DIGITAL GAME-MEDIATED SECOND LANGUAGE EDUCATION: VIEWING FROM TEACHERS’ PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

The development of information and computer technology (ICT) in recent decades has rendered digital game-mediated teaching a natural tendency in second language (L2) education. Sykes, Reinhardt and Thorne (2010) pointed out that the interactive design of digital games could greatly enhance learner motivation and make learning a highly engaging experience. L2 educational researchers and practitioners have explored the pedagogical use of commercial games of diverse genres for enhancing L2 teaching. Meanwhile serious games, or games designed specifically for L2 education have also gained ground. Some studies have investigated the incorporation of serious games into L2 curriculum. So far, learning through digital games has quite rightly focused on the learners, and so the perspective of the students in or outside classrooms is prominent in the literature. When the games are intended to be used as part of the L2 curriculum, though, the attitudes, beliefs and methodologies of the teachers can also be examined. Where this requires acceptance of technologies, it can be intimidating (Neville, 2009).

As an attempt to gain insight into teachers’ views of incorporating game-mediated learning into L2 curriculum, a research was conducted in 6 primary schools in Harbin, China. The research is part of a larger project of Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) funded by Innovate UK. Liaised with the University of Edinburgh, the project aims to design a digital platform of animated games to enhance English teaching in Chinese primary schools. The purpose of the study is two-fold: first, it serves as a systematic review of past studies on game-mediated L2 teaching and brings in research on teachers’ technology acceptance model (TAM) to discuss the feasibility of incorporating teachers’ perspective in digital game-mediated L2 research. Second, it illustrates a broader picture of the project and presents some initial tentative conclusions from research into the views of teachers from experience of an animated game for English teaching.

Keywords: Digital game-mediated teaching, teachers’ acceptance of technology, L2 curriculum.