



Attitudes towards Digital Game-Based Learning of Chinese Primary School English Teachers

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Abstract

With the development of information and computer technology (ICT), educational gaming has become a popular approach in the field of English language teaching (ELT). The effect of digital games on motivating and engaging learners has been elaborated in a proliferation of studies (e.g. Chik, 2014; Connolly et al., 2008; Sykes & Reinhardt, 2013). However, research that examines teachers' attitudes to digital game-based learning (DGBL) remains insufficient. In recognition that teachers are the true agent of incorporating any forms of technology into school curriculum (Teo, 2008), the current study focuses on the attitudes of teachers and explores the potential factors that facilitate and inhibit the integration of digital games into school English language teaching. The study is part of a larger project involving a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) between the University of Edinburgh and the game company Nosebleed Interactive Ltd., and is funded by Innovate UK. The KTP project focused on the design of a digital platform 'Tornado English', using animated games as an innovative tool for teaching English to Chinese children. The current study forms part of a large-scale needs analysis to support the platform development, where a team of student researchers from Edinburgh University collected data in 6 primary schools in Harbin, China, on stakeholders' attitudes. The study reveals the contextual constraints of incorporating new technologies into Chinese primary schools, and draws an authentic picture of the implementation of DGBL in the context of China. The study will offer insights for practices in similar contexts, and will be of interest to educational practitioners and researchers in the field of ELT, DGBL and curriculum innovation.

Keywords: *Digital Game-based Learning (DGBL); English Language Teaching (ELT); China; young learners; teachers' attitudes;*