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KEY TERM

Digital games for language learning

It is an umbrella term encompassing all approaches (educational and non-educational) using digital games for teaching and learning a language.

WHAT EVIDENCE IS SUMMARISED?

23 studies

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM THIS SECONDARY RESEARCH?

What are the key publications, participants, activities, and methodological characteristics of research in digital games for language learning?

HOW CAN I USE THE FINDINGS IN MY TEACHING?

- By incorporating different types of games, teachers can offer a holistic support system for language learning through structured exercises and communication opportunities in single and multiplayer games.
- Teachers can thoughtfully employ digital games as supplementary tools in language classrooms, with due consideration of individual differences such as prior gaming experience and learning preferences.
- Teachers can use reflective journaling tasks alongside game-based approaches to facilitate deeper engagement and understanding of learning experiences.

WHAT DOES IT FIND?

- Research on digital games for language learning has received considerable attention in recent years, with an extensive focus on learning and teaching single words.
- Individual differences, especially with prior gaming experience, may have cognitive advantages; yet this remains an under-explored area in language research.
- Single- and multiplayer games offer distinct learning and scaffolding benefits, with the former supporting structured vocabulary learning and the latter contributing to spontaneous communication and cross-cultural interaction.
- Quantitative and mixed-methods research dominate the field, while qualitative approaches (game diaries, journals, focus group discussions) and online measurement designs (eye-tracking or mouse-tracking) could offer a more nuanced understanding of learner experiences.

