VIRTUAL COMMUNICATION IN THE ONLINE GAME COUNTER-STRIKE AS AN ENGLISH LEARNING MEDIA

Aditya Darmawan [1,*], Haryadi Mujianto [2], Resty Mustika Pratiwi [3]

[1] Faculty of Communication and Information Sciences, Garut University
[1] 24071120135@fikom.uniga.ac.id*; [2] haryadimujianto@uniga.ac.id; [3] resty@uniga.ac.id

* corresponding author

ABSTRACT

This research is motivated by the rise of people who play online games, one of which is the online game Counter-Strike 2, which is favored by the world community. Playing Counter-Strike 2 online games can be used as a medium of learning English because, in Counter-Strike 2 online games, you can communicate with the international community using English. New media theory is relevant to virtual communication, the communication process using currently developing media, namely the Internet. People can improve their English language skills through the experience they get when communicating virtually with the global community by playing Counter-Strike 2 online games. The purpose of this study is for people to take advantage of Counter-Strike 2 online games, not just entertainment media so that they can use them to communicate virtually with the international public as a medium of learning and honing skills in English. This study uses a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. Data collection techniques used by researchers are interviews, observations, and literature studies. The results of this study show that playing the online game Counter-Strike 2 can be used as a medium of learning English. This is due to the player's habit of communicating with each player using the international language, namely English, when the game starts. Learning English through Counter-Strike 2 online games can add new knowledge that does not exist in formal education or books. Namely, we can learn new terms in English, known as slang. If you are used to communicating with the international public, it can increase your confidence in using English.

1. Introduction

In the era of technological and communication developments, learning media are increasingly diverse and have developed to meet the needs of society. Internet technology is the development of information and communication technology. With the internet's

interactive advantages, it is also used as a mass media and a source of information. The Internet can be a learning medium (Rachmijati, 2018). This means that learning can not only be done in formal education, one way is using online games as a learning medium. For enjoyable learning, the learning media that can be used are online games (Purnamasari et al., 2022).

Playing online games has become an entertainment necessity that is popular with most people, especially in Indonesia. People who play online games regardless of age, starting from children to the elderly, have a hobby of playing online games, one of which is the online game Counter-Strike 2. Counter-Strike 2 is a first-person shooter game released in 2023, which Valve created. This game is the fifth installment of the Counter-Strike series. Counter-Strike 2 is developing the latest version of the previous game, Counter-Strike: Global Offensive (2012). This game was released on September 27, 2023, and replaces Global Offensive (Meabook, 2024). Counter-Strike 2 is an online game with a war theme between terrorists and counter-terrorists fighting for victory. Counter-Strike 2 is an online game in the First-Person Shooter (FPS) genre (Girdayanto, 2019).

This research is based on the researcher's experience playing the online game Counter-Strike 2. When playing this online game, the researcher gained experience in communicating directly with Counter-Strike 2 users worldwide. In communication activities, researchers use the chat feature to communicate in writing and the voice chat feature to communicate orally. The language used by researchers is, of course, international, namely English, which subconsciously, this activity can practice English language skills and become an experience for communicating virtually with the international public. Virtual communication is a social space in a digital environment that forms a group and maintains a continuous communication process (Nurhaliza & Fauziah, 2020). This makes researchers feel the benefits of playing the online game Counter-Strike 2. However, many people still play the online game Counter-Strike 2 as an entertainment medium and consider it a waste of time. Most people still think that playing online games will only have a destructive impact. Therefore, we need guidance so that our people can use online games as a medium of communication and learning media, especially English, to achieve positive things by playing online games.
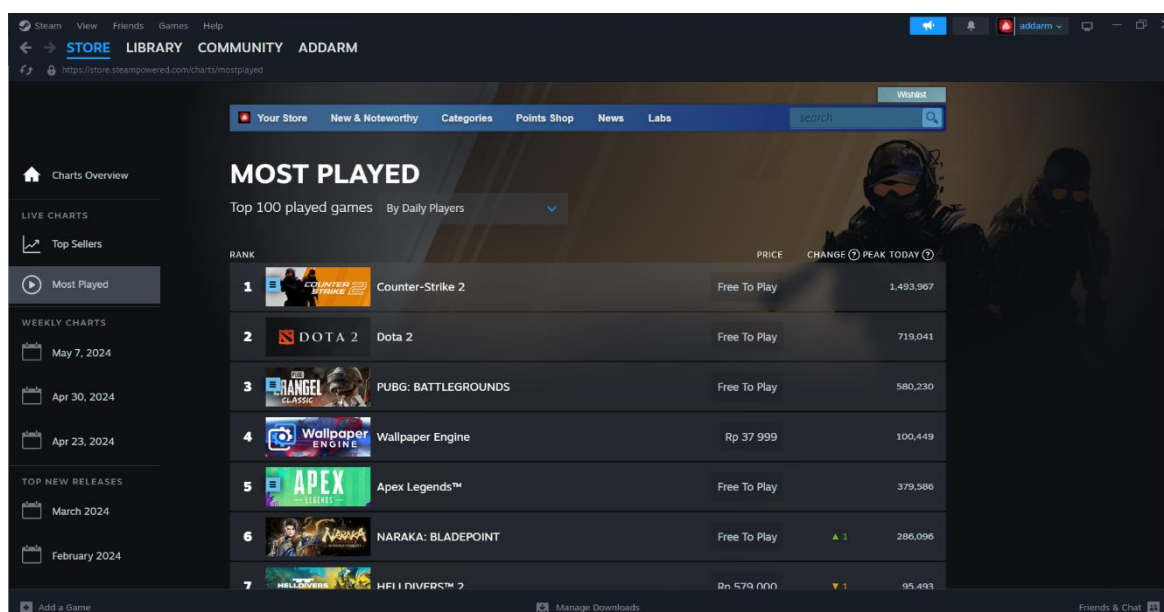

Figure 2. Most played games on steam

Source: Steam

The research is relevant to previous research on "English Language Learning Educational Games for Recognizing Objects at Home for Grade 4 Elementary School Students". The results of previous research discuss that English educational games as an English learning medium can facilitate English learning activities. Wherever and whenever because this educational game is based on Android, which is mainly used by the public. Most respondents strongly agree with the application of English educational games. This game is purely categorized as an educational game because it contains only primary English learning material without any other features in the game (Inggris & Edukasi, 2019). The following previous research is about "User Interface Analysis in English Language Learning Media Based on Visual Novel Games." The results of this previous research discuss that this educational game was created to gain experience playing while learning English based on digital learning media. English learning applications, such as digital learning media, can deliver material freely accessed anytime and anywhere (Deli, 2021).

The difference and update examined by researchers in this study is that researchers utilized online games that are already well-known and used by many people. Direct virtual communication by talking to fellow users is more effective and dynamic than focusing on monotonous educational games. The games discussed by previous research are too little known by the wider community. The researcher chose to utilize online game media, which is already well-known and played by the public so that it can be used as a more optimal way of learning English by communicating with the international public. Counter-Strike 2 can be utilized better because this is an entertainment-based online game widely played by the international community.

The theory that is the basis for this research is new media theory. New media is the connection between individuals as recipients and senders of messages with other individuals through electronic technology devices (Ahmadi, 2020). The characteristic of new media is that its technology can develop along with changing times (Andrea et al., 2021). New media theory is relevant to virtual communication, the communication process using currently developing media, namely the Internet. Virtual communication carried out through online game media has benefits. We can communicate anywhere and at any time with an internet connection and the same network of applications used by each individual.

The aim of this research is for people to use the online game Counter-Strike 2 not just as an entertainment medium but also to communicate virtually with the international public as a learning medium to hone their English language skills. These activities can provide more experience by interacting emotionally with other users and paying attention to how they express their feelings, such as when they are happy, sad, angry, and annoyed during the game. What words do they say in these conditions, and what are their intonations, which we can learn to improve our English skills.

2.Method

This research uses a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. The descriptive method is a research method used to discuss a phenomenon in narrative form (Nurhadi, 2020). Descriptive methods collect data related to respondents' perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, and experiences. The data obtained in this research used interview, observation, and literature study methods. The object of this research discusses virtual communication in the online game Counter-Strike 2 as an English language learning medium, which explains the use of virtual communication between users and other users from other countries.

Data collection techniques used by researchers are interviews, observation, and literature study. In-depth interviews were conducted to obtain views and experiences from Counter-Strike 2 online game players about what they got when playing the online game and

the extent of the impact they felt when playing the online game, whether they used the Counter-Strike 2 online game as a learning media in English or not. Meanwhile, observations were made by playing the online game while observing and interacting with users in Counter-Strike 2. In this method, the researcher also carried out a literature study, where the literature study collects data relevant to research sourced from journals. Scientific journals. Literature studies look for the need for theoretical information so that researchers have a valid theoretical basis for scientific work (Moto, 2019).

Informants in this research are categorized into two, namely key informants and primary informants. The key informants in this research are English lecturers with the scientific capacity to understand this phenomenon and provide direction for virtual communication in the online game Counter-Strike 2. Moreover, the primary informants are those who play the online game Counter-Strike 2 and interact with other players using language. English. The age range of the primary informants is between 18-24 years, and they have spent quite a long time playing the online game Counter-Strike 2.

3. Results and Discussion

The results obtained by researchers through interviews with respondents all stated that playing the online game, Counter-Strike 2 can be used as a medium for learning English. This is as stated by informant 2.

"Virtual communication in the online game Counter-Strike 2 can be used as an English learning medium because the game users come from various countries and use English" (Mukti, 2023).

In the online game Counter-Strike 2, communication uses English in its activities because the language used in these activities is English. The media that supports these communication activities utilizes the voice chat (spoken) and chat (written) features. Voice chat is communication using voice technology, which is used to connect online game players when communicating (Bangun & Yulhaidir, 2023). Using the voice chat feature, it is recommended to use a headset with a microphone so that the voice we receive and what we are talking about can be heard more clearly. Chat is a technology for online communication with fellow internet users through text or writing (Kasih & Yasin, 2016).

Voice chat is more effective than text chat because players respond faster using voice than text. The chat is delayed because we must type the message before delivery. It is possible for each player to converse orally in "real time" with this voice chat feature. Every player utilizes a unique kind and form of microphone (Riani Iskandar Batubara & Saragih, 2024). Informant 1 supports this.

"Between voice chat and chat, it is obvious that voice chat is more effective because in the online game Counter-Strike 2, communication must be responsive. Voice chat gives us the atmosphere as if we are talking in English directly with people from abroad" (Permadi, 2023).

Topics of conversation that online game players generally discuss in Counter-Strike 2 include game strategy. It is not uncommon for players to sometimes talk about random things, such as discussing life problems and personal pleasures. This can strengthen the interaction between players in communication activities. This was explained by informant 4.

"players of the online game Counter-Strike 2 generally talk about strategies to win the match, but discussions about everyday personal matters are sometimes discussed" (Jaknanihan, 2023).

Using voice chat increases the chances that our language can be understood by the person we are talking to compared to using chat. We can reduce misunderstandings in

writing grammar and typing in English. When we use voice chat, if our English skills are not good, other players will tolerate our skills and can understand the main points of our conversation. Using voice chat can help us practice our English accent better. This was explained by Resource Person 1.

"In communicating in English, the point is that the speaker and recipient of the message understand each other. When we use chat, we must pay attention to the grammar because we worry that the recipient will not understand it. "If we use voice chat, even though we are not yet proficient, it will be easier for the recipient of the message to understand the essence of what we are talking about" (Nurmalasari, 2023).

Utilizing Voice Chat can provide new knowledge in speaking English. By paying attention to the speaking style full of expressions of the person we are talking to, we can learn about anger, sadness, happiness, confusion, how annoyed they are, and what conversations they make when they are in that position. We can learn the characteristics of international public language, which gives us more knowledge not taught in formal education, such as at school. Besides vocabulary, knowledge of their speech culture must be learned to maximize conversation.

Playing the online game Counter-Strike 2 does not mean we will immediately be proficient in English. At least, by communicating in the online game Counter-Strike 2, even though we only intend it as a medium of entertainment, we unconsciously hone our English skills, especially if we intend to learn and gain experience to improve our English accent. This is as explained by informant 3.

"When I played the online game Counter-Strike 2, I only intended to find entertainment, but I felt that my ability in English had improved, which I did not realize. One of them is that I have become more confident in using English. "If I intended to learn English by communicating in the online game Counter-Strike 2, I think my English skills would be much better" (Bima, 2023).

Playing the online game, Counter-Strike 2 can be used as a medium for learning English; the matchmaking system influences this. Matchmaking is a process that brings together users in online games (Adli Abdillah, 2021). Matchmaking in the online game Counter-Strike 2 is random by bringing us as users together to meet other users internationally. This makes users of the online game Counter-Strike 2 use the international language, English. According to statista.com, the number of Counter-Strike 2 users worldwide who played simultaneously reached 1.52 million in March 2024 (Clement, 2024). This data is presented in histogram form as follows:
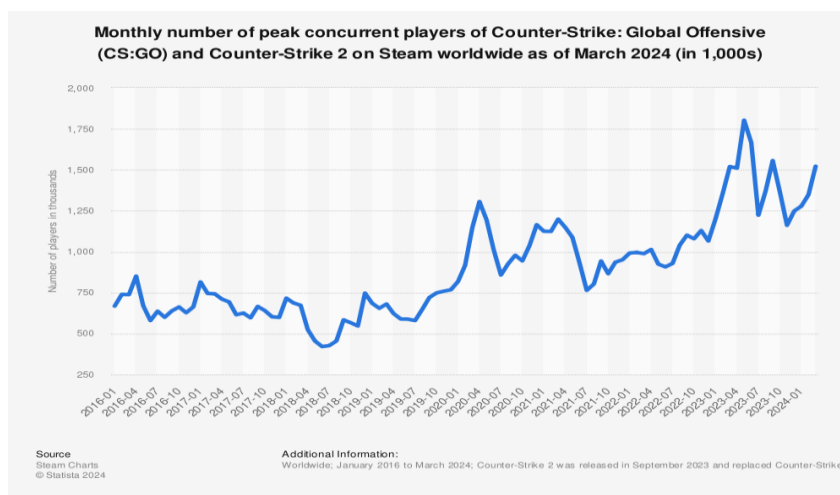
Figure 1. Counter-Strike 2 peaks concurrent player numbers on Steam

Source: Statista

This research discusses virtual communication in the online game Counter-Strike 2 as an English language learning medium. Respondents stated that they felt an improvement in their English language skills. Even though the online game Counter-Strike 2 was created not as a learning medium, when making observations, researchers were able to experience a method that researchers could not experience in college, namely being able to interact with foreign people. This adds to the researcher's insight and experience in communicating using English.

By communicating virtually with foreign people, we can learn about their daily English language learning, also known as slang. Slang is a linguistic creation, especially for teenagers who create new and easy terms to use to communicate (Rosalina et al., 2020). As explained by resource person 1.

"When we communicate with foreign people, we learn something new in English that is not taught in formal education, namely slang. This slang language is not in the dictionary and can be found when communicating with foreign people" (Nurmalasari, 2023).

Playing the online game Counter-Strike 2 is less effective if we do not understand English; at least we can understand basic English. This game is effective as a practical material for our experience when we already understand basic English and want to move up a level. We have difficulty finding foreigners in our environment. Then Counter-Strike 2 can be used as an easily accessible alternative. Moreover, the time we spend playing the online game Counter-Strike 2 is not wasted. Rather than just being used as an entertainment medium, why not use it as an English learning medium that can be done simultaneously.

Using the online game Counter-Strike 2 as a medium for learning English does not mean we get addicted and lose track of time. The online game Counter-Strike 2 is used as a medium for implementing English language learning both on the internet and in the classroom. This will be used as material for developing our public speaking skills in English. When playing the online game Counter-Strike 2, we can lead the game through our communication and by setting strategies to achieve victory in a team. This was explained by informant 3.

"When we got used to playing and communicating virtually with the team in the online game Counter-Strike 2, I felt confident in opening conversations and even leading strategy. At first, I was nervous and only spoke when asked until I dared to start talking. "This is definitely because it has become a habit" (Bima, 2023).

The phenomenon of playing online games is based on the experience that researchers had when they were teenagers and started to learn online games. This was influenced by the environmental conditions of the researcher's friends, who invited them to play online games together. Then, in early adulthood, researchers began to make playing online games a routine and began to utilize features such as chat and voice chat. From a psychological perspective, Hurlock (2001) categorizes humans into ten stages: (1) Stages of birth, namely fertilization at birth. (2) Baby, born at the end of the second week. (3) Infancy, from the end of the second week of life until the end of the second year. (4) Early childhood (2-6 years). (5) Late childhood (6 to 10/12 years). (6) Preteen (12/10 to 13/14 years). (7) Adolescence (13/14-18 years). (8) early adulthood (18-24 years); (9) Middle age (40-60 years). year); (10) old age or old age (60 years until death) (Hakim, 2020). Based on the experience through observations that researchers have obtained, this research is suitable for humans in early adulthood (18-24 years) who have spent much time playing online games.
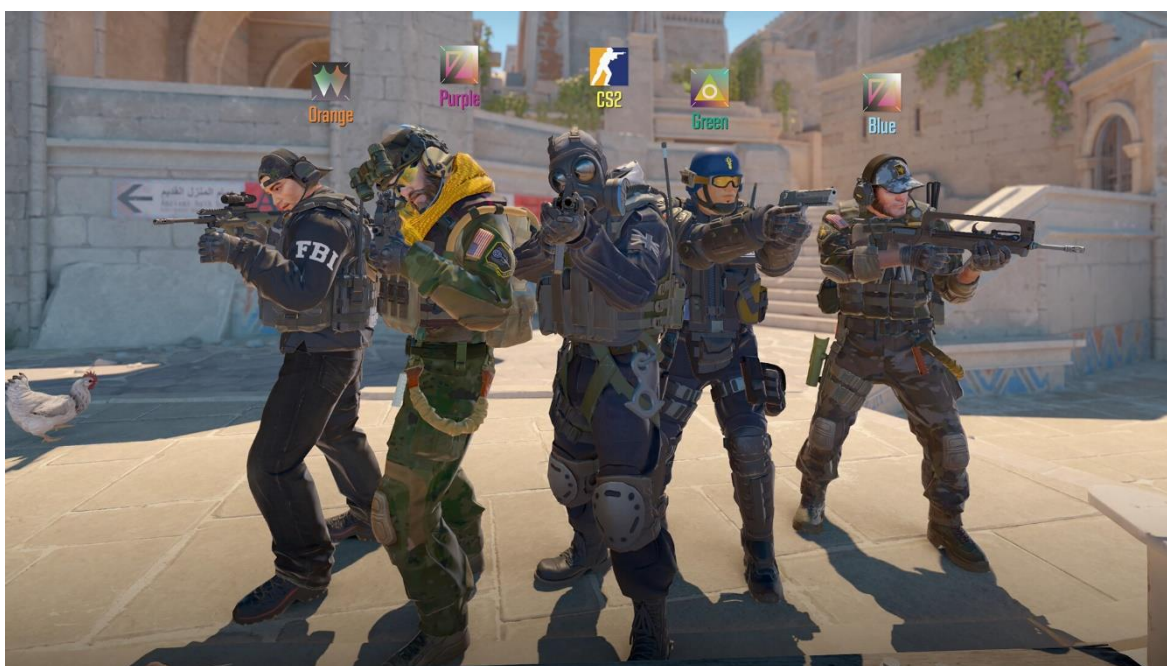

Figure 3. Cooperation in the game Counter-Strike 2

Source: Steam

The updated findings in this research compared to previous research are that learning English using virtual communication in the online game Counter-Strike 2 is more optimal because there is direct interaction with fellow humans, which makes conversations more expressive. This can also increase self-confidence in speaking English. Key Informants agreed, and the primary informants had felt the development of English themselves. They saw the phenomenon of many people proficient in English because of the online game Counter-Strike 2.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results and discussions examined by researchers, the conclusions from research on virtual communication in the online game Counter-Strike 2 as an English language learning medium can be utilized. Many people have finally realized that the increase

in English language proficiency is due to them being used to communicating virtually in online games.

However, this does not mean that the online game Counter-Strike 2 can be used as the main lesson. However, the online game Counter-Strike 2 can be used to develop and practice communication using English directly with the international public. To enter international public conversation, we must master some basic vocabulary. So that we can understand what the person we are talking to is saying and be understood by the person we are talking to. The intended development of English language skills is to increase the experience of speaking directly with the international public and learning new terms currently widely used namely slang.

Playing the online game Counter-Strike 2, if it is not intended to improve English learning, can have an effect. Inadvertently, we can speak with the international community's accent and understand new terms commonly used by the international public. We become more confident in starting conversations, conducting questions and answers, and leading game strategies. The practice of virtual communication with the international community through the online game Counter-Strike 2 can be done anytime and anywhere.

Researchers also advise readers to play the online game Counter-Strike 2 in moderation because if we cannot control ourselves, it can cause an addiction that is difficult to stop. If you are addicted, it is feared that the adverse effects will be more dominant than the positive. Cannot socialize with the surrounding environment and become lazy about working or studying.

Acknowledgment

References

Adli Abdillah, A. M. (2021). Model Simulasi Antrian Matchmaking Dalam Permainan Massive Online Battle Arena Menggunakan Algoritma K-Nearest Neighbor. *Jikomsi*, *3*(3), 314–326. Retrieved from http://ejournal.sisfokomtek.org/index.php/jikom/article/view/130

Ahmadi, M. (2020). Dampak Perkembangan New Media pada Pola Komunikasi Masyarakat. *Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Penyiaran Islam*, *4*(1), 26–37. Retrieved from http://ejournal.iai-tabah.ac.id/index.php/alamtaraok/article/view/499

Andrea Amorita Tulung, Sri Ulya Suskarwati, V. C. A. (2021). *Instagram as Media Government Public Relations Ministry of Communication and Information Technology during the Covid-19 Pandemic*. *5*(2), 137–153.

Bangun, O., & Yulhaidir. (2023). Efektivitas Voice Chat Sebagai Media Komunikasi Dalam Game. *Jurnal Komunikasi Volume*, *16*(1), 34–42.

Clement, J. (2024). Monthly number of peak concurrent players of Counter-Strike: Global Offensive (CS:GO) and Counter-Strike 2 on Steam worldwide as of March 2024. Retrieved May 14, 2024, from Statista website: https://www.statista.com/statistics/808630/csgo-number-players-steam/

Deli, D. (2021). Analisis User Interface pada Media Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Berbasis Game Visual Novel. *Journal of Applied Informatics and Computing*, *5*(1), 9–20. https://doi.org/10.30871/jaic.v5i1.2749

Girdayanto, T. M. (2019). Karakter Visual Tokoh Pada Game Counter Strike. *Titik Imaji*, *2*(1), 44–62. https://doi.org/10.30813/.v2i1.1527

Hakim, L. N. (2020). Urgensi Revisi Undang-Undang tentang Kesejahteraan Lanjut Usia. *Aspirasi: Jurnal Masalah-Masalah Sosial*, *11*(1), 43–55. https://doi.org/10.46807/aspirasi.v11i1.1589

Inggris, B., & Edukasi, G. (2019). *Game Edukasi Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris untuk Pengenalan Benda-Benda di Rumah bagi Siswa Kelas 4 Sekolah Dasar*. *9*(September), 78–92. https://doi.org/10.34010/jati.v9i2

Kasih, F., & Yasin, M. (2016). Perancangan Chating Room Berbasis Network. *CESS (Journal Of Computer Engineering, Stystem and Science)*, *1*(2), 39–43.

Meabook. (2024). Counter-Strike 2. Retrieved May 14, 2024, from Wikipedia website: https://id.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Counter-Strike_2&oldid=25140758

Moto, M. M. (2019). Indonesian Journal of Primary Education Pengaruh Penggunaan Media Pembelajaran dalam Dunia Pendidikan. *Indonesian Journal of Primary Education*, *3*(1), 20–28.

Nurhadi, Z. F. (2020). Youtube Sebagai Media Informasi Kecantikan Generasi Millenial. *Commed : Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Media*, *4*(2), 170–190. https://doi.org/10.33884/commed.v4i2.1585

Nurhaliza, W. O., & Fauziah, N. (2020). Komunikasi Kelompok dalam Virtual Community. *KOMUNIDA : Media Komunikasi Dan Dakwah*, *10*(01), 18–38. https://doi.org/10.35905/komunida.v10i01.1220

Purnamasari, S., Rahmanita, F., Soffiatun, S., Kurniawan, W., & Afriliani, F. (2022). Abdi Laksana Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat Bermain Bersama Pengetahuan Peserta Didik Melalui Media Pembelajaran Berbasis Game Online Word Wall. *Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, *3*(Vol. 3 No. 1), 70–77. Retrieved from www.wordwall.net

Rachmijati, C. (2018). Penggunaan Internet Sebagai Optimalisasi Media Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris (Program Pengabdian Pada Masyarakat Di Desa Margaluyu Kecamatan Cipendeuy). *Abdimas Siliwangi*, *1*(2), 61. https://doi.org/10.22460/as.v1i2p61-74.106

Riani Iskandar Batubara, G., & Saragih, M. Y. (2024). Virtual Communication Patterns of Mobile Legends Gamers' Journalism in Youth Sarcasm Actions in Kisaran City, Asahan Regency. *Jurnal Spektrum Komunikasi*, *12*(2), 157–166. https://doi.org/10.37826/spektrum.v12i2.710

Rosalina, R., Auzar, & Hermandra. (2020). Penggunaan Bahasa Slang di Media Sosial Twitter. *JURNAL TUAH Pendidikan Dan Pengajaran Bahasa*, *2*(1), 77–84. Retrieved from https://jtuah.ejournal.unri.ac.id/index.php/JTUAH/