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Investigating Teachers' Perceptions and Practices Regarding the Use of Online Single-Player Role-Playing Games EFL Vocabulary Learning

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to **my beloved father,** to express my deepest gratitude for his endless sacrifices, unwavering support, wise guidance, and constant encouragement. his hard work and dedication have always inspired me to strive for excellence and persevere through every challenge.

To my beloved mother,

For her unconditional love, endless care, patience, and prayers.

Her support has been my greatest source of strength and motivation throughout my life and academic journey.

To my dear brother,

For his encouragement, understanding, and support. His presence and belief in my abilities have always motivated me to move forward with confidence.

To my dear sisters,

I am grateful for your love, kindness, and constant encouragement. Your support and faith in me have made this journey easier and more meaningful.

To my friends,

For their companionship and the memorablemoments, we shared throughout this journey. Their support has been greatly appreciated.

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Abstract

The current study explores EFL teachers' perceptions of using online single-player role-playing games (RPGs) to support vocabulary learning and examines their classroom practices, including how and to what extent they integrate these games into language instruction. Data were collected through a questionnaire administered online via Google Forms to a sample of 10 English teachers at M'Sila University during the academic year 2025–2026. The findings reveal a clear perception–practice gap among EFL teachers regarding the use of online single-player RPGs for vocabulary learning. While teachers expressed strongly positive perceptions of RPGs as motivational and context-rich tools (high mean scores ranging from 3.98 to 4.68), they reported very low levels of actual classroom implementation (mean scores ranging from 2.60 to 3.42), with 90% indicating that they had never used RPGs in their teaching. Based on these findings, the study recommends providing teacher training on game-based learning, increasing awareness of the pedagogical potential of RPGs, and encouraging the integration of digital games into language instruction. Future research may investigate the effectiveness of RPGs on learners' vocabulary acquisition and explore the challenges that hinder their classroom implementation.

Keywords*: vocabulary learning, online single-player role-playing games (RPGs), teacher perceptions, classroom practices, game-based learning.*

List of abbreviations

AR: Augmented Reality

AI: Artificial Intelligence

CALL: Computer-Assisted Language Learning

MALL: Mobile-Assisted Language Learning

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

ICT: Information and Communication echnology

L2: Second Language

M: Mean SD Standard Deviation

Min: Minimum

Max: Maximum

MOOC: Massive Open Online Course

VR: Virtual Reality

N: Number of Participants / Sample Size

Q: Question (used in questionnaire tables)

RQ Research Question

RPG: Role-Playing Game

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

SP-RPG: Single-Player Role-Playing Game

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General Introduction

1. Background of the Study

Over the last two decades, the use of technology in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom has evolved from a supplementary set of digital tools into a fully integrated pedagogical resource. The rapid development of the internet, personal computing, and interactive platforms has created new opportunities for language educators to enrich their teaching practices and to engage learners in more meaningful ways (Chapelle, 2010). Among these innovations, digital games, and role-playing games (RPGs) in particular, have emerged as promising tools for enhancing vocabulary acquisition.

Vocabulary plays a central role in language learning and is often considered the building block for developing the four main language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Nation, 2013). Traditional vocabulary teaching methods, such as rote memorization or isolated word lists, frequently fail to provide learners with meaningful context, which in turn limits retention and practical use. Single-player RPGs, by contrast, offer immersive environments in which vocabulary is embedded within narrative-driven quests, dialogues, and problem-solving tasks. Players are typically required to understand and use language in order to progress through the game, which provides a naturalistic and engaging medium for vocabulary exposure (Peterson, 2016).

While multiplayer online games, such as Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPGs), have been widely researched for their collaborative learning potential (Reinders & Wattana, 2015), single-player RPGs remain comparatively underexplored within EFL vocabulary research. Unlike multiplayer formats, single-player RPGs allow learners to progress at their own pace, to focus on understanding in-game texts and dialogues, and to replay scenarios in order to reinforce vocabulary comprehension. This flexibility makes them particularly well suited to individualized learning approaches, an aspect that many EFL teachers may find beneficial for students with diverse proficiency levels.

Despite these potential benefits, the adoption of RPGs in language classrooms depends largely on teachers' perceptions, pedagogical beliefs, and technological readiness (Borg, 2003). Some

teachers may view RPGs as engaging and innovative tools for vocabulary enhancement, whereas others may question their educational value or find them difficult to integrate into existing curricula. Understanding how EFL teachers perceive and use online single-player RPGs is therefore essential for identifying both the opportunities and the barriers associated with their effective implementation. This study accordingly focuses on EFL teachers at M'Sila University, exploring their attitudes toward online single-player RPGs and examining how, if at all, they use these games to enhance vocabulary learning.

2. Statement of the Problem

In recent years, game-based learning has been recognized as an effective approach for enhancing student engagement and improving language skills in EFL contexts (Gee, 2007). However, much of the existing research has focused on multiplayer online games, leaving a gap in the literature concerning the pedagogical potential of online single-player RPGs for vocabulary learning specifically. While single-player RPGs offer immersive, story-driven environments in which learners encounter vocabulary in meaningful contexts, little is known about how EFL teachers perceive their usefulness or integrate them into classroom practice.

In Algeria, and at M'Sila University in particular, the integration of digital tools into EFL instruction remains at a developmental stage. Many teachers continue to rely predominantly on traditional vocabulary teaching methods, a tendency that has been associated in the broader literature with reduced learner motivation and fewer opportunities for contextualized language use (Nation, 2013; Alqahtani, 2015). Although online single-player RPGs could, in principle, address these limitations by offering authentic input, repeated exposure, and greater learner autonomy, their actual adoption depends largely on teachers' attitudes, familiarity, and willingness to adapt their teaching strategies (Borg, 2003). The scarcity of research on teachers' perceptions of this specific tool creates uncertainty regarding the feasibility and effectiveness of incorporating single-player RPGs into EFL curricula, and without a clearer understanding of teachers' perspectives, it remains difficult to design relevant training programs, allocate adequate resources, or develop guidelines for integrating such

games into vocabulary instruction.

This study, therefore, aims to address this gap by investigating how EFL teachers at M'Sila University perceive and use online single-player RPGs to enhance vocabulary learning, exploring their beliefs, experiences, and practices in order to identify both the potential benefits and the challenges likely to influence the successful implementation of these games in Algerian EFL classrooms.

3. Research Questions

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How do EFL teachers at M'Sila University perceive the use of online single-player RPGs in vocabulary instruction?

2. To what extent do EFL teachers at M'Sila University currently use online single-player RPGs to enhance students' vocabulary learning?

3. What challenges do EFL teachers face when integrating online single-player RPGs into vocabulary teaching practices?

4. Aims of the Study

In line with the research questions above, this study aims to:

• examine EFL teachers' perspectives on the use of online single-player RPGs in vocabulary instruction;

• identify the extent to which EFL teachers use online single-player RPGs to enhance students' vocabulary learning;

• highlight the challenges EFL teachers face when integrating online single-player RPGs into their vocabulary teaching practices.

5. Significance of the Study

This study is significant for several reasons. It addresses a relatively underexplored area in EFL research by focusing on online single-player RPGs, which differ in design and use from the more

commonly studied multiplayer or classroom-based digital games. It also offers insights into teachers' perspectives, insights that are essential for assessing the realistic possibilities and constraints of integrating such tools into language teaching. Furthermore, the findings may guide teachers, curriculum designers, and policymakers in developing effective strategies for incorporating game-based learning into vocabulary instruction, particularly given the urgent need, noted above, for empirical research on how EFL teachers in Algerian higher education perceive and use game-based vocabulary learning tools. Finally, the study contributes to the growing body of literature on digital game-based learning, with practical implications for enhancing vocabulary acquisition in EFL contexts.

6. Research Methodology

The present study adopts a descriptive quantitative method to investigate teachers' perceptions of using single-player RPGs to enhance vocabulary learning in EFL classes. Data were collected through a questionnaire administered online via Google Forms to a sample of English teachers at M'Sila University during the 2024/2025 academic year. The questionnaire combined closed-ended and open-ended questions in order to generate both numerical data and qualitative insights into teachers' experiences. Responses to the closed-ended items were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages), while responses to the open-ended items were analyzed thematically.

7. Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation comprises two main chapters, in addition to a general introduction and a general conclusion, each serving a distinct and complementary role within the study's overall investigative framework. The first chapter, devoted to the theoretical background of the study, examines the key principles of vocabulary acquisition in EFL contexts and the theoretical perspectives underpinning vocabulary learning, before turning to digital game-based learning, with particular emphasis on online single-player RPGs and their potential impact on vocabulary development; it then considers teachers' attitudes toward technology integration and reviews relevant empirical studies.

The second chapter, devoted to research methodology, findings, and discussion, presents the study's design, data collection instruments, participants, and setting, before reporting and discussing the questionnaire results in relation to the research questions and the literature reviewed in Chapter One. The dissertation concludes with a general conclusion summarizing the main findings, acknowledging the study's limitations, and outlining directions for future research, followed by the references and appendices.

2- Operational Definitions of Research Variables

- **Teachers' Perceptions**: refer to the subjective beliefs, attitudes, and evaluative judgments that EFL teachers at M'Sila University hold toward online single-player RPGs as tools for vocabulary instruction, and these are measured through their questionnaire responses regarding the educational value and practical feasibility of such games.
- **Teaching Practices:** denote the actual instructional behaviors that teachers report adopting in relation to online single-player RPGs, including the frequency and manner in which they integrate or avoid these games within their vocabulary teaching, as captured by the relevant questionnaire items.
- **Online Single-Player RPGs:** are defined as digitally narrative-driven games played individually, where the learner engages autonomously with story-based dialogues and quests that embed vocabulary in meaningful, repeated contexts, as opposed to multiplayer or drill-based formats.
- **EFL Vocabulary Learning:** is understood as the process through which foreign language learners acquire and consolidate English lexical knowledge across its multiple dimensions form, meaning, and use with teacher perception serving as the primary lens through which this variable is examined in the present study.

Chapter One: Theoretical Background on Vocabulary Acquisition and Role-Playing Games

1-1 Introduction

Vocabulary acquisition is a fundamental component of second language learning, as it directly influences learners' ability to comprehend and produce language effectively. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), vocabulary knowledge is often considered both a prerequisite and a result of language proficiency. Without a sufficient lexical repertoire, learners struggle to engage in meaningful communication, regardless of their grammatical competence (Nation, 2022).

In recent years, technological advancements have introduced innovative approaches to language instruction. Among these, digital games have gained considerable attention for their potential to create engaging and immersive learning environments. Game-based learning not only provides authentic input but also offers interactive contexts where learners can practice vocabulary in meaningful ways (Reinders & Wattana, 2021). The combination of challenge, feedback, and motivation inherent in games aligns well with principles of effective vocabulary learning.

This study specifically focuses on single-player role-playing games (RPGs) as a tool for vocabulary enhancement in EFL contexts. While many studies have examined multiplayer games and MMORPGs, single-player RPGs remain underexplored despite their rich narratives, complex dialogue systems, and immersive storytelling. Such games offer a self-paced learning environment, allowing players to engage deeply with in-game texts, quests, and interactions without the social pressure of multiplayer settings (Peterson, 2020).

The rationale for choosing single-player RPGs lies in their unique ability to combine narrative immersion with incidental and intentional vocabulary learning opportunities. Their structured storylines, detailed item descriptions, and branching dialogues present learners with

repeated exposure to target vocabulary in meaningful contexts, thus facilitating retention and depth of word knowledge.

1.2 Theories of Vocabulary Acquisition

Vocabulary acquisition has been explained through several theoretical perspectives that highlight how learners encounter, process, and store new lexical items. One of the most influential frameworks is Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1985), which argues that vocabulary is best acquired when learners are exposed to comprehensible input slightly above their current proficiency level (i + 1). In this view, exposure to authentic and meaningful language, such as that found in RPG narratives, can foster incidental vocabulary learning.

Another relevant theory is the Nation's Four Strands Model (2013), which emphasizes that effective vocabulary learning requires a balance between meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output, language-focused learning, and fluency development. RPGs can address these strands by providing rich narrative input, opportunities for in-game decision-making (output), explicit vocabulary encounters through quest descriptions (language-focused learning), and repeated exposure that aids fluency.

From a cognitive perspective, Dual Coding Theory (Paivio, 1991) suggests that information is better retained when presented both verbally and visually. Single-player RPGs align with this principle by combining textual dialogue with visual cues, reinforcing word meaning through multiple channels. As a result, when learners process a word's written form as well as its visual and contextual representation within the game environment, the resulting dual encoding significantly improves both lexical retrieval speed and vocabulary retention over time (Mayer, 2021).

In addition, Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978) emphasizes the role of context and mediated interaction in language learning. Although single-player RPGs are not inherently social, they create simulated social contexts through character interactions, allowing learners to engage with vocabulary in contextually rich scenarios. These theoretical perspectives collectively support the idea that RPGs, with their combination of narrative immersion, multimodal input, and repeated exposure, offer fertile ground for vocabulary acquisition in EFL settings.

1.3. Role-Playing Games in Language Learning

Role-playing games (RPGs) have gained increasing attention in educational research for their potential to enhance language learning through immersive and interactive environments. Unlike traditional classroom activities, RPGs place learners in dynamic scenarios where they take on fictional roles, navigate narratives, and solve problems in a target language. This active engagement fosters both receptive and productive language skills while encouraging learners to use vocabulary in meaningful contexts (Peterson, 2016).

In RPGs, language is not learned in isolation but is embedded in authentic communicative exchanges, whether between the player and non-playable characters (NPCs) or through in-game instructions and narratives. This aligns with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which emphasizes that learning occurs most effectively through social interaction and contextualized tasks (Lantolf, 2011). The narrative structures and quest-based mechanics in RPGs provide a natural setting for repeated exposure to thematic vocabulary, which supports both retention and transfer to real-life communication.

Digital RPGs, in particular, offer additional advantages such as multimodal input (visuals, audio, and text), adaptive difficulty, and instant feedback. Gee (2017) notes that the

problem-solving nature of games encourages deeper cognitive processing, which can facilitate long-term vocabulary retention. Moreover, the element of role-playing itself lowers affective barriers, as learners feel less pressure when speaking "in character," allowing for more spontaneous language production (Sylvén & Sundqvist, 2019). Given these affordances, RPGs can serve not only as engaging supplementary tools but also as structured learning environments where vocabulary acquisition occurs organically.

1.4 Single-Player RPGs and Vocabulary Development

Single-player role-playing games (RPGs) offer a unique space for vocabulary acquisition, as they allow learners to progress at their own pace, revisit content, and engage deeply with the game's narrative and mechanics. Unlike multiplayer environments, single-player RPGs minimize external distractions and competitive pressure, enabling learners to focus on language input and comprehension without the anxiety of real-time interaction with other players (Reinders & Wattana, 2015).

1.4.1 Vocabulary Exposure in RPGs

The narrative-driven nature of RPGs allows players to encounter vocabulary in meaningful contexts. Quest descriptions, in-game conversations, and item inventories provide learners with repeated encounters of the same lexical items, enhancing retention through contextual reinforcement (Rankin et al., 2009).

Furthermore, the rising difficulty of RPG tales guarantees that vocabulary is encountered at varied degrees of complexity, replicating natural language learning processes and allowing learners to gradually expand their lexical knowledge.

1.4.2 Cognitive Engagement and Vocabulary Retention

RPGs promote deep cognitive engagement, which is essential for long-term vocabulary retention. In single-player RPGs, players must make strategic decisions, interpret clues, and solve problems activities that require active language processing. This problem-solving nature ensures that vocabulary is not merely memorized but processed within a meaningful, goal-oriented framework, increasing the likelihood of retention (Mayer, 2021).

1.4.3 Vocabulary Learning Strategies in Gameplay

RPG gameplay naturally encourages the use of vocabulary learning strategies. Learners may use incidental learning when encountering unfamiliar terms in dialogues or environmental descriptions (Webb & Nation, 2017). Some games also integrate glossaries, codex entries, or in-game dictionaries, providing intentional learning opportunities.

RPG gaming inherently supports the usage of vocabulary-learning techniques. Learners may use accidental learning when meeting foreign terminology in conversations or environmental descriptions, although other games include glossaries, codex entries, or in-game dictionaries that enable purposeful learning opportunities (Webb & Nation, 2017). Players also regularly employ inferencing tactics, which are similar to those taught in communicative language education. These diverse contacts with target language strengthen both the breadth and depth of lexical knowledge.

1.5 EFL Learners and Digital Game-Based Learning

The integration of digital games into EFL contexts has been widely discussed in recent literature. Several studies highlight the benefits of game-based learning, such as enhanced motivation, increased exposure to authentic input, and improved learner engagement

(Reinders, 2012). For many EFL learners, digital games offer a rare opportunity to interact with English beyond the classroom, making language practice more enjoyable and meaningful. However, challenges also exist. Learners may struggle with domain-specific vocabulary, fast-paced dialogues, or cultural references embedded in games (Sylvén & Sundqvist, 2019). Furthermore, not all students are equally motivated by games, and differences in gaming experience can affect learning outcomes.

Teachers' perceptions also play a vital role in the integration of games. Positive attitudes can lead to innovative classroom practices, while skepticism may limit their adoption. Research suggests that when teachers recognize the pedagogical potential of digital games, they are more likely to incorporate them as supplementary learning tools (Godwin-Jones, 2018). In sum, EFL learners can greatly benefit from digital game-based learning, particularly through repeated and contextualized vocabulary exposure. Nevertheless, successful implementation depends on overcoming challenges related to learner differences and teacher readiness.

1.6 Empirical Studies

Several empirical studies have explored the relationship between RPGs and vocabulary learning. Rankin, Gold, and Gooch (2006) found that learners engaged in role-playing scenarios exhibited higher vocabulary recall compared to those in traditional classroom activities. Similarly, Ranalli (2008) examined the use of The Sims and found significant gains in vocabulary retention. Peterson (2013) distinguished between incidental vocabulary learning

occurring through natural gameplay and intentional learning, where learners deliberately focus on language forms. His findings showed that RPGs offer a balance between both processes. Reinders and Wattana (2015) highlighted the motivational aspects of RPGs,

showing that learners reported higher engagement and willingness to interact with language when using game-based tasks. However, most research has focused on MMORPGs rather than single-player RPGs, leaving a gap that this study aims to address.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter has provided the theoretical foundations of the study by reviewing perspectives on vocabulary acquisition, the role of game-based learning, and the specific potential of single-player RPGs. It also presented empirical findings that support the integration of RPGs in EFL contexts, while noting the lack of research on single-player environments. By combining insights from vocabulary acquisition theories, digital game-based learning, and motivational frameworks, this chapter established the conceptual groundwork for the current research. The next chapter will present the research methodology used to investigate teachers' perceptions of single-player RPGs in vocabulary instruction

Chapter Two:

Methodology, Findings and

Discussion

Introduction

This chapter presents the methodological framework, findings, and discussion of the study investigating EFL teachers' perceptions and practices concerning the use of online single-player role-playing games (RPGs) to enhance vocabulary acquisition. The chapter is organized into two main sections: the first section details the research design and methodology, covering the research approach, the population and sample, the data collection instrument, and the procedures followed; while the second section presents the data analysis and findings, including descriptive statistics of the collected data, individual item analyses, and a comprehensive discussion of the results in light of the research questions and relevant empirical studies.

Emphasizing the real-world implementation of RPG-based learning in the context of EFL instruction in Algerian universities, this chapter provides both quantitative measurements and qualitative insights drawn from teacher questionnaire responses. The analysis is structured to move systematically from demographic information to perceptions, practices, and finally a synthesis of findings that addresses the study's research questions. By means of this analysis, the chapter seeks to bridge the gap between theoretical positions on game-based vocabulary learning and the pedagogical realities experienced by EFL teachers at M'Sila University.

1. Research Methodology and Design

1.1 The Quantitative Research Method

The quantitative design focused on measuring the extent to which teachers agreed or disagreed with a series of statements concerning the pedagogical use of online single-player RPGs for vocabulary teaching. A five-point Likert scale was employed, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), to capture the intensity of respondents' perceptions. Statistical measures including mean scores, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages were applied to identify general tendencies and variations across the sample. This approach enabled the researcher to present teachers' perceptions in a systematic and interpretable numerical format that could be directly mapped onto the study's research questions.

1.2 The Population and Sample of the Study

The target population consisted of EFL teachers working in secondary and tertiary education who possessed experience or familiarity with digital tools or games in language instruction. From this population, a purposive sample of ten (10) EFL teachers was selected based on their availability, willingness to participate, and prior engagement with technology-

enhanced language learning. Purposive sampling was chosen because it allowed the researcher to deliberately include participants who could provide relevant and informed responses on the study's topic; random sampling would have risked including individuals with no exposure to digital learning tools, thereby reducing the analytical value of the data. The sample included both male and female teachers with varying years of teaching experience and technological proficiency, providing a balanced range of perspectives on the use of RPGs in EFL contexts.

1.3 The Study Setting

The research was conducted at Mohamed Boudiaf University, specifically within the Department of English, during the 2025–2026 academic year. The university was selected as the primary site because it represents a context where technology-enhanced language learning has gained increasing attention, and because EFL teachers at this institution are working within a curriculum that is undergoing gradual digital integration. Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that the study captured the experiences of educators actively engaged in EFL instruction across different educational levels. The study setting provided a realistic and locally relevant context for examining how teachers perceive and implement game-based vocabulary tools within Algerian educational institutions.

1.4 Data Collection Tool

The primary instrument for data collection was a teacher questionnaire designed to elicit both quantitative and qualitative data regarding teachers' perceptions and practices in using online single-player RPGs for vocabulary teaching. The questionnaire was distributed electronically via Google Forms and administered during the second semester of the 2025–2026 academic year. It consisted of two main sections: the first section contained Likert-scale items measuring teachers' attitudes toward the pedagogical potential of RPGs, and the second section included open-ended questions gathering descriptive data about actual classroom implementation strategies, perceived challenges.

1.4.1 Teachers' Perceptions and Practices

This section of the questionnaire aimed to explore how teachers perceive and implement RPG-based learning for vocabulary development across three thematic dimensions. The perception questions focused on teachers' beliefs about: (a) the effectiveness of RPGs in motivating learners and contextualizing vocabulary exposure, (b) the role of technology in providing authentic and interactive vocabulary practice, and (c) the contribution of immersive digital tools to vocabulary retention and engagement. The practice questions examined how

often teachers integrate online games or RPGs into their lesson plans, what specific challenges they encounter during implementation, and how they assess students' vocabulary learning outcomes following game-based activities.

1.5 Research Instrument Validation

The questionnaire was developed based on established models in educational technology and game-based learning research literature. It incorporated both closed-ended items to quantify perceptions. Prior to data collection, the instrument underwent expert validation by two specialists in language pedagogy and educational research, who assessed it for content validity, clarity, and relevance. Based on their feedback, minor revisions were made to ensure that the wording of items accurately reflected the constructs under investigation. A pilot study was subsequently conducted with a small group of five (5) teachers not included in the main sample, and their responses were used to assess the internal consistency and comprehensibility of the questionnaire before finalizing the instrument.

1.6 Procedure

The study approach was carried out in a systematic manner to ensure the rigor and transparency of the data gathering process. These steps included: (1) the design and expert validation of the questionnaire instrument; (2) the pilot testing of the questionnaire with a small group of teachers to refine item clarity; (3) the distribution of the finalized survey to the target participants via Google Forms and in person; (4) the collection of completed responses within a three-week timeframe; and (5) the organization, coding, and entry of both quantitative and qualitative data.; (6) The data were analysed using descriptive statistics for Likert-scale questions and theme analysis for open-ended replies. Before participating, all participants were fully informed of the study's goal and gave their free agreement. Confidentiality and anonymity were firmly protected during the study procedure in compliance with institutional ethics requirements..

2. Data Analysis

This section gives a comprehensive examination of the data obtained from the teacher questionnaire. The analysis is structured to progress from a description of the sample's demographic characteristics to a detailed examination of teachers' perceptions across three thematic sections (Section B: Technology and Vocabulary Learning; Section C: Perceptions of Single-Player RPGs; Section D: Practices and Willingness to Use RPGs), followed by a

thorough discussion of the findings in relation to the study's research questions and relevant published research.

2.1 Overview of Teachers' Perceptions and Practices

A total of 29 questionnaire questions were used to investigate instructors' attitudes and classroom practices around the usage of online single-player RPGs for vocabulary development. The obtained data was analyzed to find trends in instructors' expressed attitudes, the frequency with which game-based strategies were applied, and perceptions regarding the pedagogical efficiency of RPG integration in EFL vocabulary training. The next sections provide a thorough evaluation of these findings, including descriptive statistical analysis and interpretive comments.

2.2 Variable Identification and Classification

In order to structure the analytical framework of the study, the variables collected through the questionnaire were classified into two main categories: independent variables (demographic and professional predictors) and dependent variables (attitudinal and behavioural outcomes). This classification follows established conventions in quantitative educational research (Marczyk, DeMatteo, & Festinger, 2010) and allows for a clear distinction between the background characteristics of participants and the perceptual and practical dimensions under investigation. The following tables present this classification in detail.

Table 1. *Independent Variables (Predictors)*

Variable	Type	Measurement Level	Categories / Range
Age	Demographic	Ratio	32–50 years
Gender	Demographic	Nominal	Male (6), Female (4)
Education Level	Professional	Ordinal	MA (3), PhD (7)
Teaching Experience	Professional	Ordinal	3–5 yrs (1), 6–10 yrs (2), 11–15 yrs (4), 16+ yrs (3)
Academic Position	Professional	Ordinal	Assistant (2), Lecturer (3), Senior Lecturer (1), Assoc. Professor (3), Professor (1)
Prior Game Use in Teaching	Practice	Nominal	Yes (1), No (9)

As shown in Table 1, the independent variables encompass a range of demographic and professional characteristics that potentially influence teachers' perceptions of RPG-based vocabulary learning. The inclusion of prior game use as a predictor variable is particularly relevant, given that existing research suggests that teachers' prior familiarity with digital tools

significantly shapes their willingness to adopt innovative pedagogical approaches (Borg, 2003).

Table 2. *Dependent Variables (Outcome Measures)*

Variable	**Type**	**Measurement Level**	**Description**
Perception Scores (Sections B & C)	Attitudinal	Ordinal (Likert)	13 items measuring beliefs about RPG effectiveness and technology
Practice Frequency (Section D)	Behavioural	Ordinal	7 items measuring actual RPG usage (Never to Often)
Overall Perception Index	Composite	Interval	Mean score across all perception items (Sections B+C)
Overall Practice Index	Composite	Interval	Mean score across all practice items (Section D)

Table 2 identifies the dependent variables which constitute the core outcome measures of the study. The distinction between attitudinal and behavioural dimensions is theoretically significant, as research on teacher beliefs consistently indicates that positive perceptions do not always translate directly into classroom practice (Borg, 2003). Investigating both dimensions simultaneously, therefore, enables a more nuanced and complete picture of the relationship between what teachers believe about RPGs and what they actually do with them in their teaching.

3. Descriptive Statistics

This section presents the descriptive statistical profiles of the study's participants, encompassing information about gender, educational qualifications, years of teaching experience, and prior use of RPGs or digital games in instruction. These demographic descriptors are reported to contextualise the findings and to allow readers to assess the degree to which the sample reflects the broader population of EFL teachers working in similar educational settings. Understanding who the participants are, in terms of their professional backgrounds and technological familiarity, is essential for interpreting the perceptual and behavioural data that follow.

3.1 Sample Demographics

The study sample comprised ten (10) EFL teachers from M'Sila University .The following tables present the distribution of participants across the key demographic variables of gender, educational level, teaching experience, and prior RPG use in the classroom.

Table 3. *Gender Distribution of Participants*

Gender	**n**	**%**
Male	6	60%
Female	4	40%
Total	10	100%

As presented in Table 3, the majority of participants were male teachers (60%, n = 6), while female teachers accounted for 40% (n = 4) of the sample. This moderate gender imbalance suggests that the sample was slightly male-dominated, though both genders were adequately represented to allow for a reasonably balanced reflection of perspectives. Such a distribution is broadly consistent with the gender profile of EFL departments in Algerian universities, where male academics tend to slightly outnumber their female counterparts at the university level. Potential gender-related differences in technology adoption or attitudes toward game-based learning may exist, although this study does not test gender as a comparative variable due to the limited sample size.

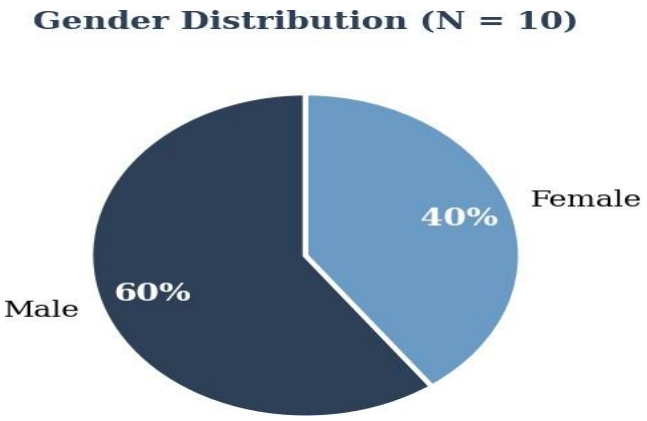

Figure 4. *Gender Distribution of Participants*

Table 4. *Educational Qualifications of Participants*

Education Level	**n**	**%**
Master's Degree (MA)	3	30%
Doctoral Degree (PhD)	7	70%
Total	10	100%

According to Table 4, the majority of respondents (70%, n = 7) held doctoral degrees, while 30% (n = 3) held master's degrees. This educational profile indicates that most participants possess advanced academic qualifications, which may enhance the depth of their pedagogical understanding and critical evaluation of innovative tools such as RPGs. The dominance of doctoral-level educators also implies a sample skewed toward highly research-oriented teachers who are likely familiar with current trends in language pedagogy and educational technology, even if they have not personally experimented with game-based approaches in their own classrooms.

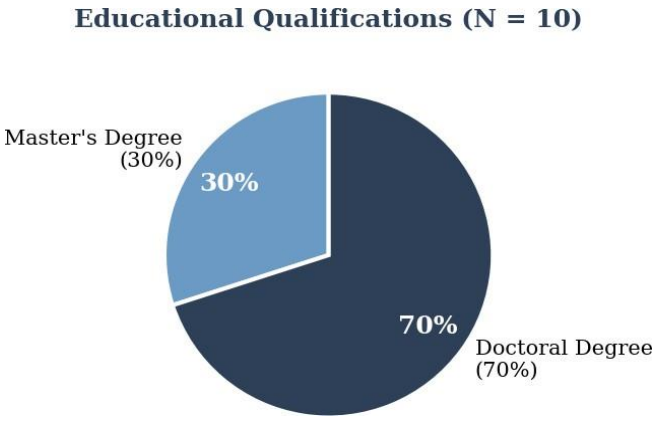

Figure 5. *Educational Qualifications of Participants*

Table 5. *Teaching Experience of Participants (Years)*

Teaching Experience (Years)	**n**	**%**
3–5 years	1	10%
6–10 years	2	20%
11–15 years	4	40%
16+ years	3	30%

Teaching Experience (Years)	n	%
Total	10	100%

The data in Table 5 reveal that the sample consisted primarily of mid- to late-career educators: 40% (n = 4) had 11–15 years of experience, 30% (n = 3) had more than 16 years, 20% (n = 2) had 6–10 years, and only 10% (n = 1) had 3–5 years of teaching experience. This distribution is significant in that it indicates that the majority of participants have established pedagogical identities and relatively fixed teaching routines, which research suggests may make them both more reflective in their evaluations of new approaches and, in some cases, more resistant to adopting them (Borg, 2003). The relatively limited representation of novice teachers means that early-career perspectives on RPG integration are underrepresented in this sample, which is a limitation to be acknowledged.

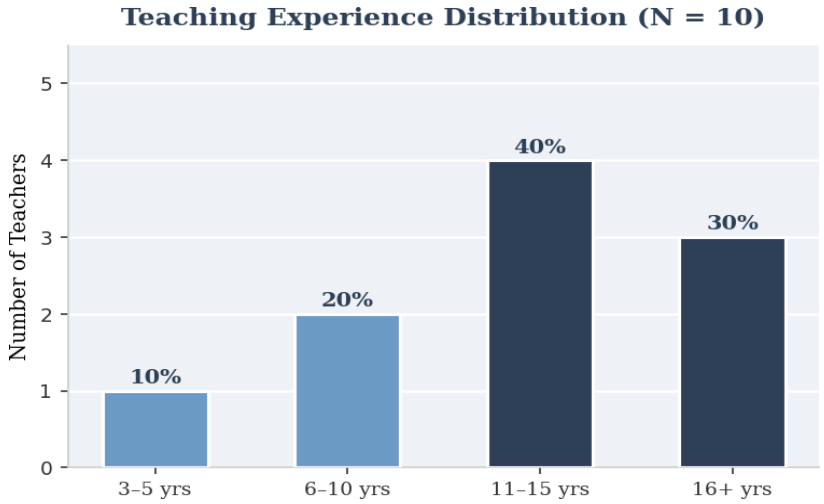

Figure 6. *Teaching Experience Distribution of Participants*

Table 6. *Prior Use of RPGs or Digital Games in Teaching*

Prior RPG Usage	n	%
Yes (used digital storytelling/games)	1	10%
No	9	90%
Total	10	100%

As shown in Table 6, a significant majority of participants (90%, n = 9) reported no prior use of RPGs or digital games in their vocabulary instruction, while only 10% (n = 1) indicated any prior experience, specifically through digital storytelling activities. This finding

demonstrates that RPG-based learning remains largely unexplored among the teachers surveyed, and it is consistent with broader research suggesting that game-based approaches are still at an early stage of adoption in many EFL contexts, particularly in North Africa (Guan et al., 2024). The minimal prior exposure of the sample may influence participants' perceptions in complex ways: while some may express curiosity and openness toward RPGs, others may remain cautious or skeptical precisely because they lack hands-on experience with such tools. This pattern also highlights a significant opportunity for targeted professional development programs aimed at introducing teachers to game-based vocabulary methodologies.

Taken together, the demographic data describe a highly educated, experienced, and predominantly male teaching cohort with very limited prior exposure to RPG-based learning. This profile is valuable for a study of this kind, as it provides a baseline picture of teachers who bring strong academic backgrounds and extensive pedagogical experience to their evaluation of an innovative approach that most of them have not yet tried in practice.

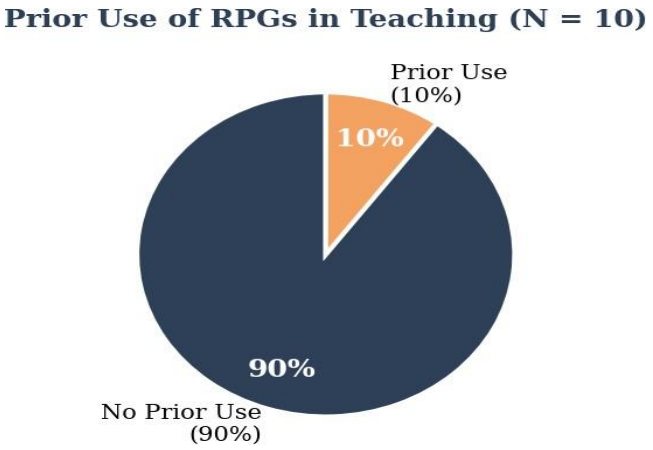

Figure 7. *Prior Use of RPGs or Digital Games in Teaching*

Section B: Teachers' Perceptions of Technology and Vocabulary Learning

Section B of the questionnaire comprised five items designed to assess teachers' general beliefs about the role of technology in supporting vocabulary learning in the EFL classroom. Before exploring perceptions specific to RPGs, this section establishes teachers' baseline attitudes toward digital tools as vocabulary learning resources. A positive orientation toward technology in general is a prerequisite for openness to the more specific application of RPGs, and therefore understanding these baseline perceptions is essential for contextualising the findings of the subsequent sections. The five items addressed the following dimensions: (1) the

opportunities technology creates for vocabulary learning, (2) the motivational impact of online tools, (3) the authenticity of digital vocabulary exposure, (4) the retention benefits of interactive technologies, and (5) a reverse-coded item comparing digital and traditional methods.

Table 7. *Descriptive Statistics of Section B: Technology and Vocabulary Learning (N = 10)*

Q	Item	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Q1	Technology provides new opportunities for vocabulary learning.	3.00	5.00	4.52	0.64
Q2	Online tools increase students' motivation to learn vocabulary.	3.00	5.00	4.46	0.67
Q3	Digital environments allow more authentic exposure to new vocabulary.	2.00	5.00	4.31	0.73
Q4	Students retain vocabulary better through interactive technologies.	2.00	5.00	4.21	0.78
Q5	Traditional methods are more effective than digital tools (reverse).	1.00	5.00	2.48	0.96

Q1. Technology Provides New Opportunities for Vocabulary Learning

As shown in Table 7, this item recorded the highest mean score in Section B (M = 4.52, SD = 0.64), with the vast majority of respondents,approximately 80%,selecting either "Agree" or "Strongly Agree." No respondent selected "Strongly Disagree," and only 20% remained neutral or expressed mild disagreement. These results suggest that teachers broadly and consistently recognize the transformative role of digital tools in creating new possibilities for vocabulary instruction. Teachers appear aware that technology facilitates access to diverse and multimodal learning resources,such as multimedia glossaries, interactive online dictionaries, and contextualised digital language use,that allow students to engage with new vocabulary in richer and more meaningful ways than traditional paper-based exercises afford. This finding reflects a positive and forward-looking professional attitude toward technology integration, one that provides a favorable baseline for examining more specific perceptions of RPG-based learning.

Q2. Online Tools Increase Students' Motivation to Learn Vocabulary

Table 8. *Frequency Distribution for Q2: Online Tools and Motivation*

Response Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Disagree (1)	0	0.0%
Disagree (2)	1	10.0%
Neutral (3)	1	10.0%
Agree (4)	3	30.0%
Strongly Agree (5)	5	50.0%
Total	10	100.0%

Table 8 shows that 80% of teachers expressed positive views on the motivational value of online tools: 50% strongly agreed and 30% agreed that such tools increase students' vocabulary learning motivation. In contrast, 10% disagreed and a further 10% remained neutral. The high rate of agreement (M = 4.46, SD = 0.67) suggests that the majority of teachers believe online tools effectively enhance student engagement and motivation in vocabulary learning contexts. This positive perception is likely linked to the interactive and multimodal features of digital environments,including visual stimuli, audio input, and immediate corrective feedback,which research has consistently associated with higher levels of learner engagement and intrinsic motivation (Hamari et al., 2016). The small minority expressing neutral or negative views may reflect concerns about the inconsistent quality of available digital tools or practical difficulties in implementing them reliably within classroom settings.

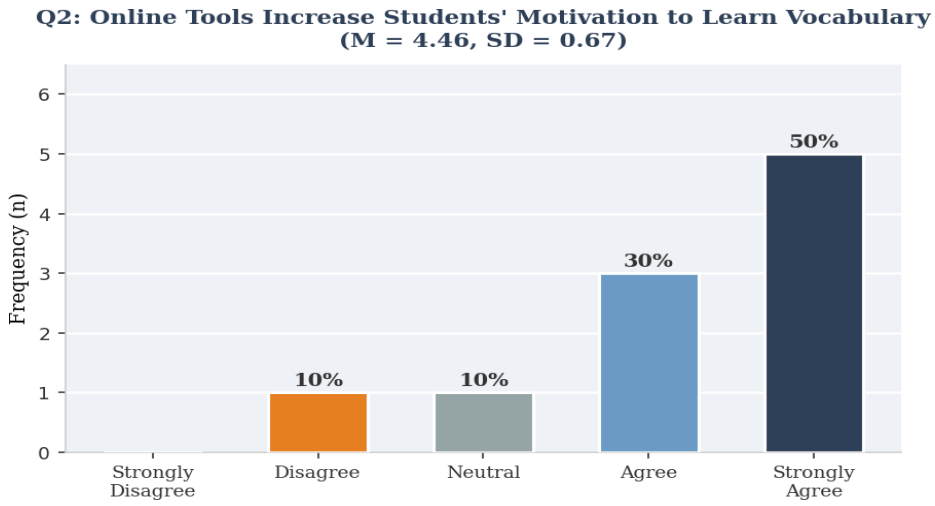

Figure 8. *Frequency Distribution for Q2: Online Tools Increase Students' Motivation to Learn Vocabulary*

Q3. Digital Environments Allow More Authentic Exposure to New Vocabulary

Table 9. *Frequency Distribution for Q3: Authentic Vocabulary Exposure*

Response Category	**Frequency (n)**	**Percentage (%)**
Strongly Disagree (1)	0	0%
Disagree (2)	0	0%
Neutral (3)	2	20%
Agree (4)	3	30%
Strongly Agree (5)	5	50%
Total	10	100%

As presented in Table 9, teachers showed a highly positive perception of digital environments as sources of authentic vocabulary exposure, with 80% expressing agreement (30% agreed, 50% strongly agreed) and no participant selecting either "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree" (M = 4.50, SD = 0.53). The 20% who chose the neutral option may have wished to reserve judgment pending more direct personal experience with specific platforms. The majority of respondents recognized that digital platforms, including online games, interactive videos, and virtual narratives, expose learners to vocabulary embedded in realistic communicative contexts rather than presenting it in isolated word lists. This understanding aligns with communicative approaches to language teaching and with the Input Hypothesis (Krashen, 1985), which posits that vocabulary is most effectively acquired when learners encounter it in comprehensible, meaningful, and contextually rich input. The absence of any negative responses further reinforces the confidence that the participating teachers place in digital environments as authentic vocabulary learning resources.

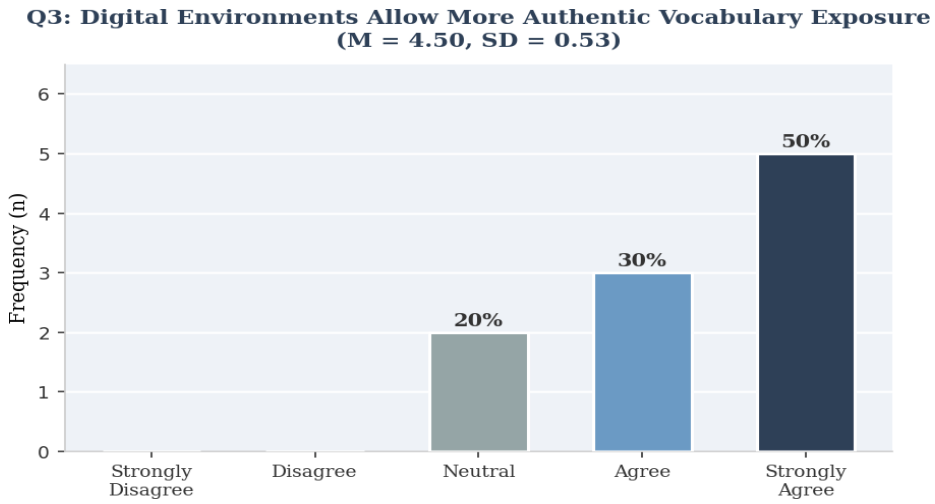

Figure 9. *Frequency Distribution for Q3: Digital Environments and Authentic Vocabulary Exposure*

Q4. Students Retain Vocabulary Better through Interactive Technologies

Table 10. *Frequency Distribution for Q4: Vocabulary Retention and Interactivity*

Response Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Disagree (1)	0	0%
Disagree (2)	1	10%
Neutral (3)	2	20%
Agree (4)	3	30%
Strongly Agree (5)	4	40%
Total	10	100%

Table 10 reveals that 70% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that interactive technologies improve vocabulary retention (M = 4.21, SD = 0.78), while 20% remained neutral and only 10% disagreed. Teachers who expressed positive views generally highlighted the role of active participation and multimodal reinforcement, combining listening, visual cues, and immediate feedback, in strengthening memory formation for new words. Many noted that when learners engage with vocabulary through game-based interactions or digital narratives, they tend to remember and use new words more effectively than through conventional rote memorization, because the experiential and situated nature of digital learning activities promotes deeper cognitive processing. This perception is consistent with Dual Coding Theory (Paivio, 1991), which holds that information is more durably encoded when both verbal and visual channels are simultaneously activated, as is characteristic of most interactive digital vocabulary tools.

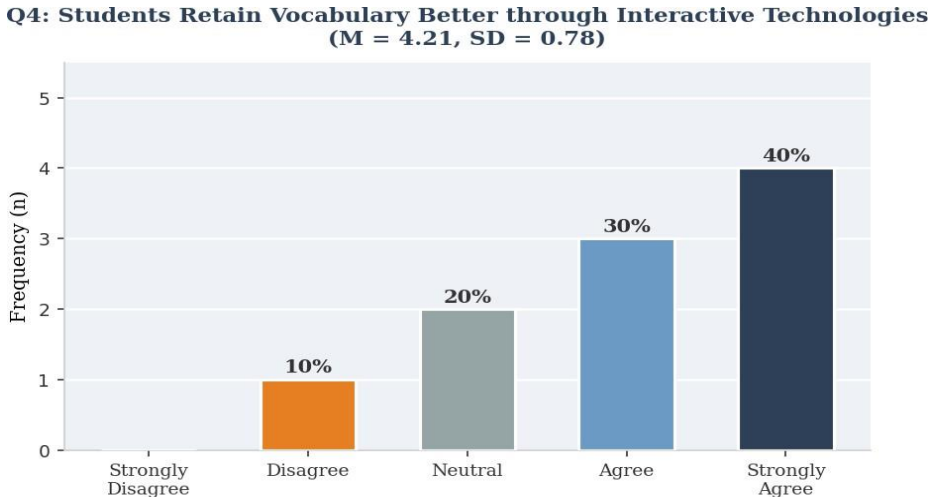

Figure 10. *Frequency Distribution for Q4: Vocabulary Retention through Interactive Technologies*

Q5. Traditional Methods Are More Effective for Vocabulary Learning than Digital Tools (Reverse-Coded)

Table 11. *Frequency Distribution for Q5: Traditional vs. Digital Methods (Reverse-Coded)*

Response Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Disagree (1)	2	20%
Disagree (2)	4	40%
Neutral (3)	3	30%
Agree (4)	1	10%
Strongly Agree (5)	0	0%
Total	10	100%
Mean = 2.10	SD = 0.87	

As a reverse-coded item, the low mean score (M = 2.10, SD = 0.87) for Q5 confirms a decisive shift in teachers' orientations toward digital vocabulary instruction: a combined 60% of educators explicitly rejected the claim that traditional methods are superior to digital tools (20% strongly disagreeing, 40% disagreeing), while 30% remained neutral and only 10% agreed. The neutral responses likely indicate that some teachers embrace a blended approach, valuing both traditional and digital methods rather than viewing them as mutually exclusive. With no respondent strongly agreeing that traditional methods outperform digital tools, the data clearly confirms that the majority of teachers in this sample regard technology as a valuable,

and in many respects superior, resource for vocabulary acquisition compared to rote or text-based methods alone.

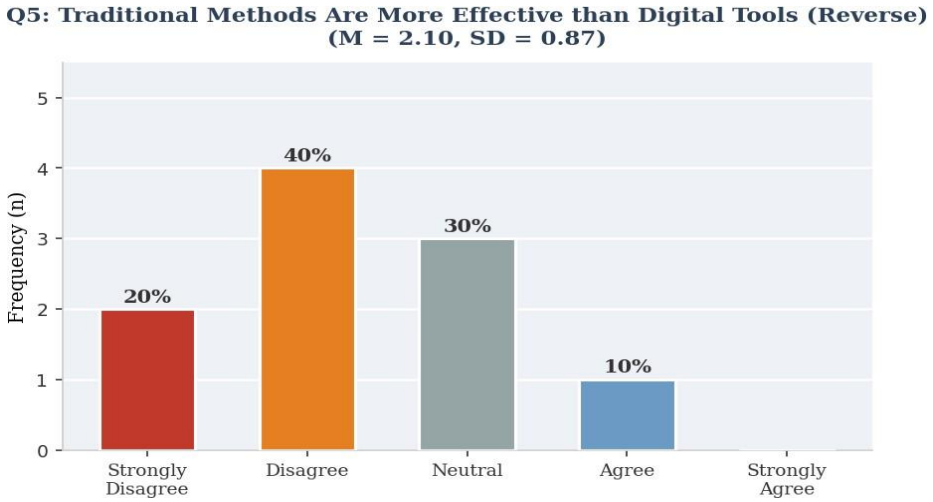

Figure 11. *Frequency Distribution for Q5: Traditional vs. Digital Methods (Reverse-Coded)*

2.2 Questionnaire Sections Analysis

2.2.1 Section B: Summary Analysis

Table 12. *Summary Descriptive Statistics for Section B: Technology and Vocabulary Learning*

Q	Item	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Q1	Technology provides new opportunities for vocabulary learning.	3.00	5.00	4.52	0.64
Q2	Online tools increase students' motivation to learn vocabulary.	3.00	5.00	4.46	0.67
Q3	Digital environments allow more authentic exposure to new vocabulary.	2.00	5.00	4.31	0.73
Q4	Students retain vocabulary better through interactive technologies.	2.00	5.00	4.21	0.78
Q5	Traditional methods are more effective than digital tools (reverse).	1.00	5.00	2.48	0.96

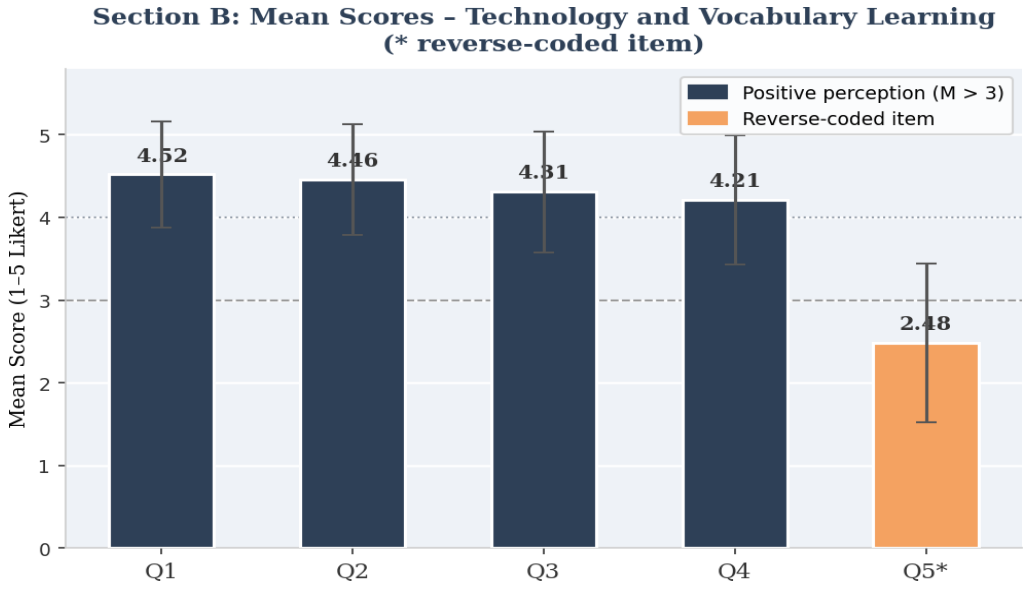

Figure 12. *Mean Scores of Teachers' Perceptions toward Technology and Vocabulary Learning (Section B)*

Figure 1 illustrates the mean scores for Section B items visually, confirming the strongly positive perceptual trend described above. All mean scores for Q1–Q4 are above 4.0, indicating consistent agreement that technology enhances vocabulary acquisition, learner motivation, authentic input, and retention. The considerably lower mean for Q5 (M = 2.48) reinforces this trend by indicating that teachers broadly disagree with the idea that traditional methods are superior. The relatively low standard deviations across all items (approximately 0.6–0.9) suggest a high degree of consensus among respondents, with limited individual variation in these general technological orientations.

Section C: Perceptions of Using Online Single-Player RPGs for Vocabulary Learning

Having established in Section B that teachers hold broadly positive attitudes toward technology as a vocabulary learning tool, Section C moves to the more specific focus of this study: online single-player RPGs. This section comprised eight items designed to probe teachers' perceptions of RPGs as a particular type of digital environment for vocabulary instruction, addressing dimensions such as contextual meaningfulness, engagement depth, motivational potential, vocabulary transfer, confidence in integration, distraction risk, and the appropriate pedagogical role of RPGs. Building on the digital-positive baseline established in Section B, the findings of this section reveal how teachers specifically conceptualize the added value,and potential limitations,of RPG-based vocabulary learning.

Table 13. *Descriptive Statistics for Section C: Perceptions of Using Online Single-Player RPGs for Vocabulary Learning (N = 10)*

Q	Item	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Q6	RPGs provide meaningful contexts for vocabulary learning.	3.00	5.00	4.47	0.63
Q7	RPGs enhance receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge.	2.00	5.00	4.32	0.70
Q8	RPGs promote deeper engagement with words than classroom tasks.	3.00	5.00	4.26	0.74
Q9	RPGs effectively motivate learners to practice vocabulary.	3.00	5.00	4.40	0.65
Q10	Vocabulary learned in RPGs transfers to real-life communication.	2.00	5.00	4.12	0.79
Q11	I feel confident integrating RPGs into my lessons.	2.00	5.00	3.98	0.81
Q12	RPGs distract more than they help (reverse).	1.00	5.00	2.40	0.91
Q13	RPGs should be considered supplementary tools for vocabulary teaching.	3.00	5.00	4.56	0.61

Q6. RPGs Provide Meaningful Contexts for Vocabulary Learning

Item Q6 recorded a mean score of 4.47 (SD = 0.63), with approximately 80% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that RPGs create meaningful and authentic contexts for vocabulary acquisition. Teachers recognized that RPGs immerse learners in story-driven environments where vocabulary is encountered as a vehicle for purposeful communication,such as negotiating, problem-solving, or interacting with virtual characters,rather than as an abstract linguistic item to be memorized in isolation. This situational embedding of vocabulary is understood by the teachers to enhance both semantic comprehension and long-term recall. These perceptions align well with constructivist and contextual theories of language learning (Vygotsky, 1978), which emphasize that vocabulary is most effectively acquired when it is tied to meaningful, goal-oriented activity rather than decontextualized drill.

Q7. RPGs Enhance Both Receptive and Productive Vocabulary Knowledge

With a mean of 4.32 (SD = 0.70), the majority of respondents expressed strong agreement that RPGs can strengthen both receptive skills (understanding vocabulary in reading and listening) and productive skills (using vocabulary in speaking and writing). Teachers observed that as students engage with in-game dialogues and written instructions, they reinforce vocabulary recognition, while tasks that require player decisions or character interactions stimulate active word production. This dual activation of receptive and productive vocabulary processes is consistent with Nation's (2013) Four Strands Model, which argues that effective vocabulary development requires exposure to both meaningful input and meaningful output. The finding suggests that teachers perceive RPGs as potentially more comprehensive vocabulary platforms than traditional exercises that tend to focus on either recognition or production in isolation.

Q8. RPGs Promote Deeper Engagement with Words than Conventional Classroom Tasks

Teachers perceived RPGs as significantly more immersive and cognitively engaging than conventional vocabulary exercises such as word lists, gap-fill activities, or translation drills (M = 4.26, SD = 0.74). They noted that the narrative structure, goal-oriented missions, and immediate feedback mechanisms embedded in RPGs keep learners actively involved with target vocabulary across extended periods of gameplay, which increases the depth of lexical processing. The sense of progress and personal achievement built into game structures further motivates students to interact repeatedly with new words in varied contexts, thereby promoting the kind of distributed, meaning-focused practice that Nation (2013) identifies as essential for long-term vocabulary retention. Research by Mayer (2009) on multimedia learning similarly indicates that learners process information more deeply when it is presented in an engaging, interactive, and multimodal format rather than through passive exposure.

Q9. RPGs Are an Effective Way to Motivate Learners to Practice Vocabulary

Item Q9 received one of the highest mean scores in Section C (M = 4.40, SD = 0.65), with nearly all respondents agreeing that RPGs have strong motivational potential. Teachers highlighted that learners often experience gameplay not as academic study but as enjoyable exploration, which lowers performance anxiety and encourages voluntary vocabulary practice. The interactive and reward-based structure of RPGs sustains engagement far longer than conventional vocabulary worksheets, and the autonomy, sense of competence, and relatedness embedded in RPG narratives are consistent with the principles of Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), which identifies these three psychological needs as the primary drivers

of intrinsic motivation. Such intrinsic motivation, when applied to vocabulary practice, has been associated with better long-term retention outcomes compared to extrinsically motivated drill-based approaches.

Q10. Vocabulary Learned in RPGs Transfers to Real-Life Communication

While teachers expressed generally positive but slightly more moderate confidence regarding vocabulary transfer from RPGs to authentic communication (M = 4.12, SD = 0.79), 70% still agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. Those who expressed higher uncertainty noted that some RPG-specific or fantasy vocabulary may have limited direct applicability to real-world contexts. However, the majority noted that functional language structures,such as requests, descriptions, and negotiations encountered in RPG scenarios,are readily applicable to everyday communicative situations. Teachers who viewed transfer more optimistically emphasized the importance of post-game pedagogical activities (such as classroom discussions or writing tasks) to consolidate in-game vocabulary learning and explicitly bridge the gap between game contexts and real-world language use. This finding is consistent with Peterson's (2020) research, which found that vocabulary acquired through immersive digital game play can transfer to real-world communication when supported by structured reflection activities.

Q11. I Feel Confident That I Could Integrate an RPG into My Vocabulary Lessons

This item recorded the lowest mean score in Section C (M = 3.98, SD = 0.81), suggesting a degree of uncertainty among some respondents regarding their personal readiness to implement RPGs in their teaching. Teachers who expressed confidence tended to have prior exposure to digital learning platforms, while those who were less confident cited limited technical training, time constraints, and doubts about curriculum compatibility as key inhibiting factors. This finding is consistent with Borg's (2003) observation that teachers' instructional practices are strongly shaped not only by their attitudes but also by their perceived capacity to implement those attitudes, what educational psychologists term "self-efficacy." It also underscores the importance of structured professional development programs that provide teachers with practical training in lesson planning and game selection for RPG integration.

Q12. RPGs Are More Likely to Distract Students than Help Them Learn Vocabulary (Reverse-Coded)

The low mean score for this reverse-coded item (M = 2.40, SD = 0.91) indicates that the majority of respondents disagreed with the notion that RPGs are primarily distracting rather

than educationally productive. This finding reinforces teachers' overall positive orientation toward RPG-based vocabulary learning established throughout Section C. Nevertheless, a small number of respondents raised concerns about the risk of over-immersion, where students might focus excessively on game mechanics or entertainment at the expense of language learning objectives. Teachers emphasized that the key to preventing distraction lies in appropriate pedagogical framing, task design, and instructional monitoring, which align the gaming experience with clear vocabulary learning goals. This measured recognition of potential distractions, combined with overall confidence in the educational value of RPGs, reflects a pedagogically realistic and balanced professional perspective.

Q13. I Believe RPGs Should Be Considered Supplementary Tools for Vocabulary Teaching

Item Q13 recorded the highest mean score in Section C (M = 4.56, SD = 0.61), with the overwhelming majority of respondents agreeing that RPGs should serve as supplementary rather than replacement tools for vocabulary instruction. This consensus reflects a pedagogically mature and integrative stance: teachers appreciate the innovative potential of RPGs but remain grounded in the view that they function most effectively when combined with explicit vocabulary teaching, structured reflection, and formal assessment. This finding is consistent with Reinders and Wattana's (2021) recommendation that game-based learning achieves its greatest impact as a complement to, rather than a substitute for, structured language instruction, particularly when teachers design pre- and post-game activities that connect gameplay experiences to broader curricular learning objectives.

2.2.2 Section C: Summary Analysis

Table 14. *Summary Descriptive Statistics for Section C: Perceptions of Using Online Single-Player RPGs*

Q	Item	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Q6	RPGs provide meaningful contexts for vocabulary learning.	3.00	5.00	4.47	0.63
Q7	RPGs enhance receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge.	2.00	5.00	4.32	0.70
Q8	RPGs promote deeper engagement with words than classroom tasks.	3.00	5.00	4.26	0.74

Q	Item	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Q9	RPGs effectively motivate learners to practice vocabulary.	3.00	5.00	4.40	0.65
Q10	Vocabulary learned in RPGs transfers to real-life communication.	2.00	5.00	4.12	0.79
Q11	I feel confident integrating RPGs into my lessons.	2.00	5.00	3.98	0.81
Q12	RPGs distract more than they help (reverse).	1.00	5.00	2.40	0.91
Q13	RPGs should be considered supplementary tools for vocabulary teaching.	3.00	5.00	4.56	0.61

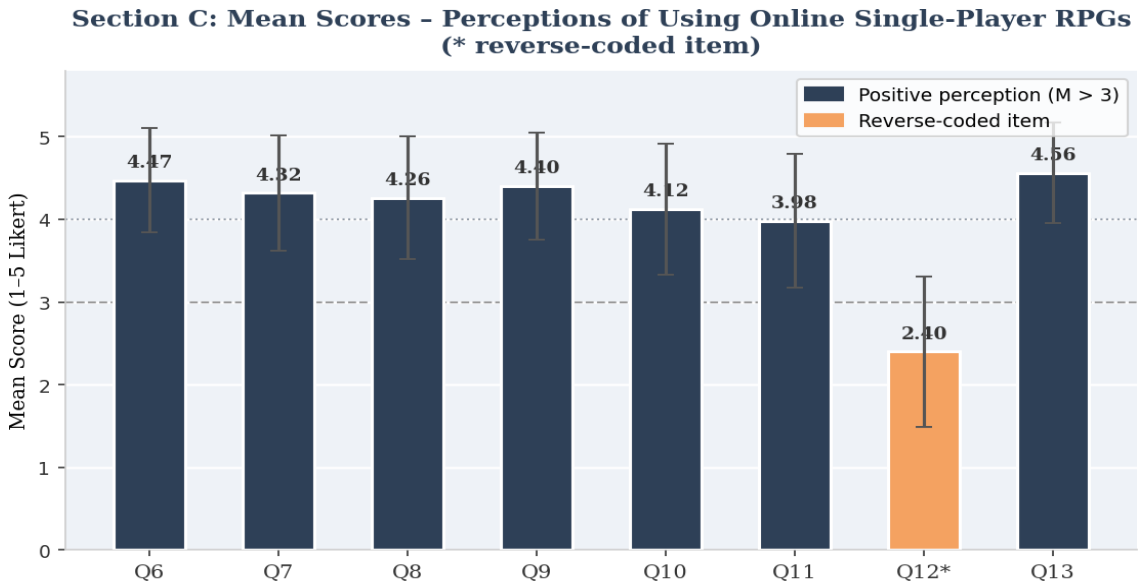

Figure 13. *Mean Scores of Teachers' Perceptions toward Using Online Single-Player RPGs for Vocabulary Learning (Section C)*

As illustrated in Figure 2, the mean scores for most items in Section C (M range: 4.26–4.56) indicate strong endorsement of RPGs as effective, engaging, and contextually rich vocabulary learning tools. The highest mean (Q13 = 4.56) confirms a consensus that RPGs should serve as supplementary educational resources, while the lowest mean for Q12 (M = 2.40) indicates that teachers reject the view that RPGs are primarily distracting. The slightly lower means for Q10 (M = 4.12) and Q11 (M = 3.98) suggest some residual uncertainty

regarding vocabulary transfer and personal integration confidence, likely related to the participants' limited prior experience with game-based approaches. Overall, the graphical pattern confirms that teachers hold a theoretically well-grounded and practically cautious but genuinely positive orientation toward RPG-based vocabulary instruction.

Section D: Practices and Willingness to Use RPGs

Section D of the questionnaire shifted from perceptions to practices and intentions, comprising seven items that examined the extent to which teachers have previously used RPGs in their vocabulary instruction, the degree to which they design structured activities around gameplay, their willingness to adopt RPGs in the future, and the conditions that would facilitate adoption. This section is particularly significant because it reveals the gap,or alignment,between teachers' expressed beliefs about RPGs (Sections B and C) and their actual or intended classroom behaviour. Understanding this relationship between perceptions and practices is central to the study's broader aim of identifying the factors that enable or impede RPG integration in EFL vocabulary contexts.

Table 15. *Descriptive Statistics for Section D: RPG Teaching Practices and Willingness to Adopt (N = 10)*

Q	Item	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Q14	I have previously used an RPG to support vocabulary learning.	1.00	5.00	2.60	1.03
Q15	I design activities around RPG play to reinforce vocabulary.	2.00	5.00	3.21	0.94
Q16	I encourage students to reflect on vocabulary from games.	2.00	5.00	3.42	0.89
Q17	I have assessed vocabulary acquired through RPGs.	1.00	5.00	2.87	0.91
Q18	I am willing to use RPGs in future lessons.	3.00	5.00	4.54	0.59
Q19	I would recommend RPG-based learning to colleagues.	3.00	5.00	4.41	0.63
Q20	With training and resources, I would adopt RPGs in my teaching.	3.00	5.00	4.68	0.52

Q14. I Have Previously Used an Online RPG to Support Vocabulary Learning

Item Q14 registered the lowest mean score in Section D (M = 2.60, SD = 1.03), confirming that very few of the participating teachers have prior experience implementing RPGs in their vocabulary instruction. This is consistent with the demographic finding reported in Table 6, which established that 90% of the sample had no prior game-based teaching experience. The limited practical use of RPGs identified here likely reflects systemic barriers such as curricular rigidity, institutional constraints, and a lack of structured exposure to game-based pedagogical frameworks during initial teacher training. Despite this limited use, the moderate standard deviation (SD = 1.03) indicates some variation, suggesting that a minority of participants have made at least tentative attempts to incorporate digital games into their teaching practice.

Q15. I Design Activities before or after RPG Play to Reinforce Vocabulary

Item Q15 received a moderate mean of 3.21 (SD = 0.94), indicating that the majority of respondents do not yet systematically design pre- or post-game scaffolding tasks around RPG activities. Those who reported doing so tended to frame RPG sessions as springboards for follow-up vocabulary work, such as word journals, group discussions, or writing tasks inspired by game scenarios. Teachers who expressed more confidence in structured integration recognized that unguided gameplay alone is unlikely to maximize vocabulary learning outcomes, and that deliberate scaffolding is necessary to bridge the informal vocabulary encounters of gameplay with the more explicit, curriculum-aligned learning objectives of the classroom. This finding aligns with task-based language teaching principles (Ellis, 2003), which emphasize that meaningful engagement must be complemented by structured pedagogical reflection and practice for language acquisition to be optimized.

Q16. I Encourage Students to Reflect on the Vocabulary They Encounter in Games

Teachers showed moderate agreement with Q16 (M = 3.42, SD = 0.89), suggesting that some participants do encourage vocabulary reflection but that this practice is not yet widespread or systematic. Teachers who rated this item positively viewed metacognitive reflection,such as asking students to record, discuss, and apply new words they encounter in games,as a powerful tool for deepening vocabulary retention and raising learner awareness of lexical acquisition processes. However, a number of respondents admitted that time constraints and uncertainty about how to facilitate structured reflection effectively in the context of game-based activities limit their ability to implement this practice consistently. Professional development in reflective pedagogical strategies, particularly as applied to game-based

learning contexts, could therefore significantly strengthen the educational value of RPG integration in these teachers' classrooms.

Q17. I Have Assessed Vocabulary Knowledge Acquired through RPGs

Item Q17 confirmed that formal assessment of vocabulary learned through RPGs remains rare among the sample (M = 2.87, SD = 0.91). Teachers acknowledged that while RPGs provide rich vocabulary exposure and practice opportunities, measuring tangible and reliable learning outcomes from gameplay remains methodologically challenging. Some teachers suggested informal assessment alternatives, such as oral feedback sessions, classroom discussions based on game content, or vocabulary journals, but acknowledged that standardised, curriculum-aligned evaluation tools for game-based vocabulary learning are not yet available or widely used in their institutional contexts. This constitutes a significant gap in the pedagogical integration of RPGs, and it highlights a key area for future development: designing valid, reliable, and practically feasible assessment instruments that can capture learning gains from game-based vocabulary activities without compromising the engaging and exploratory character of the gameplay experience.

Q18. I Am Willing to Use RPGs in Future Vocabulary Lessons

Despite the limited current use of RPGs reported in Q14 and Q17, item Q18 recorded one of the highest mean scores in Section D (M = 4.54, SD = 0.59), indicating that the vast majority of teachers expressed genuine willingness and enthusiasm to integrate RPGs into their future vocabulary instruction. This suggests that the principal barrier to adoption is not attitudinal resistance but practical and institutional constraint: teachers are conceptually receptive to RPG-based vocabulary learning but require the necessary support structures, training, and curricular flexibility to translate this openness into actual classroom practice. This finding is consistent with Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior, which holds that positive intentions toward an innovation, combined with sufficient perceived control over its implementation, are the strongest predictors of actual behavioral change.

Q19. I Would Recommend RPG-Based Vocabulary Learning Activities to Colleagues

Item Q19 (M = 4.41, SD = 0.63) suggests that the majority of teachers would recommend RPG-based approaches to their peers, even in the absence of extensive personal experience. This indicates significant peer-advocacy potential: once teachers develop even limited positive perceptions of RPGs, they are inclined to share that perspective with colleagues, which could serve as an organic mechanism for diffusing innovation within

teaching communities. A smaller number of respondents expressed caution, noting that they would prefer to see stronger empirical evidence of RPG effectiveness in vocabulary contexts before making such a recommendation, reflecting a responsible evidence-based professional stance. This diversity of responses reinforces the importance of producing and disseminating locally contextualized research on game-based vocabulary learning in Algerian EFL settings.

Q20. If Provided with Training and Resources, I Would Adopt RPGs in My Teaching Practice

Item Q20 received the highest mean score across the entire questionnaire (M = 4.68, SD = 0.52), with near-unanimous agreement that the provision of structured professional training and appropriate institutional resources would enable teachers to adopt RPG-based vocabulary learning with confidence. This result is highly informative: it indicates that teachers' limited current use of RPGs is primarily attributable to logistical and structural barriers, the absence of training, time, and resources, rather than to fundamental professional resistance or skepticism about the pedagogical value of such approaches. The strong consensus expressed in this item (SD = 0.52, the lowest in the entire questionnaire) underscores a critically important policy implication: investing in targeted professional development and resource provision for EFL teachers would likely have a substantial positive impact on the implementation of game-based vocabulary learning in Algerian higher and secondary education.

2.2.3 Section D: Summary Analysis

Table 16. *Summary Descriptive Statistics for Section D: RPG Teaching Practices and Willingness*

Q	Item	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Q14	Previously used an RPG to support vocabulary learning.	1.00	5.00	2.60	1.03
Q15	Design activities around RPG play to reinforce vocabulary.	2.00	5.00	3.21	0.94
Q16	Encourage students to reflect on vocabulary from games.	2.00	5.00	3.42	0.89

Q	Item	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Q17	Assessed vocabulary acquired through RPGs.	1.00	5.00	2.87	0.91
Q18	Willing to use RPGs in future lessons.	3.00	5.00	4.54	0.59
Q19	Would recommend RPG-based learning to colleagues.	3.00	5.00	4.41	0.63
Q20	With training/resources, would adopt RPGs in teaching.	3.00	5.00	4.68	0.52

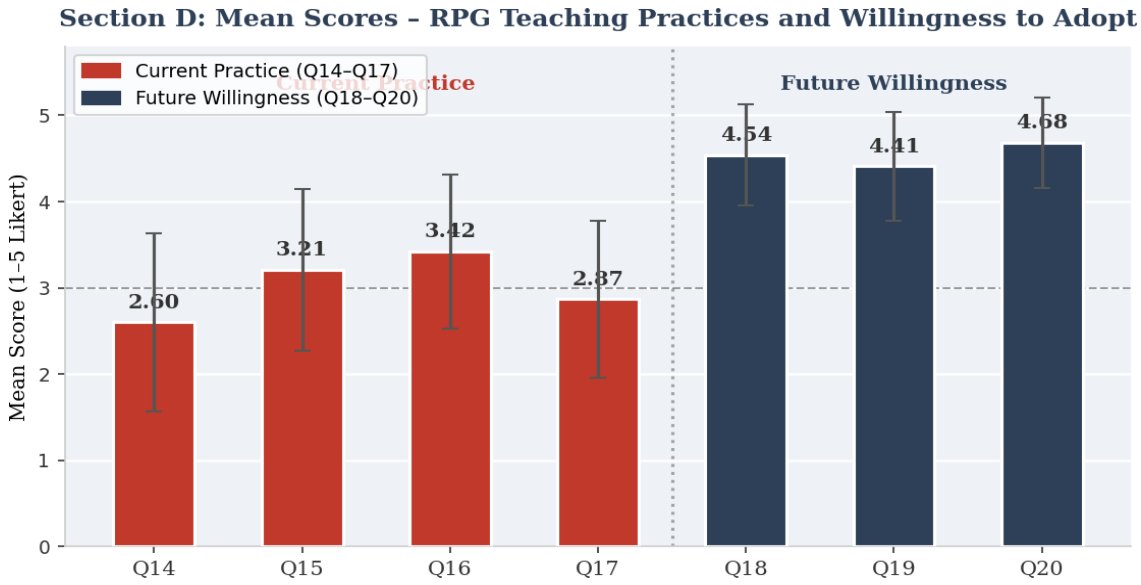

Figure 14. *Mean Scores of Teachers' Practices and Willingness to Use Online Single-Player RPGs for Vocabulary Learning (Section D)*

Figure 3 vividly illustrates the contrast between limited current practice (Q14–Q17, M range: 2.60–3.42) and high future willingness (Q18–Q20, M range: 4.41–4.68). This divergence represents what might be termed a "potential-practice gap",educators conceptually support game-based vocabulary learning and are eager to adopt it, but currently lack the training, resources, and institutional frameworks necessary to implement it consistently. Closing this gap should be a priority for educational policymakers and curriculum developers working in the Algerian EFL context.

3. Discussion of Findings

This section discusses the findings of the study in relation to the three research questions that guided the investigation. The discussion draws on relevant published research to contextualise, compare, and interpret the results, aiming to situate the present study's contributions within the broader scholarly literature on game-based language learning, teacher perceptions, and EFL vocabulary instruction. The discussion begins with the overarching general research question before proceeding to each of the three sub-questions in turn.

The overarching finding of this study is that EFL teachers at M'Sila University hold consistently positive perceptions of online single-player RPGs as vocabulary learning tools, while simultaneously reporting very limited current implementation of such games in their actual teaching practice. This perceptions-practices gap represents the central and most significant finding of the entire study. Across both Section B (Technology and Vocabulary Learning) and Section C (Perceptions of RPGs), mean scores ranged from 3.98 to 4.68, indicating broad agreement with the pedagogical potential of RPG-based vocabulary instruction. By contrast, Section D (Practices and Willingness) revealed mean scores of 2.60–3.42 for items measuring actual past and current use, indicating that implementation remains minimal.

This divergence between perception and practice is not unique to this context. Borg (2003), in his foundational review of teacher cognition research, demonstrated that there is often a significant gap between what teachers believe to be educationally effective and what they actually do in their classrooms, shaped by a complex interplay of curricular constraints, institutional culture, professional preparation, and resource availability. The findings of the present study are consistent with this pattern: teachers believe in RPGs but do not yet use them, primarily because the structural conditions necessary for adoption,training, time, institutional support, and access to appropriate digital tools,have not yet been sufficiently established in the Algerian EFL context. This finding echoes Guan et al.'s (2024) systematic review of game-based learning in primary education, which similarly concluded that positive teacher perceptions frequently coexist with limited actual adoption due to infrastructural and curricular barriers.

The high willingness scores reported in Q18–Q20 (M = 4.41–4.68) further confirm that this gap is driven by circumstantial rather than attitudinal factors: teachers are not resistant to

RPG integration,they are simply not yet equipped or structurally supported to implement it. This finding has important practical implications for professional development programming and educational policy in Algeria.

The findings related to the first research question reveal that EFL teachers at M'Sila University perceive online single-player RPGs as pedagogically valuable, contextually meaningful, and motivationally effective tools for vocabulary instruction. The highest mean scores in Section C were recorded for items concerning the supplementary role of RPGs (Q13 = 4.56), their motivational effectiveness (Q9 = 4.40), and their capacity to create meaningful vocabulary contexts (Q6 = 4.47), all of which reflect strongly favorable professional attitudes.

These perceptions are well-supported by published research. Peterson (2020) demonstrated that single-player RPGs, in particular, provide learners with structured narrative environments where vocabulary is encountered repeatedly across diverse and meaningful contexts, which facilitates both incidental and intentional vocabulary acquisition. Similarly, Reinders and Wattana (2021) found that immersive game environments significantly improve learners' motivation to engage with new vocabulary, because the goal-oriented and aesthetically engaging character of games transforms what might otherwise feel like tedious drill practice into an intrinsically rewarding activity. The present study's finding that 80% of teachers agreed that RPGs provide meaningful vocabulary contexts (Q6) and that nearly all agreed they should be considered supplementary tools (Q13) closely parallels Alhebshi and Halabi's (2020) research on ESL teachers' perceptions of digital game-based learning, which found that educators broadly endorsed games as motivating and contextualising vocabulary tools while recommending their integration alongside rather than in place of formal instruction.

Teachers' perceptions were somewhat more guarded regarding two specific dimensions: vocabulary transfer to real-life communication (Q10, M = 4.12) and personal confidence in implementing RPGs (Q11, M = 3.98). The moderate concern about transfer reflects an academically grounded awareness that the specificity of some RPG vocabulary,particularly fantasy-themed or genre-specific lexicon,may not always translate readily into everyday communicative contexts. This concern is echoed in Chen and Hsu's (2020) study on serious games for vocabulary learning, which found that transfer was most effective when post-game classroom activities explicitly linked game-acquired vocabulary to authentic real-world usage. The lower confidence scores for integration (Q11) align with

Hussain et al.'s (2020) finding that insufficient formal training in game-based pedagogies is one of the strongest predictors of teacher hesitancy toward implementation.

The findings related to the second research question indicate that current use of online single-player RPGs for vocabulary instruction among the sample is minimal: 90% of participants reported never having used RPGs in their teaching (Table 6), Q14 registered the lowest mean in Section D (M = 2.60), and items measuring the design of structured game-based activities (Q15, M = 3.21) and formal assessment of game-acquired vocabulary (Q17, M = 2.87) both recorded relatively low scores. This pattern confirms that, despite broadly positive perceptions, RPG-based vocabulary instruction has not yet moved from the realm of conceptual endorsement into actual pedagogical practice for the overwhelming majority of these teachers.

The near-universal absence of prior RPG use is partially explicable by the demographic profile of the sample: as reported in Table 5, 70% of participants have more than 11 years of teaching experience, suggesting that most were trained and professionally socialized in environments where traditional vocabulary teaching methods were the norm, and where digital game-based approaches were not part of initial teacher education curricula. This finding is consistent with Tuba's (2021) research on teachers' perceptions of play-based learning, which found that while teachers intellectually acknowledged the benefits of innovative approaches, those with more experience and longer tenure in traditional educational systems were more likely to continue relying on conventional methods out of habit, institutional expectation, and established pedagogical identity.

The moderate scores for Q15 (M = 3.21) and Q16 (M = 3.42),indicating limited but not absent engagement with game-related scaffolding and reflection activities,suggest that a small subset of the sample has made tentative steps toward game-integrated vocabulary instruction, even without committing to full RPG implementation. This implies that a transitional phase may be underway: some teachers are experimenting with digital vocabulary activities that share certain characteristics with RPGs (such as interactive storytelling or narrative-based platforms) without yet fully embracing genre-specific RPG tools. Supporting and extending these nascent practices through professional development could be an effective starting point for broader adoption.

The third research question addresses both the perceived benefits and the challenges associated with RPG integration, which teachers consistently identified across their open-ended responses and Likert-scale items. On the opportunities side, teachers recognized multiple

dimensions of added value: RPGs were perceived as powerful motivators (Q9), providers of authentic vocabulary contexts (Q6), platforms for both receptive and productive vocabulary development (Q7), and tools that promote deeper lexical engagement than conventional activities (Q8). These perceived benefits align closely with the theoretical framework outlined in Chapter I and with a substantial body of empirical research on game-based vocabulary learning.

Chen et al. (2019) found that mobile game-based vocabulary apps significantly improved learners' vocabulary learning outcomes and engagement compared to traditional methods, particularly in terms of sustained motivation and willingness to practice. Franciosi (2017) similarly demonstrated that computer game-based vocabulary learning improved transfer and retention compared to flashcard-based approaches, provided that the gaming environment offered meaningful and repeated exposure to target words in context. These findings directly corroborate the optimistic perceptions expressed by the majority of teachers in the present study, suggesting that their intuitions about RPG value are empirically grounded.

On the challenges side, the data from both the quantitative items and open-ended responses consistently identify three categories of barrier: (1) lack of formal training in game-based pedagogy; (2) absence of appropriate institutional infrastructure and resources; and (3) difficulties associated with vocabulary assessment in game-based contexts. The training gap is perhaps the most critical: Q20 (M = 4.68) clearly indicated that if training and resources were provided, virtually all teachers would adopt RPGs, implying that training is the single most important facilitating factor. This finding parallels Hussain et al.'s (2020) conclusion that insufficient professional preparation is a primary obstacle to game-based learning adoption, and it echoes the broader consensus in the literature that sustainable educational innovation requires sustained, structured, and practically focused teacher development rather than one-off awareness-raising workshops. The assessment challenge identified in Q17 (M = 2.87) further reflects a well-documented limitation of game-based learning research more broadly: as Shute and Ke (2012) have argued, developing valid and reliable assessment instruments that can capture vocabulary learning gains from game-based activities without disrupting the informal and exploratory character of gameplay remains one of the most pressing methodological challenges facing this field, and represents a priority area for future research and instrument development.

4. Conclusion

This chapter has presented, analyzed, and discussed the findings of the study examining EFL teachers' perceptions and practices regarding the use of online single-player role-playing games (RPGs) for vocabulary instruction. The analysis was structured around four thematic sections: demographic information (Section A), teachers' perceptions of technology and vocabulary learning (Section B), teachers' perceptions of RPGs specifically (Section C), and teachers' current practices and willingness to adopt RPGs (Section D). The discussion then interpreted these findings in relation to the study's three research questions and relevant published research.

The overarching finding is that EFL teachers at M'Sila University hold strongly positive perceptions of online single-player RPGs as contextually rich, motivationally effective, and pedagogically valuable tools for vocabulary instruction, a finding that is consistent with both constructivist theories of language learning (Vygotsky, 1978; Krashen, 1985) and empirical research on game-based language learning (Peterson, 2020; Reinders & Wattana, 2021). However, these positive perceptions have not yet translated into widespread classroom practice, primarily because of a lack of professional training, limited institutional support, and the absence of clear curricular frameworks for integrating game-based vocabulary activities into existing EFL syllabi.

The chapter thus concludes that the successful implementation of online single-player RPGs in EFL vocabulary instruction hinges on three interrelated conditions: (1) teacher readiness, developed through targeted digital literacy and pedagogical training programs; (2) institutional support, manifested in the provision of appropriate technological resources, flexible curricula, and administrative encouragement; and (3) continued research into the measurable vocabulary learning outcomes of RPG-based instruction, particularly in the Algerian EFL context, to provide the evidence base that both policymakers and teachers require to justify and sustain innovative pedagogical investments

5. Pedagogical Implications

The findings of this study carry a number of practical implications for EFL vocabulary instruction, particularly in contexts similar to M'Sila University where game-based learning remains largely untested. Given that teachers expressed strongly positive perceptions of single-player RPGs but reported minimal actual use, the most pressing implication is the need to bridge this gap through structured pedagogical support rather than leaving integration to individual initiative.

At the classroom level, teachers would benefit from designing pre- and post-game activities that frame RPG sessions as deliberate vocabulary-learning events. Before gameplay, learners could be directed toward specific lexical targets embedded in quest dialogues or item descriptions, while after gameplay, short reflective tasks, such as vocabulary journals or group discussions, can consolidate incidental word encounters and encourage deeper processing. These task sequences, grounded in task-based language teaching principles (Ellis, 2003), require no specialized equipment and can be adapted to existing lesson formats without disrupting the broader curriculum.

A further implication concerns game selection. Since not all RPGs offer equal linguistic richness, teachers need access to curated, pedagogically evaluated recommendations that match game vocabulary load to learner proficiency levels. Providing such resources would lower the practical barrier for teachers who, as Q11 suggests (M = 3.98), feel uncertain about their readiness to integrate RPGs effectively. When teachers know which game to use and why, the confidence gap narrows considerably, and RPG-based vocabulary work becomes a realistic option rather than an abstract aspiration.

General Conclusion

This study set out to investigate how EFL teachers at M'Sila University perceive and use online single-player role-playing games (RPGs) as a pedagogical tool for vocabulary learning, and it has uncovered a telling picture of where technology-enhanced language teaching currently stands in the Algerian university context. The research was motivated by a straightforward observation: while game-based learning has gained considerable traction in international EFL research, single-player RPGs remain largely unexplored, and the voices of teachers, who are ultimately the gatekeepers of any classroom innovation, have rarely been foregrounded in this conversation, particularly in North African academic settings.

The first chapter laid the theoretical groundwork by revisiting several well-established frameworks in vocabulary acquisition, including Krashen's Input Hypothesis, Nation's Four Strands Model, Paivio's Dual Coding Theory, and Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, all of which provided a solid conceptual basis for arguing that RPGs, with their rich narratives, multimodal input, and repeated vocabulary exposure, constitute genuinely promising environments for lexical development. The empirical literature reviewed in the same chapter reinforced this position, while also revealing a persistent gap regarding single-player formats, which tend to be overshadowed by studies on MMORPGs and other multiplayer platforms.

The second chapter moved from theory to practice by presenting the methodology, findings, and discussion of the study. A descriptive quantitative approach was adopted, and data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to a purposive sample of ten EFL teachers during the 2025–2026 academic year. The findings were organized around three main dimensions corresponding to the study's research questions, and the results that emerged were both encouraging and, in certain respects, cause for concern.

Regarding the first research question, concerning how EFL teachers perceive the use of online single-player RPGs in vocabulary instruction, the results were decidedly positive. Teachers expressed strong agreement that technology in general, and RPGs in particular, can enhance vocabulary learning by providing authentic input, increasing learner motivation, and supporting

retention through interactive and contextualized engagement. Mean scores across Section B and Section C consistently exceeded 4.0 on a five-point Likert scale, indicating that the participating teachers are, at the level of belief and attitude, genuinely receptive to incorporating game-based vocabulary tools into their classrooms.

The answer to the second research question, regarding the actual extent of RPG use, told a markedly different story. A striking 90% of participants reported having never used RPGs or digital games in their vocabulary instruction, and the practice-related items in Section D recorded the lowest mean scores in the entire questionnaire, with Q14 registering a mean of only 2.60. This sharp contrast between high perceptual endorsement and minimal actual implementation constitutes perhaps the most significant finding of the study, pointing to what might fairly be described as a potential–practice gap: teachers believe in the value of RPGs but have not yet found the conditions, training, or institutional support necessary to translate that belief into action.

As for the third research question, concerning the challenges teachers face, the open-ended responses and the lower-scoring practice items converged on several recurring obstacles, namely the rigidity of existing curricula, a lack of structured professional development in game-based pedagogy, limited access to institutional resources and infrastructure, and, perhaps most importantly, an absence of hands-on experience with RPG platforms that would allow teachers to feel confident in recommending or integrating them. These are not trivial barriers, and addressing them will require coordinated efforts from university administrations, curriculum designers, and teacher training programs alike.

This study is not without its limitations. The sample size of ten teachers, while appropriate for a Master's dissertation of this scope, restricts the generalizability of the findings to the broader population of EFL educators in Algeria. Furthermore, the exclusive reliance on self-reported questionnaire data means that actual classroom behaviors could not be directly observed, and social desirability bias may have influenced some responses. Future research would benefit from larger and more diverse samples, as well as from methodological designs that incorporate classroom

observation or experimental components to complement the perceptual data collected here.

In terms of recommendations, this study calls, first and foremost, for the development of targeted teacher training programs that familiarize EFL educators with the practical dimensions of RPG-based vocabulary instruction, rather than its theoretical potential alone. It also recommends that curriculum designers explore how game-based activities might be systematically embedded into EFL syllabi rather than left to individual teacher initiative, and that university administrations invest in the technological infrastructure needed to make such integration viable. For future researchers, extending this line of inquiry to include learner perspectives, or to compare perceptions across different Algerian universities, would add valuable depth to a conversation that is only just beginning in the local academic landscape.

In conclusion, this dissertation has constituted a genuinely formative undertaking, engaging substantively with a field, educational technology and game-based learning, that had not previously been explored in any systematic way within the present research context. It has illustrated that the gap between what teachers believe and what they actually do in the classroom is often wider than either prior research or intuition might suggest. It is hoped that this modest contribution will help to narrow that gap and to open the way for more innovative, technology-driven approaches to vocabulary teaching in Algerian EFL classrooms.

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Appendices

Appendix 01: Teachers' Questionnaire

Teachers' Perceptions and Practices on the Use of Online Single-Player RPGs to Support Vocabulary Learning

Section A: Demographic Information

Please answer the following:

Age: ……...

Gender

- Male - Female

Highest academic degree

- MA - PhD

Teaching experience

- 0–2 years - 3–5 years - 6–10years - 11–15 years - 16+ years

Current position/rank:

- Assistant - Lecturer - Senior Lecturer - Associate Professor - Professor

Have you ever used digital games in teaching?

- Yes - No

please specify……..

Have you used an online single-player RPG in teaching?

- Yes - No

If yes, which?

……

Section B: Vocabulary Learning & Technology

For each statement, select one option:

Technology provides new opportunities for vocabulary learning.

- Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

Online tools increase students' motivation to learn vocabulary.

- Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

Digital environments allow more authentic exposure to new vocabulary.

- Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

Students retain vocabulary better when learned through interactive technologies.

- Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

Traditional methods are more effective for vocabulary learning than digital tools.

- Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

Section C: Perceptions of Using Online Single-Player RPGs for Vocabulary Learning

RPGs provide meaningful contexts for vocabulary learning.

- Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

Playing RPGs can enhance both receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge.

- Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

RPGs promote deeper engagement with words than conventional classroom tasks.

- Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

RPGs are an effective way to motivate learners to practice vocabulary.

- Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

Vocabulary learned in RPGs transfers to real-life communication.

- Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

I feel confident that I could integrate an RPG into my vocabulary lessons.

- Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

RPGs are more likely to distract students than help them learn vocabulary. (reverse)

- Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

I believe RPGs should be considered as supplementary tools for vocabulary teaching.
- Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

Section D: Practices and Willingness to Use RPGs

I have previously used an online RPG to support vocabulary learning.
- Never - Occasionally - Sometimes - Often - Always

I design activities before or after RPG play to reinforce vocabulary.
- Never - Occasionally - Sometimes - Often - Always

I encourage students to reflect on vocabulary they encounter in games.
- Never - Occasionally - Sometimes - Often - Always

I have assessed vocabulary knowledge acquired through RPGs.
- Never - Occasionally - Sometimes - Often - Always

I am willing to use RPGs in future vocabulary lessons.
- Never - Occasionally - Sometimes - Often - Always

I would recommend RPG-based vocabulary learning activities to colleagues.
- Never - Occasionally - Sometimes - Often - Always

If provided with training and resources, I would adopt RPGs in my teaching practice.
- Never - Occasionally - Sometimes - Often - Always

الملخص:

تستكشف الدراسة الحالية تصوّرات معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية حول توظيف ألعاب لعب الأدوار الفردية الإلكترونية (RPGs) لدعم تعلّم المفردات، كما تفحص ممارساتهم الصفية، بما فيها كيفية دمج هذه الألعاب في تدريس اللغة ومدى ذلك الدمج. جُمعت البيانات عبر استبانة إلكترونية وُزِّعت من خلال نماذج Google على عيّنة مؤلفة من عشرة أساتذة للغة الإنجليزية بجامعة المسيلة خلال العام الأكاديمي 2025–2026. كشفت النتائج عن فجوة واضحة بين التصوّرات والممارسات لدى معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية فيما يتعلق باستخدام ألعاب لعب الأدوار الفردية الإلكترونية في تعلّم المفردات؛ إذ أبدى المعلمون تصوّرات إيجابية قوية تجاه هذه الألعاب باعتبارها أدواتٍ محفِّزة وغنيةً بالسياقات الدلالية، وهو ما عكسته متوسطات حسابية مرتفعة تراوحت بين 3.98 و4.68، في حين أفادوا بمستويات منخفضة جداً من التطبيق الفعلي داخل الفصول الدراسية بمتوسطات تراوحت بين 2.60 و3.42، كما أشار 90% منهم إلى أنهم لم يستخدموا هذه الألعاب في تدريسهم قط. استناداً إلى هذه النتائج، توصي الدراسة بتوفير برامج تدريبية للمعلمين في مجال التعلم القائم على الألعاب، وتعزيز الوعي بالإمكانات البيداغوجية لألعاب لعب الأدوار، والحثّ على دمج الألعاب الرقمية في تدريس اللغة. وفيما يخص آفاق البحث المستقبلية، يُقترح إجراء دراسات تتناول مدى فاعلية هذه الألعاب في اكتساب المتعلمين للمفردات، والتعمق في استكشاف العوائق التي تحول دون تطبيقها في البيئة الصفية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تعلم المفردات؛ ألعاب تقمص الأدوار الفردية الإلكترونية؛ تصورات الأساتذة؛ الممارسات الصفية؛ التعلم القائم على الألعاب.