

Playing the Online Games Becomes One of Affecting Factors to Generate the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) for Millennials

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Abstract. This research aims to analyze how playing online games could be one of affecting factors to generate the second language acquisition to millennial. It's a case study to a child living in multilingual environment where some languages used, they are Indonesian, Sundanese and English. Online games are mostly played by using English as the communication tool which in this research English is the second language comprehended. Some factors such as the participants, solidarity and status among the players affect to the child in comprehending his second language that is English. He switches the language following the topic he's speaking. That condition guides him to be able to speak English well. His comprehension about lexical English has been coloring his own linguistic repertoire that is Indonesian. Some theories used relating with this research are Sociolinguistics and Second Language Acquisition (SLA). The data are analyzed and described qualitatively. Some results obtained are (1) modelling variety or code choice used, and (2) linguistics constraints found. The modelling variety or code chosen are Indonesian and English where the discourse domain is when the child is playing the online games at home. The situational and linguistic context must be appropriate to the choice of code used in the community. Afterwards some codes chosen, those are Indonesia and English could be constraint linguistically. This conditions show that how playing online games could give good impact for millennials in improving their second language acquisition

1. Introduction

A game is an activity done by one or more players with some specific roles. Some researchers have mentioned their statements such as Avedon and Smith who said that game is an exercise of voluntary control systems, in which there is a contest between powers, confined by rules in order to produce a disequilibrium outcome [1]. Other researcher, Costikyan said that a game is an interactive structure that requires players to struggle toward goals [2]. Jesse Schell also said that a game is a problem-solving activity, approached with a playful attitude [3].

Online game is one kind of game that is played over some forms of computer network, such as internet. Playing online games has become a massive entertainment during a pandemic era and has increasingly colored life after. Not only teenagers who play it, but also children do not escape its influence. The influence could give either positive or negative impact.

Some researches show how playing online games give negative impacts such as negatively on psychological wellbeing, intolerant attitude, depression, anxiety, social phobias, lower school performance

and lower life satisfaction. Desai et al. 2010; Grüsser et al. 2007; Mentzoni et al. 2011 mentioned that recent studies estimate between 4 and 11 % of 'gamers' show some signs of problematic or addictive use including withdrawal, tolerance and negative outcomes [4]. Furthermore, Gentile et al. 2011; Mentzoni et al. 2011 said that excessive use of video games has been associated with elevated depression, anxiety, social phobias, lower school performance and lower life satisfaction [5]. Messias et al. (2001) concluded an association between excessive video game use and sadness, suicidal ideation and suicide planning [6]. Williams et al. argue that both male and female MMORPG players reported considerably higher prevalence of depression and substance addiction than typical rates for the US population. Liu and Peng 2009; Smyth 2007 added that similarly, physical problems such as health and sleep difficulties, personal life problems and academic/professional problems have been described as elevated in MMORPG players.

The positive impacts have also been searched as Ducheneaut and Williams et al. who found some positive impact of MMORPGs, such as the development of social skills and relationships through play [7]. Longman et al. concluded that players derived social support from fellow online gamers which is, in turn, associated with improved wellbeing [8]. In addition, online games have been linked with skill development. Chen described MMORPGs as providing opportunity for communication, problem solving, teamwork and shared goals, highlighting the potential benefits of these interactions on social relationships, communication skills and some cognitive functions [9].

Based on the statements above, it can be concluded that playing online game is an interesting activity played by various players and could give some both negative and positive impacts. There are some genres of online games such as Action, Adventure, Action-Adventure, Role-Playing Game (RPG), Simulation, Strategy, Sports, Idle Gaming. Those online games have their own characteristics, role, and instruments. Some games are played by doing some communication among the players either oral or writing. Some others could be done by being a single player without doing any communication to other player.

Words used in playing those online games are various. They depend on the style of the online games. There is a game that has mission to fight each other physically, however, there is also a game that has mission to build a building, a city, even a world. Most games use English language as the communication tool. This condition demands skill of English speaking among the players. Players who live in a place where English is not their native language, must be capable of speaking English and it has made them become bilingual or even multilingual person. The bilingual persons could have more than one domain in using their language.

Domain is clearly a very general concept which draws on three important social factors in code choice – participants, setting and topic [10]. Domain is useful for capturing broad generalization about any speech community particularly useful for bilingual and multilingual speech communities. The complexity of bilingual interaction will influence the domain and varieties that are relevant to language choices. Some domains such as at school, at playing online games or at playing offline games are possible to have the difference in the language choices and the pattern of language use in the community. These domains are usually selected for use in different situations.

In Sociolinguistics, the term discourse domain refers to features or conventions of language use determined by the context in which communication takes place. A discourse domain typically includes a variety of registers and also known as cognitive discourse domain, discourse world, and knowledge map. A discourse domain can be understood as a social construct as well as a cognitive construct. A discourse domain is made up of individuals who exhibit their own distinctive knowledge structures, cognitive styles, and biases. However, within the boundaries of a domain, there is continual interaction between domain structures and individual knowledge, an interaction between the individual and the social level [11]. Discourse domain among the player meet the same knowledge about the game they play. Having the knowledge about each discourse domain could result the understanding and good play.

Social factors are other factor beside domain and its discourse that could affect the code choice. Social distance dimension such as how well they know each other, are they strangers, friends, or brothers will

influence to the use a different code. The games role may also affect the code choice. They may also have particular function or goal for the games. Each game has their own role and function and goal that must be comprehended among the players. This condition results the importance of understanding the language for being used for.

The description of all dimensions above is to represent accurately the language pattern of the players in playing online games. English language as one of international languages becomes the neutral one used among the player. It is most used in playing online games. The use of English language in playing most of international online games demands the player speak it fluently. It becomes a challenge for Indonesian players since English language is the second language used. Second Language Acquisition (SLA) has been a continuing phenomenon in bilingual or multilingual community.

The process of acquiring a language on a child has been carried out since humans were born. Humans have been stimulated to develop their language faculties as Chomsky (1965, 1968, 1986) said in Harley, that language acquisition must be guided by innate constraint and that language is a special faculty not dependent on other cognitive or perceptual processes [12]. It is acquired at a time when the child is incapable of complex intellectual achievements, and therefore could not be dependent on intelligence, cognition, or experience. The language they hear is impoverished and degenerate, children cannot acquire a grammar by exposure to language alone. Assistance is provided by the innate structure called the language acquisition device (LAD) that is replaced by the idea of universal grammar. Acquiring a language on a child needs a stimulus in its generation as Cummings said that before we can utter a single word, we have to be capable of forming thoughts that are appropriate for communication [13].

Each child's language development is unique. Many factors are behind this process. Freeman mentioned A second language is one being acquired in an environment in which the language is spoken natively. The word second implies that it is acquired later than the first (language). Several variables are factors that support a speaker in mastering his second language acquisition. The ability to pronounce, record, imitate and understand becomes an iterative step in the acquisition process. In addition, Larsen mentions several factors that influence it, they are age, aptitude, social-psychological factor, personality, cognitive style, hemisphere specialization, learning strategies, and other factors such as memory, awareness, language failure, attraction, gender, birth process, and experiences [14].

The need for mastery of English as a second language has an impact on the process of acquiring that language on Indonesian children. This phenomenon is a new challenge for parents and educators to be able to facilitate the needs of children, especially in technology and language. Parents and educators are challenged to be able to deal with changing needs, especially the use of language in several generations. In Alpha generation, Mark Mc. Crindle and Ashley Fell said that Alpha generation is the current generation of children who began being born in the year 2010. They are the children of the Millennials, shape the social media landscape, the popular culture influencers and the emerging consumers. They are deemed social, global and mobile as they will work, study and travel between different countries and multiple careers. Mark Mc. Crindle and Ashley Fell describe the needs of children at different generations. Significant differences can be seen in generation Z (born 1995 to 2009) and Alpha generation (born 2010 to 2024) that occur at this time. These differences can be seen in several ways, including educational targets that direct children to adapt, the focus of education that focuses on learning skills, work styles that prioritize collaboration, and so on [15]. Based on the previous statement, the research about how playing online games could be one of affecting factors to generate the second language acquisition to millennial becomes the objective of this research and it could be one of ways to open people perspective of the effect of playing online games for millennials.

2. Method

The method used in this study is a qualitative method. According to Cresswell, a qualitative method is an approach or a research to explore and understand a central phenomenon [16]. To understand this central

phenomenon, the study was done by using qualitative observation, qualitative documents, and qualitative audio. The speaking of the participant was recorded during his playing on his online games, then it's transcribed phonemically. The data are analyzed by using discourse domain and second language acquisition (SLA) tool to get the findings how playing online games becomes one of affecting factors to generate the SLA on a child as a millennial. Language background and repertoire of the child that are variegated in terms of languages known and degree of competence are the focus of this research.

3. Results and Discussion

The child is eight years old and as one of millennials (Alpha generation) who live in multilingual community has some languages used in his daily activity. Those languages are Indonesian, English, and Sundanese. Indonesian language is his native language since his parents have different vernaculars. Sundanese is spoken when he is playing with his friends since he lives in West Java and Sundanese language is its local language. English is used when he is playing online games since there are some particular words used on those games. His learning skills especially in speaking English language, and work styles that prioritize collaboration are influenced much by his playing in online games. The age of 8 has made him easily adopt any new vocabularies and memorize them well.

Table 1. Domains of language use on the child (participant)

Domain	Addressee	Setting	Topic	Variety Code
School	Teachers	School	Education	Indonesian
Family	Parents and siblings	Restaurant	Choosing food	Indonesian
Friendship in neighborhood	Friend	Home	Hide and seek	Indonesian and Sundanese
Friendship in online games	Friend	Home (virtual/online)	Playing Roblox online game	Indonesian and English

There are three languages used by the participant following the place when the conversation takes place. The participant speaks in Indonesian when he talks to his teacher in school discussing some topics relating with his lesson. He speaks Indonesian and Sundanese when he's playing with his neighbors in his living environment, and speaks English when he's playing kind of online game. Each language used following the situation he faces. In his age, he has already had capability on the code choice which means he has already known when he must speak in Indonesian, Sundanese, or English. The need to comprehend with the meaning of words used forces him to learn his second language well.

Data 1.

Conversation spoken with teacher in school
 Participant : bu, yang puisi harus difoto?
 Teacher : iya, dikirim ke link LDS

Participant : ok, semoga foto kita ditampilin
Teacher : ngobrolnya disudahi dulu.
fokus menyimak materi dari pak Noval
Participant : Abdul itu, bu

Based on the above data, it could be seen that the participant speaks in Indonesian formally since he knows to whom he is speaking. He adopts the situation and the context that he chooses Indonesian as his code.

Data 2.

Conversation spoken with family in restaurant

Mother : mbak, pesan nasi empat
Participant : aku mau minum jus stroberi
Father : kakak pilih dan ambil sayurannya
Participant : mau daging manisnya dua
Mother : pakai kuah yang bening ya?
Participant : aku enggak mau makan sayur, mau dagingnya aja

The above data shows that Indonesian language used in conversation among his family members. In order to make it easy and commonly happened, Indonesian language is chosen to be the code. This situation occurs since his parents that are from different city and have different vernacular.

Data 3.

Conversation spoken with friends at home

Friend 1 : Lintang, bolanya masuk selokan
Participant : ambil *atuh*
Friend 2 : sini dicuci dulu sama aku
Friend 3 : habis ini kita main di lapangan ya
Participant : jauh *atuh*, *sok* kamu aja ke sana

On data 3, it shows the use of Sundanese and Indonesian language. Participant who lives in Bandung (West Java) are surrounded by neighbors with Sundanese as their local language. The informal conversation spoken using Sundanese and Indonesian language

Data 4.

Conversation spoken with friends in online games

Participant : gila, *the rock* sangat jantan
Friend 1 : makanan kita tertinggal di sana lho
Participant : butuh tangga, *excuse me*
Friend 2 : susah itu, Cok
Participant : iih kamu pegang doritos, burger, *oh my God*
Friend 1 : kita mau pindah rumah

Some English words are spoken by the participant on data 4. The participant has some reasons in choosing English language as the code choice. The words the rock, has specific meaning on that games that are different from the lexical meaning people ordinary use. Informal style used in the conversation among the players. It's done in order to make them relax, fun, and happy.

Language varies according to its uses as well as its users, according to where it is used and to whom, as well as according to who is using it. The addressees and the context affect our choice of code or variety,

whether language, dialect or style. [17]. The above conversation reflects that millennials refer to choose informal style when they are in a conversation.

4. Conclusion

A child on his age, has already had his own competency on the spelling and the understanding about the English words used in context of playing online games. He has already known the domains of language use well. He is capable of comprehending Indonesian language as his native language, Sundanese language as his local language, and English language when he is playing the online games. The informal style appears when he is playing online games so it makes him comfort and easier to adopt some new English vocabularies as his second language. Then, it could be concluded that playing online games becomes one of affecting factors to the participant in generating his second language acquisition.

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