

Soft Communication Skills Through Mobile Legends: Exploring Teamwork and Strategy Interaction Among University Students

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Abstract

This study investigates the phenomenon of developing soft communication skills through the popular online game Mobile Legends, focusing on university students' teamwork and strategic interactions. The purpose is to explore how collaborative gaming environments facilitate the enhancement of essential communication competencies. Utilizing qualitative methods, including surveys and interviews, the research gathers insights from participants about their experiences in gameplay. Findings revealed that involvement in Mobile Legends significantly improved skills such as effective communication (51.6% effective), teamwork (54.8% effective), strategic interaction (61.3% effective), decision making (51.6% effective), and multi-tasking (48.4% less effective). Thus underscoring the potential of games as a valuable tool for developing interpersonal skills in academic settings.

Keywords: Soft Communication Skills, Mobile Legends, University Students, Teamwork, Strategy Interaction



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INTRODUCTION

In today's digital era, the importance of communication soft skills is increasingly recognized in both academic and professional environments. As noted in the research, "communication is the most important thing because it requires interaction with each other to achieve victory" (Yourlanda & Cindoswari, 2023). As students prepare to enter the world of college, developing these skills becomes important for more effective communication. This research explores how Mobile Legends can improve these competencies through teamwork and strategic interactions. Games that require players to work together to achieve a common goal, train and perfect their communication skills. Communication that includes effective teamwork and strategic interactions is equally important in the game. What's interesting about online games like "Mobile Legends" is the presence of chat rooms, which are places for players to carry out strategic interactions before starting a game that requires constant communication. This research focuses on exploring how "Mobile Legends" can be a medium for developing communication skills such as teamwork and strategic interaction between students. By analyzing student experiences through surveys and asking for opinions. This research aims to understand how concepts and features in games can influence the development of interpersonal skills, especially in terms of soft communication skills, namely strategic interaction and teamwork. These findings suggest that gaming is often viewed as a recreational activity. However, Mobile Legends can also be a powerful medium for opening up new possibilities in improving communication skills, especially teamwork and strategic interaction. In the student context, there is a great desire to explore how "Mobile Legends" can contribute to interpersonal skills, in this case soft communication skills, namely teamwork and strategic interaction. Although Mobile Legends is often only used as a means of entertainment. However, this game also involves teamwork and strategic interactions. This

research analyzes how "Mobile Legends" can be applied to students' oral communication skills in academic and professional situations and identifies the contribution of the experience of playing Mobile Legends to the development of students' teamwork and strategic interaction skills.

Literature Review

Soft Skill Communication

Mobile Legends is a MOBA game that can be a medium for improving soft communication skills for the younger generation. Teamwork and strategic interactions are an integral part of the communication skills this game demands from its players. Rahmatiah et al. (2023) explains that unity in the Mobile Legends player community functions as a symbolic force. This process is formed through the involvement of members in sharing roles, supporting each other, and strengthening social relationships, thereby contributing to the team's success in competition. This shows the importance of coordination and solidarity to achieve common goals in team games. in line with Rahmatiah, Genson et al. (2023) highlighted communication patterns between Mobile Legends players which emphasize openness, empathy, moral support and a sense of egalitarianism. These elements help build stronger relationships among team members and improve their collective performance in the game. Based on these two opinions, it can be concluded that Mobile Legends can help improve soft communication skills for players.

In terms of strategic interaction, Dharmawati, et.all (2022) explains that this game is actually strategic because it continues to build and change strategies throughout the game so it requires dynamic communication. Such strategic interactions also allow players to communicate their strategies—leaving them ready to respond quickly to teammates' implied strategies. Often, effective in-game communication via voice and text chat makes strategic changes seamless. In terms of decision making, according to Rida Nur Rahmadiani (2021), the experience of purchasing virtual goods in Mobile Legends can create faster and more impulsive decision making patterns. This is often influenced by factors such as emotions during play and the player's level of involvement. Apart from that, in terms of multitasking, according to Dela Cruz et al. (2024) further discuss how fast-paced, real-time game interactions require multitasking, from managing combat and movement to team communication. This processing of multiple activities simultaneously helps hone multitasking skills that can be applied outside of gaming.

Teamwork and Strategy Interaction

Teamwork and strategy play an important role in Mobile Legends, where solid cooperation between team members can determine victory. Each player has a unique role, such as Tank, Marksman, Mage, Assassin, and Support, which must be optimized according to the team's needs. Effective communication, whether through chat, voice, or in-game signaling, is essential for strategizing such as ganking, zoning, or pushing turrets. In addition, understanding your opponent's heroes, mastering the map, and making quick decisions, such as when to attack the Lord or Turtle, are also key to success in the game. Teamwork in Mobile Legends is closely tied to the division of roles within a squad, which emphasizes coordination and adaptability. Effective communication and role-taking, such as interactions between tank, support, and damage-dealer heroes, are essential to achieving common goals such as winning matches or advancing in rank. This is in line with symbolic interactionism, which highlights the need for mutual understanding and strategy reorganization to maintain cohesiveness within the team (Mawalia, I., 2020).

Making Decision and Multitasking Through Mobile Legends

In Mobile Legends, decision-making and multitasking are critical skills that determine a team's success in a match. Players must make quick decisions, such as when to attack, defend, or secure objectives like Turtle and Lord, while taking into account the constantly changing game situation. Multitasking is also very important, as players often have to manage multiple tasks simultaneously, such as monitoring the mini-map, avoiding enemy attacks, and signaling to teammates. This ability requires good coordination between vision, reaction, and strategy, which is often done under high pressure to maintain a competitive edge in the game. The combination of quick decision-making and effective multitasking can be the difference between victory and defeat. Multitasking, such as monitoring the mini-map while avoiding enemy attacks, plays a crucial role in improving a player's response to game challenges. This ability requires good coordination between visual perception, quick reactions, and strategy implementation Santos, J. P., & Ramirez, L. (2022).

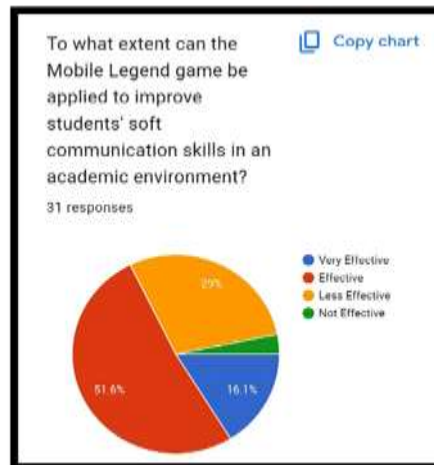
Mobile Legends for Learning

Mobile Legends for educational purposes, especially in language learning, has shown great potential for informal learning, especially for players who have limited English skills, so it is useful for improving their English skills. By playing Mobile Legends, players are exposed to new vocabulary, especially when interacting with global players. Communication in English in a gaming environment, especially when playing multiplayer games, can help with vocabulary acquisition. Some students report that their English vocabulary increases through interacting with others online, especially in terms such as game-specific terminology (Diantoro et al., 2021). Hamdani & Wahyudi (2022) also discuss the positive relationship between game-based learning and student motivation, stating that games like Mobile Legends are not only entertaining but also increase learning engagement. This occurs when students feel more connected to the content, fostering a sense of accomplishment and increasing their focus on academic tasks. Additionally, other research emphasizes the social engagement aspect of mobile games, where students who participate in such games often develop a sense of camaraderie, which may enhance their collaborative abilities when transferring these skills to academic assignments(Haidar, W.M., & Antika, E.R.2022).

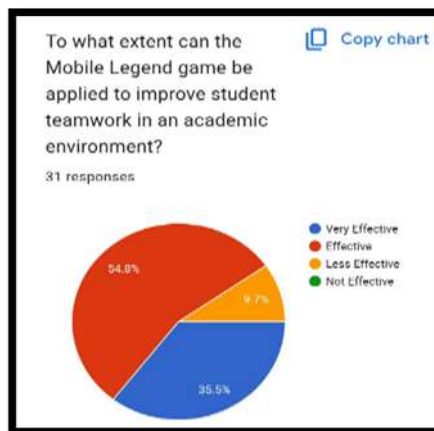
RESEARCH METHODS

This research employed a qualitative approach to analyze the contributions of Mobile Legends to students' communication skills, strategic interactions, and teamwork. The study integrated observational and survey-based methods to gather subjective data on players' experiences and perceptions. Data collection focused on participants' engagement with Mobile Legends in the context of developing these skills, emphasizing non-numerical insights aligned with qualitative analysis principles. The research utilized a structured framework, examining key variables such as communication effectiveness, teamwork dynamics, and strategic decision-making. Participants were observed during gameplay and surveyed using online tools, such as Google Forms, featuring targeted questions which is described as "a web-based app used to create forms for data collection purposes" (Wiemken et al., 2018). These questions explored themes like in-game collaboration, role coordination, and adaptive strategies, reflecting the game's influence on real-world skill development. Additionally, the study included thematic analysis to identify patterns in player responses, aligning with qualitative methodologies. The research sample consisted of Mobile Legends players with varying levels of experience, ensuring diverse perspectives. This method provided an in-depth understanding of how the game fosters essential competencies, offering a foundation for further exploration into its educational applications.

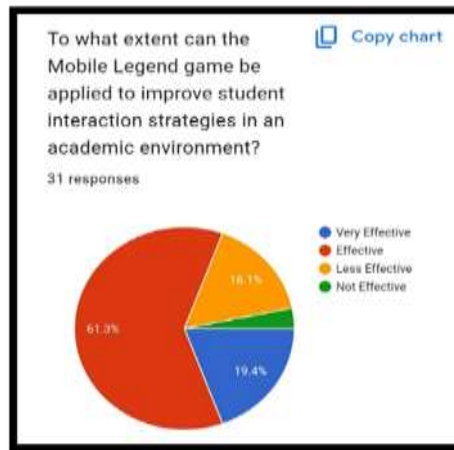
RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION



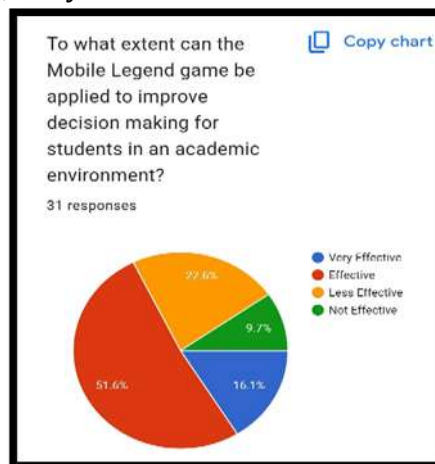
The largest proportion of respondents, 51.6%, believe that Mobile Legends is "effective" in enhancing students' soft communication skills. This indicates that more than half of the participants recognize the game's potential in fostering key communication abilities such as teamwork, strategic thinking, and collaboration. "How it can be effective?" because, through the game Mobile Legends, when playing with friends (party), it is possible to use the mic to communicate, which helps improve communication skills for those who choose to play with the mic on. However, this doesn't apply when playing with random players in a party or solo with random matchmaking, because it doesn't allow for mic communication since you don't know each other.



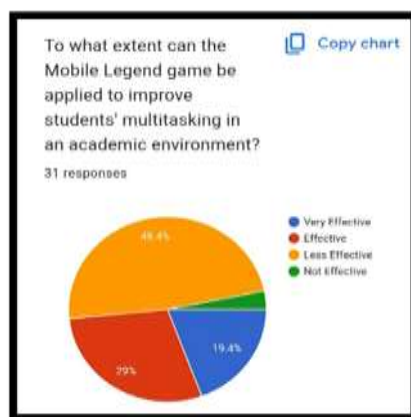
The pie chart shows respondents' perspectives on how effectively Mobile Legends can be applied to improve student teamwork in an academic environment. The largest segment, representing 54.8% of respondents, indicated that they found the game to be effective in improving teamwork skills. "How it can be?", teamwork is also honed when playing in a party (with people you know, as mentioned in point 1), because you generally get to know how your friends play, and over time, team cooperation will improve. Additionally, friends in the party are more likely to offer strategies for gameplay, so when facing certain situations, team members know what to do.



The pie chart depicts respondents' views regarding the extent to which Mobile Legends can improve student interaction strategies in the academic environment. The largest portion, representing 61.3%, shows that the majority of respondents consider this game to be effective in increasing strategy interaction. This highlights the potential of games to encourage collaboration, rapid decision making, and adaptive communication, which are essential for effective interaction. "How it can be?", returning to points 1 and 2, strategies for interaction, such as briefing teammates, will only develop when playing with the same group (party). They will build interaction strategies by having prior discussions, for example, "If I press the 'gather' symbol, then be ready, okay?"



The pie chart depicts respondents' views on how effectively Mobile Legends can improve decision-making skills for students in an academic environment. The largest share, 51.6%, indicated that the majority of respondents considered the game to be effective in improving decision making, indicates that the strategic and quick-thinking elements in the game were seen as beneficial for developing these skills. "How it can be?", decision-making is not bound by teammates; this can be developed even when playing with random players. Why? Because Mobile Legends is a MOBA (Multiplayer Online Battle Arena) game, which requires quick thinking when facing certain situations. Over time, this skill will naturally develop with experience in the game.



The pie chart reveals respondents' opinions regarding how effectively Mobile Legends can improve students' multitasking abilities in an academic environment. The largest portion, namely 48.4%, shows that the majority of respondents consider games to be less effective in improving multitasking abilities. This suggests that although games require some level of multitasking, such as managing different tasks during the game, this may not be seen as directly applicable to the demands of academic multitasking. Multitasking, in my opinion, is not really developed for a Mobile Legends player, because ML only hones a player's skills in that specific game. It doesn't necessarily mean that someone who plays ML is also good at other fields like studying, doing tasks, or other activities.

Discussion

Mobile Legends (MLBB) is a MOBA game that enhances real-world soft skills through its dynamic and team-based gameplay. It develops communication skills by requiring real-time coordination, conflict resolution, and constructive feedback among players. Decision-making is sharpened as players make quick choices under pressure and adapt strategies based on evolving game conditions. Teamwork is fostered through role specialization, shared objectives, and trust-building, while strategic interaction is encouraged via tactical planning, counter-strategies, and resource management. Additionally, multitasking skills are improved as players manage simultaneous actions, maintain situational awareness, and prioritize tasks effectively. This immersive environment provides an engaging platform to practice and refine these essential skills. The survey results highlight varying perceptions of Mobile Legends' effectiveness in enhancing students' soft skills within academic contexts. A majority of respondents (51.6%) found the game effective in improving communication skills, emphasizing its role in fostering teamwork, collaboration, and strategic thinking. Similarly, 54.8% of participants believed the game effectively enhances teamwork abilities, while 61.3% recognized its potential to improve interaction strategies through collaboration and adaptive communication. Regarding decision-making, 51.6% of respondents viewed the game as beneficial for developing strategic thinking and quick decision-making skills. However, only 48.4% considered the game less effective for enhancing multitasking abilities, suggesting skepticism about its applicability to academic multitasking demands. Overall, the findings indicate positive perceptions of the game's potential to improve communication, teamwork, and decision-making, with less confidence in its impact on multitasking.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Mobile Legends is an online game that offers a unique learning experience, combining entertainment and education. It encourages teamwork by having players assume specific roles and collaborate to achieve game goals. Team-based gameplay

like this improves communication skills, as players must articulate strategies, respond to team dynamics, and make quick decisions under pressure, thereby refining their critical thinking abilities. Mobile Legends, communication skills can be developed through the on mic feature when playing with friends in a party, as existing relationships facilitate more effective strategy discussions. Conversely, when playing with random players through matchmaking, this feature is seldom utilized due to the lack of personal connection. Teamwork also improves significantly in party games, as understanding teammates' play styles enables better collaboration, including pre-discussed strategies like the use of specific signals or symbols. Decision-making skills, however, can still be honed even when playing with random players, as the game demands quick thinking and strategic responses to dynamic situations. On the other hand, multitasking is generally less cultivated, as the skills developed are specific to the game and do not necessarily translate to other activities, such as studying or completing tasks outside the gaming context. The game also helps players multitask by requiring them to manage multiple inputs at once. These skills are important in both gaming and real-world situations. Additionally, the English vocabulary in this game helps players build vocabulary and improve communication skills, making it a useful tool in foreign language learning. In addition, the interactive nature of games can increase student motivation, making learning more interesting. Playing with a variety of people from different cultures provides exposure to a variety of communication styles and conversational practices, increasing cultural awareness and language skills.

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