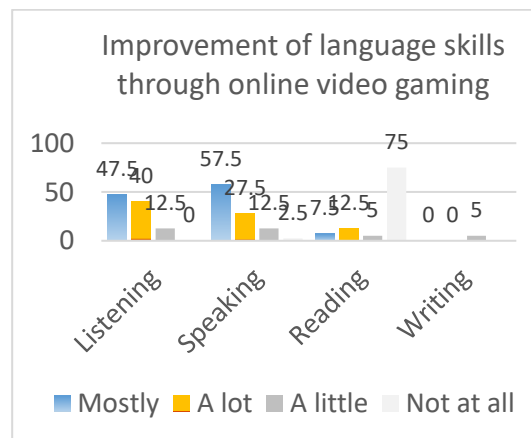


Figure 3. Enhanced Language Skills Through Online Video Gaming

Figure (3) shows that nearly half of the participants (47, 5%) asserted that their listening skills have improved and 40% declared a considerable improvement. However, only a small proportion (12,5%) asserted that their skill improved to a minor extent, while no one chose the option “not at all”. As for the speaking skills, a significant proportion (57,5%) declared great improvement

of these skills through online gaming, with 27,5% avowing a substantial improvement. Some other participants, which constituted 12,5%, chose the option “a little” to reveal a marginal enhancement. Only 2.5% declared that online gaming did not enhance their speaking skills, preferring to choose “not at all”.

In contrast to listening and speaking, reading and writing received the lowest scores. Fewer participants (7,5%) reported important improvement in their reading skills, while 12,5% declared that the reading skills improved considerably. Strikingly, the majority of participants (75%) avowed that they did not benefit from gaming to enhance such skills. The remaining 5% claimed a marginal improvement. Akin to reading skills, a very small percentage of participants (5%) declared having made some considerable improvement in their writing skills, but the vast majority (95%) claimed no improvement at all.

#### 4.2 The Interview

Six questions were introduced to the participants with the aim of eliciting data related to the relationship between the questions and their focus on motivation, language learning, gaming experience, and cultural interaction. Accordingly, the interview questions were classified on the basis of these aims. Some significant responses, in the participants' own words, are listed below:

**Question (1):** What motivates you to play video games online in English?

1. “If I tell you my story with the English language, you are not going to believe me. I've started gaming at a younger age and I acquired English before learning it at middle and secondary schools. Once I got my baccalaureate exam without overthinking too much, I blindly opted for continuing my journey with English at university. In Algeria, all games are released in English and it's my preferred language and I love interacting with English players when gaming”

2. “All the known games are primarily in English; it's their default language. People can

change it but I keep it as it is because I'm lazy and that laziness helped me acquire a lot of knowledge. All games are released in English and it's my preferred language.”

3. “To speak English fluently without mistakes and enhance my pronunciation and vocabulary and learn how to listen and reply in English discussion. My second motivation is for entertainment and relax”

**Question (2):** Has playing video games helped you in learning specific English expressions or idiomatic phrases? If so, could you provide some examples?

The question above was structured in order to have an idea about whether playing video games is helpful in learning specific English expressions and idiomatic phrases. EFL learners' answers were so fruitful, as almost all of them reported having benefited from these games and learnt a lot, while others could not provide an answer to the question. The majority of the participants listed a number of English expressions which they still recall and use, avowing that video games have had a positive impact on their academic writing. Furthermore, some of them asserted that they have found many expressions useful and added them to their vocabulary bulk to: “apply them on the regular” said one of the participants. Daily use of the learnt expressions is in English interaction settings such as at the English department, in the classroom with their teachers and classmates or outside with their friends; texting, messaging, or emailing them. We state instances of useful expressions: “be patient” “The only thing that can defeat power is more power” “You forget a thousand things every day. Make sure this is one of them” “Do not be sorry; be better” “Away from keyboard” (When a player is temporarily inactive)

Other specific terms and expressions, which are basically military, were mentioned by some participants: "Am watching the door for you" "Don't rush they're so many" "The treasure is beyond the wall" "There is two cars waiting you beneath the building" "If you play smart we'll win" "Shoot their car to blow it". Some

participants acknowledge having learnt a lot of idiomatic expressions when playing online games with English native and even non-native speakers and state that they found them useful for daily use as well as academic use. Let us consider a few among the many idiomatic expressions that were mentioned in the participants' responses: 'Nerf your peak' 'Bite the bullet' 'Calm before the storm' 'It's raining cats and dogs' 'Piece of cake' 'Take a rain check', 'What happens in the dark comes out in the light'. Indeed, participants' answers, accompanied by vivid examples, reveal the impact of video games on their English proficiency.

**Question (3):** Have you encountered any challenges when playing games in English? For example, language barriers, difficulties in understanding instructions. Can you provide specific examples?

1. "Yes, it was at the very beginning when I started as a novice player knowing nothing about the types of games. In strategy games, for example, complex terminology and rapid conversations often puzzled me. I was always in search of words meaning to be able to understand the storyline and complete the game. Honestly, I was always using a dictionary or Google Translate. After years I became proficient in English and could read the game story without having any issues."

2. "At the start when I was communicating, I was shy and I couldn't pronounce some words. It took me a long time to think of what to say. However, nowadays, I don't really have a lot of problems when speaking English while gaming, except sometimes I might pronounce a word or two wrongly."

3. Well, when I first started gaming, I faced some language barriers as I did not have enough repertoire or vocabulary, but I eventually overcame this. Now, I do not face such challenges. Sometimes, the players' accents while interacting using voice calls are difficult to understand, such as an Indian player's accent.

4. "Yes, there are some words and sentences that I did not know about and had not learned before, especially since academic education in our country is limited to the curriculum only. When playing with British fellows who speak in their slang language, oh boy, I had to ask a lot about what everything means. For example, they don't say 'family', they just say 'fam', and they don't say 'isn't it', they say 'innit'. Instead of brother, they say 'bruv'. So yeah, I had to get used to that, and eventually I did. There are more examples, but I just can't think of them atm (at the moment)."

5. "Many times, I could not find the suitable words or expressions to convey what I intended to say. In video games like Counter Strike 2, one has to communicate with their teammates to provide information about the enemy team. It happened to me that I would find myself unable to indicate where an enemy was because I did not have enough vocabulary."

6. "Not really, I paired watching movies with playing video games when I was little, so that really helped me get over most barriers. But when encountering with one, I always had the confidence to ask about it and whatnot. For example, 'whatnot' could be 'etcetera' (etc.), 'and so on,' or 'and similar things.'"

**Question (4):** Do you believe playing video games negatively affects your academic performance or study time?

1. "Yes, I have learnt a lot of UK slang because I have been playing video games mainly with people from there who often make use of these words such as: noob/newbie, lad, mate, pissed. You know, unlike our Muslim communities, people in many parts of the globe openly utter slang words and even taboo words. So, I think I cannot tell you about those taboo words I have learnt and I am unwilling to even write them down for you"

2. "Yes, indeed. The fact that I have been playing for a long time and have learnt English slang and coded words as well as some abbreviations such as ASAP (as soon as possible), OMW (on my way), and BRB (be

right back), has had a negative impact by inserting abbreviations and, without paying attention, some slang words in my academic writing”

3. “While playing with native speakers I had difficulty understanding their slang language (their street slang) such as ‘inna bit’, ‘gonna’, ‘trynna’, and ‘imma’. But, after spending many hours with them, I became able to speak their language, including their street slang. Unconsciously, I started using these words in my essays and home assignments, and in my learning environment and I know that this is bad. I should be aware of this”

4. “Yes. communicating with foreigners made me learn a lot of abbreviated words and expressions. For the moment, I cannot recall too many, but I can remember: PvP (Player versus Player), PvE (Player versus Environment), and Lag (Slow or delayed response due to network issues and often resulting a poor gaming experience).

**Question (5):** Have you encountered any cultural challenges while interacting with players from different countries such as misunderstandings, cultural differences in communication styles?

The present question is qualitative in nature and participants felt free to answer honestly. Some players provided short answers without going into much detail. Based on what they reported, these cultural conflicts sometimes arise because the cultures are so different that it is hard to understand each other, which often leads to a lack of effective communication. Others stated that they often get into trouble with gamers from many foreign countries because of religion, and thus most of the time, the game turns into a real fight, with each side trying to convince the other about his religion and its principles.

One of the participants’ own words are the following: “The great amount of slang and taboo words that I encounter are also a source of cultural differences. Each time I try to convince my partner to minimize such words, it is in vain, which shows that using such words

forms a part of their own culture”. Another participant states: “Some people tend to bring politics and religion into the conversations unnecessarily, which often leads to heated debates and creates division among participants”. Thus, in addition to cultural and religious conflicts, political differences also come to the surface frequently.

**Question (6):** Can you share what you have learnt from video games in general?

1. “I became more at ease with the English language, as I improved my English skills and learned new concepts.”

2. “Because of gaming, I quit a lot of negative habits like smoking and coming home late, but I also made some really cool friends who helped me improve in many aspects of my life.”

3. “Basically everything; it’s good for improving your English or any other language. It improved my vocabulary as well as my writing skills and helped me gain a good accent in a way. Making friends will help you to learn about other countries and their cultures.”

4. “I’ve learned a lot when it comes to English, not as much compared to watching movies vocabulary wise, but it was way more interactive than just listening to people communicating in films. You had the chance to speak to other individuals, and that’s the charm about it. It gets very interesting since you’re exposing yourself to other cultures, and you could get fluent fast with the right mindset.”

5. “I learned how to speak English and learned that gaming is a big waste of time if you don’t control yourself and think responsibly. It’s almost impossible to be that mature at a young age, so that’s a negative point for gaming right there because personally, I wasted my whole high school experience. I didn’t live it due to the addiction of playing games all day, which also can lead to resolve big problems such as a lack of communication skills and depression.

## 5. Results and Discussion

The results of this study indicated that the participants reported benefiting considerably from online gaming. The essence of gaming has

always been a part of their life, as it has improved their competence and significantly aided them in acquiring English. Video gaming has provided them with opportunities to practice their performance by engaging online with native speakers directly, unlike the surrounding environment where it is mostly impossible to find people speaking English in an effective or proficient way. Moreover, a number of participants stated that before they joined the gaming community, their linguistic input was merely from TV, meaning only competence and no performance, but online gaming has opened up a gate of opportunity for them. Once they joined the gaming community, a safe place was provided (behind the screen), and the fear of making errors or mistakes was totally dropped. This led some of them to converse in their broken English with other players in real time in a much more confident way, boosting both their competence and performance. They confessed that they always performed such linguistic outputs without the fear of being judged. Instead, they were motivated or sometimes corrected by the native-speaking gaming partners to say the words in a much more correct way.

Data analysis has revealed that the participants have acquired a great range of vocabulary and developed their speaking and listening skills, followed by a slight improvement in reading and, to a lesser extent writing skills. In terms of listening, some participants acknowledged their development in listening skills to offline games (games through which there are no real-life players) which helped them prepare for online games to confront real players. Generally, these offline games have characters voiced by native speakers speaking in a correct way, bringing the game's narrative to life. An example of these games is 'The Forgotten City' where it relies on listening skills to understand and proceed throughout the levels by listening carefully to the narrator.

According to the participants, this has improved their comprehension of spoken

language as well as how the exact words are pronounced. It has also provided them with the skill to distinguish between the multiple English accents (Black English, British English, RP English, and Scottish). They further avowed that through this, they could discern where one is actually from or their socioeconomic status. Listening to video game characters also aided them in distinguishing an individual's tone, feeling, and mood, as well as whether someone is being sarcastic or not.

Moreover, these gamers stated that they have also developed their speaking skills through listening, as they always resorted to 'accent imitation'. What was being said by the native speakers in the video games was said by them. Video games with old English speech broaden their competence to the extent of using rhetoric and formal speech when talking with friends or during public speaking sometimes.

To this extent we should mention that a strong correlation exists between the time and period spent in gaming and the impact of this on the students' English language skills. Veterans who spent a long period in gaming, where the sole medium of instruction is English, have significantly developed their skills, mainly speaking and listening skills, and to a lesser extent, reading and writing skills. Novices who have been engaging in online gaming for a short time are still struggling with their broken English.

Just as the online games provide the option for vocal communication, they also offer the option to write in-game. A good example is 'League of Legends', a game that requires communication to reach certain goals. While on a team of English native speakers (or at least proficient speakers of English), there is a need to communicate via texting for success. Seeing words written correctly gives the urge to memorize their correct forms. This aided the participants in mastering the morphological structure of words and distinguishing between correctly formed and ill-formed words. The majority of participants find some games useful as they draw heavily from literature and



civilization, which, in an academic setting, inspire them to use formal and frozen styles of writing to provide academic nuances.

As for the reading skill, though almost all participants avowed video games have a lesser effect on their reading and writing skills, video games also boosted their motivation to read as they made it more fun and engaging. Video games provide the option of subtitles and sometimes storytelling without a voice-over. This forces them to read to comprehend the full essence of the storyline. The extensive reading provided them with new terminologies, broadening their vocabulary in various forms: formal, which they use frequently in academic settings and essays, and informal, which they communicate with friends or a much more casual and spontaneous speech.

As already mentioned above, online video games do not really have a great impact on the writing skill. However, some participants stated that video gaming helped them to enhance their academic writing. They went on to say that in some types of games they find themselves involved in writing activities by structuring the story of the game in their own words. In other games, such as multiplayer games, they coordinate with their partners through text chat, which helps them develop their ability to express themselves clearly by writing effectively.

Based on the qualitative data retrieved from the interview, the gaming experience proves to be beneficial for EFL learners; they kill two birds with one stone as in addition to learning English and improving their skills, other skills are developed in parallel. Some participants went on to say that they learned how to be patient, improved their reaction time, and became able to type very quickly. Others declared that they have learned from video games the way they should interact with different people having different cultures, as the game itself provides some rules to respect and penalties to avoid. They further added that in this way, they were able to share their ideas and communicate comfortably, opening a path to achieve and gain cultural resources. They also

mentioned that some games are extremely useful for improving their knowledge and developing their minds to think of multiple solutions to problems or ways to achieve victory (critical thinking/intelligence quotient -IQ), such as strategy games. Survival games, as they said, have taught them how to deal with situations and control themselves. Some video games still remind players about their time spent gaming, making them aware of how they should play any game in an appropriate way, as time management is highly beneficial in protecting their mental and physical health.

But, playing video games is a coin with two facets that cannot be separated from each other. Thus, just as they have a positive impact on English language proficiency among EFL learners, the other negative aspect of this impact arises. In addition to the useful expressions and idioms mentioned earlier, indeed, cultural misunderstandings in gaming are abundant and can occur in different forms. Misunderstandings of in-game actions, for example, might lead to conflicts among players. Chief of these conflicts is language barrier where many participants avowed that miscommunication is recurrent in online gaming as they are gaming with people from around the globe after all. These gamers use English slang words most of the times and this can be confusing for non-native speakers who find themselves obliged to ask for clarifications or search to understand the intended meaning. In addition to slang words, taboo words are also commonly used and non-native speakers often find themselves searching for the precise meaning of the words they hear.

Indeed, online multiplayer gaming gives them the opportunity to play with real-life players from all around the globe. Step by step, engaging in oral conversation with them on daily basis improved their English in a positive way, regardless of the taboo words, which are a negative aspect learned on the journey.

## **6. Conclusion**

To conclude, this study focused on exploring the impact of online video games on the language proficiency of EFL learners at Abou Bekr Belkaid University. We examined the positive and negative impact of online video gaming on EFL learners. We also investigated the challenges and obstacles that EFL learners face when gaming online. The study proved that online video games are an opportunity for EFL learners to learn English in a casual and non-formal setting. The main findings revealed that the participants have acquired a great range of vocabulary and developed their speaking and listening skills, followed by a slight improvement in reading and, to a lesser extent writing skills. They have also developed their speaking skills through listening, as they always resorted to 'accent imitation'.

A strong correlation exists between the time and period spent in gaming and the impact of this on the students' English language skills. Veterans who spent a long period in gaming, where the sole medium of instruction is English, have significantly developed their skills, mainly speaking and listening skills, and to a lesser extent, reading and writing skills. Novices who have been engaging in online gaming for a short time are still struggling with their broken English. As playing video games proves to be a helpful in enhancing the students' language skills, the negative impact is clearly observable in the amount of slang and taboo words along with abbreviation forms learned and used in academic purposes.

The present study also aimed to reveal the challenges and obstacles EFL learners face when engaged in online gaming. These are mainly, linguistic and cultural. The linguistic challenges lie mainly in the differing English accents that surface with novice players. The cultural conflicts sometimes arise because of the difference in cultures, making it is hard to understand each other, which often leads to a lack of effective communication.

In addition to language and communication skills that EFL learners have enhanced through gaming, social and cultural

aspects were developed through interaction. Furthermore, personal and cognitive as well as emotional and psychological benefits emerged from gaming.

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