Words of Warcraft

A study on Swedish second-language learners' vocabulary acquisition, using the computer-game World of Warcraft

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ABSTRACT

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Teaching and learning is a field under constant development, as is the world of computers and computer gaming. Two essential domains for our society – school and computers – are being amalgamated with every passing week, and our view on teaching is slowly being broadened.

Despite encountering English everyday, Swedish pupils might still have a hard time to find the motivation for learning a foreign language, and as a teacher it is my job to help my pupils find the proper motivation to make progress in their own language acquisition. Palmberg (1986) did research on vocabulary acquisition and motivation with the help of a computer-game and found that it did help in the subject's learning. After Palmberg though, there has been little research in the area.

This essay aims to examine and discuss if playing a well-known Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game (MMORPG) named *World of Warcraft* could help Swedish second-language learner's vocabulary. 20 subjects were tested, first with a pre-test to see how many of the 30 words chosen the participants might have known before. A week after the pre-test 10 participants played the game, and 10 read a piece of text. They were tested again afterwards and their results were compared. The study shows that vocabulary could indeed benefit from playing a computer-game, and that it could prompt pupils that are hard to motivate.

Keywords: World of Warcraft, vocabulary, learning, acquisition, teaching

INDEX

CHAPTER PAGE

1. INTRODUCTION

Imagine playing a computer-game. Imagine yourself walking down a forest road, chatting with the person walking on the path next to you. The sun's rays hit the forest floor through the thick tree copses, and to the left of your field of vision a deer is gracing. You and your friend are talking about this and that when suddenly a monster appears, and the peaceful walk-and-talk turns into a vicious fight for survival, where written communication between you and your friend is a more important weapon than the sword you carry at your side. Through communication and interaction the beast is bested and the peaceful trot is resumed. Now imagine that you are playing the game, not at home for leisure, but at school for language learning.

Teaching, or rather the view of how a teacher should teach, has changed rapidly and constantly since the introduction of the idea of the child as a cognitive being rather than a receiver of information. Pupils and learners are not just to sit and receive, but should take an active role as part of the teaching. They are meant to interact with both the teacher, the material, and with each other to fulfill one of the Swedish school's most important aims: to foster independent, critical, and democratic human beings (Lpf 94). These ideas were formed some forty years back, when it was said that a pupil should be encouraged into becoming self-reliant, independent citizens with the ability to question and interpret different sets of fact to create their own opinion (Undervisningsplan: 1955). However this was seldom the case since the document never gave teachers any guidelines as to how to manage this:[1]

> "When deciding how to reach these goals every individual teacher should be able to do as s/he see fits… One way of teaching, which brings good results in one class, might not suit every other teacher… The teacher should decide on every single pupil's ability and adapt the material after each pupil."

The concept of making the pupils independent and democratic fell short since teachers did not know how to manage these new goals; no directions were given, creating a status quo where teachers mostly continued with their planning and work as they had before the new plan. Also the pupils never got to be involved in the learning process since the teacher was the sole decision maker when it came to each and every

[1] Undervisningsplan, 1955. Translated to English

pupil's abilities. With no actual saying in their own learning the wanted fostering into democratic, self-reliant citizens faltered.

Some forty years later it is stated in the Curriculum for the Non-Compulsory School System, Lpf 94, that a teacher shall:[2]

"Take as the starting point each individual pupil's needs, preconditions, experience and thinking…
• Organise and carry out the work so that the pupils:

- develop in accordance with their own preconditions and at the same time are stimulated into using and developing all their ability
- experience that knowledge is meaningful and that their own learning is progressing
- receive support in their language and communicative development
- gradually receive more and increasingly independent tasks to perform as well as increasing responsibility…

• Make clear the values and perspectives that knowledge is based on and encourage pupils to take a position on how their knowledge can be used,
• Make sure that education in terms of its contents and its structure reflect both male and female perspectives,
• Stimulate, guide and support pupils and provide special support to pupils with difficulties…
• Use in the education the knowledge and experience of social and working life which the pupils have or acquire during their education…
• Take account of developments in pedagogical research and relevant subject areas, and apply these in the education."

In comparison with the teaching-plan from 1955, these are quite elaborate descriptions of how a teacher should work in order to meet the goals and values set up by the Swedish National Agency for Education. This shows that there has, by necessity, been a shift of paradigms in the intricate world known as the school.

In a similar way, the view on computers changed, and when a decade-and-a-half ago people perceived the computer as nothing more than a tool with limited usage, the situation today is an entirely different matter. Today a computer is an invaluable help and partner in both business life and private life. It has become a way of life and more. It is hard, not to say impossible, to imagine our world without the media known as the computer. And it is an invaluable tool in schools as well, although its use in teaching is rather restricted, even if new appliances, such as the brilliant *Smartboard*, are making their way into classrooms. More and more schools and teachers are staring to discover the new media however, and the usage of computers and the ability to go online creates and enables new ways of reaching the pupils with your message, and helps to motivate them.

[2] Utbildningsdepartementet (1994). *Läroplaner för det obligatoriska skolväsendet, Lpf 94*, Stockholm: Skolverket

As a teacher, am very fond of searching for new ways of motivating learners that are hard to activate, and therefore I tried to use this new medium in a slightly different way when I was teaching. The class I taught got to work with the English language by using screen-shots I took from a popular computer-game called *World of Warcraft*, and I immediately noticed a change in their motivation just by shifting focus from what they thought to be a dull textbook to something they recognized outside of school, but had never encountered inside a classroom. And that is why I am writing this essay, to try and prove that computer-games could, and should, be used more often in classrooms. That even though they are considered to be instruments of leisure there exists an unexplored pedagogical element in them. An element I wish to bring forward and shed some light upon. This study will therefore test if Swedish second-language learners vocabulary could benefit from playing a computer-game. 30 lexical items were chosen from the computer-game World of Warcraft to be tested by letting 20 upper-secondary pupils either read a text containing the 30 words, or to play a predetermined route through the game where they would encounter the words. The participants were tested a week before the exposure to the words, and tested again immediately after either reading the text or playing the game.

This essay also covers earlier research made on vocabulary acquisition, computer assisted learning, and studies made on computer-games and vocabulary learning. These researches are taken into consideration when analyzing the data assembled from the participants.

2. BACKGROUND AND EARLIER RESEARCH

The different MMORPGs (Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game) such as World of Warcraft have increased in popularity rapidly during the course of a few years since the release of the first MMORPGs and the subsequent development of this genre of games. The quick expansion into popular culture has made more and more researchers interested in the phenomenon that is online gaming culture and how it affects different disciplines. However these studies mostly cover structures and relations in the game rather than the role of these games in foreign language learning. One example of this could be found in Braswell's and Childress' article *Using Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games for Online Learning*, where they discuss the potential of using MMORPG's in different kinds of teaching and learning

situations. There are no extensive studies of how, and whether, MMORPGs have any effect on language learners' vocabulary acquisition and understanding. This study aims to focus on the question of whether learners could benefit from playing an online game.

This chapter will present the importance of vocabulary learning, as well as the history of computer-assisted learning. There will also be references to computer games and how they previously have been used in language learning studies.

2.1 VOCABULARY LEARNING FOR SECOND LANGUAGE SPEAKERS

Hedge (2000) speaks generally, and specifically, about how vocabulary is acquired by learners of English, and discusses different techniques for learning and remembering new words. Inspired by the surge of vocabulary as an essential part of language learning she devotes a great deal of time describing the process of vocabulary acquisition. According to Hedge there is a difference between *denotative* and *connotative* meaning. The former relate to learning through referring the words to objects, actions, or events in the physical world, where the latter refers to emotions and attitudes of a language. Words like *arrogant* and *wise* normally carry negative and positive connotations respectively, while *ambitious* is a word where a learner has to be aware of the word's context before deciding its connotational meaning (Hedge: 2000). Hedge also describes cognitive ways for vocabulary learning. Cognitive learning is, according to Hedge, when a learner is using direct mental operations that are concerned with working on new words in order to understand, categorize, and store them in the mental lexicon. Examples are associations, learning words in groups, and exploring a word's range of meaning. Cognitive learning is also when you deduct words from a text's syntactic structure. Knowing your way around grammar helps the learner deduce what the word might indicate. It also helps if the learner applies his/her interlingual ability to search for clues in their first language (L1) to acquire indications in the second language (L2) (Hedge: 2000). Hedge also categorizes acquired vocabulary as *active* and *passive*: active vocabulary consists of the words you frequently use in speech and/or in writing, while the passive vocabulary refers to words you recognize but might not know the exact usage or meaning of.

Vocabulary was long neglected as an important part of language learning, it was thought as something that came with grammar teaching or by itself when practicing language skills. This is something that has changed during the last decade.

Now researchers have realized that a language learner without an elementary vocabulary cannot proceed properly with his/her acquisition (Coady, Huckin: 1997). Laufer (1997) is among those who speak of the importance of vocabulary, and she develops the idea of the *Threshold vocabulary* in understanding unfamiliar words. The notion of threshold vocabulary is based upon a study by Laufer (1991) that states that an average learner should have a vocabulary of at least 5000 lexical items (where one lexical item equals one word); otherwise they are considered below the threshold. When below the threshold even advanced learners with good academic abilities performed poorly on the study's reading exercises. This study is one of the reasons vocabulary was brought back as an important part in a learner's acquisition of a foreign language.

Laufer (1997) also introduces the notion of *Deceptive Transparency*. Deceptive Transparency refers to words whose morphology and structure looks as if they provide clues to their meaning. As an example Laufer presents the word *infallible*, a word that could be divided into a prefix, a word, and a suffix: in+fall+ible, thus the words meaning could be interpreted as "something that cannot fall". Another example is the word *shortcomings*. This word could be perceived as a composition of an adjective and a noun: short+comings, ergo this word could be interpreted as "short visits".

Deceptive Transparency can further be divided into five categories, which each in turn explains difficulties an L2 learner might have when comprehending foreign language words:

(i) Words with a deceptive morphological structure;
These are words that look like they were composed of meaningful morphemes. The meaning of the word is interpreted as the equaled sum of meanings of its components. An example of this might be a word like *infallible*.

(ii) Idioms;
Similar to the first category, when idioms are translated word for word the meaning of the whole phrase is the sum of the meaning of its parts. For a Swedish learner this might mean that an idiomatic expression such as *It is raining cats and dogs* simply translates into *Det regnar katter och hundar* – the literal meaning – instead of the true meaning of the expression, *It is raining heavily*.

(iii) False friends;

If the form in L1 is identical, or resembles, the form of the word in L2, the meaning is interpreted the same as that of the L1 word. One example for a Swedish learner could be word *ignorant*, which in English means that you are lacking knowledge or awareness in general. In Swedish *ignorant* is spelled the exact same, and pronounced in a similar way, but means that you are showing disinterest and have an arrogant unwillingness to learning.

(iv) Words with multiple meanings;

In this category the learner makes no consideration of a word's polysemy. When a word is polysemic it carries multiple, related meanings. The word *wood* has different meanings depending on in which context it is mentioned. Wood can be either a piece of a tree, or a geographical area with many trees. When misinterpreting, a Swedish learner might consider the familiar meaning of a word as its only meaning.

(v) 'Synforms' (similar lexical forms);

When making these kinds of mistakes the learner misinterprets a word's lexical form, e.g. *cute – acute*, *conceal – cancel* etc. This category stems from two sources; either the learner's memory of the word is insecure or imperfect, or the learner is not sure of which of the two words goes where – creating misinterpretations.

These five categories all state different misinterpretations when reading a word or a phrase outside a context. To mitigate misinterpretations Laufer suggest that the learner read the words and phrases and interpret the context as well as the unfamiliar words or phrases. According to Laufer this is the best method of sidestepping the problems deceptive transparency represents. When a learner comes across a word s/he is not sure of, s/he should interpret the context and use circumlocution to gain an understanding. These are all ideas based on a learner that *reads* and is aware of the fact that s/he is supposed to learn.

When has a word been learned then? According to McCarthy (1990) there is a fine line between *knowing* a word and being able to *retrieve* it from your mind. McCarthy also presents a very plausible definition to when a word is learned: when

an L2 learner can combine his/her *knowledge* (spelling, pronunciation, meaning etc.) with the ability to *retrieve* it from his/her mind when required. In other words, when a learner cannot actively use a particular word when needed, without too much mental searching and consideration, there is a good chance that the learner has incomplete knowledge of that word. McCarthy (1990) also argues that it is not enough to simply categorize a learner's vocabulary as *active* and *passive*. These are far too simplistic categorizations for describing such a delicate matter. Instead McCarthy speaks about *receptive retrieval* and *productive retrieval*, two terms he thinks are more elaborate and inclusive than passive and active vocabulary. Receptive retrieval involves matching spoken or written input to stored sound and orthographic patterns and their associated meanings. Productive retrieval takes the opposite direction; meanings will have to be given forms; some forms will be simple words, some will be derived words and compounds etc. Since passive and active vocabulary are terms more easily understood, and are more widely used, this study will not make use of McCarthy's terms.

In which ways can a learner's active and passive vocabulary be tested then? Hughes (2003) suggests that when testing a learner's passive ability one could do this through a "recognize synonyms" exercise, also referred to as "multiple-choice test":

tidy a. gather b. shine c. welcome d. clean

The learner is to define the word to the left by circling one of the four options to the right. It is important to use distraction words that the learner might recognize, else the learner will ignore that word all together - if s/he is to define *tidy* you should therefore not use words such as *groyne* or *aspesis* as options. Nation (2000) also supports the idea of using these kinds of test for a learner's passive ability. Nation argues that not only are these tests drawing on the passive knowledge of the L2 learner, but also the tests are easy to correct, even if preparing the tests will take a great deal of time and consideration.

To test a learner's active ability Read (2000) suggests either a text where you fill in the blank spaces with the appropriate words, or that you allow your participants to create own sentences with the words provided. Read argues for the latter option when testing active vocabulary, since blank-filling versions might promote passive recollection rather than active. According to Read this is partly because blank-filling

often requires for the first couple of letters being provided in the blank space. This does not help the participant's active vocabulary, but rather stimulates its passive ditto. This study is letting the participants create sentences of their own to promote their active vocabulary.

Is it then possible that when interacting with the foreign language through another media, such as a MMORPG, you could use the computer-game the same way you would a piece of text? That when playing and interacting the learner applies the same language learning strategies as he/she would when reading a book, but on another basis, without being aware of the explicit learning process. The use of computers in language learning could be considered an attempt to fuse the ideas brought forward above; that if you could create a computerized program to help avoid deceptive transparency and to help language learners with their active and passive vocabulary. This is what the next chapter will discuss.

2.2 CALL (COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING)

Mark Warschauer (1996) presents a brief introduction of what he calls the three phases of CALL-development: *behavioristic CALL*, *communicative CALL*, and *integrative CALL*. Warschauer argues that in just 40 years, since CALL was first used, the development has accelerated rapidly. In the "childhood" of CALL in the 1950s to the 1960s computer programs were based on behavioristic theories of learning. The drills were repetitive and came with positive stimuli if the correct answer was given. Pejoratively these programs contained tasks who became known as "Drill and kill" exercises. The computers acted as teachers and initially the method received praise since the computer did not tire of presenting the pupil with the same repetitive tasks over and over again, and most importantly, it presented its pupil with non-judgmental feedback, which did not make the pupil feel inferior or ashamed if s/he failed to provide the right answer (Warschauer: 1996).

Communicative CALL was the second phase, developed during the 1970s and 80s. These programs differed from the earlier ones in that there were not that many repetitive tasks, and they were based on the notion that the computer should never try anything a book could do just as well. The computer went from an all-knowing teacher to the "knower-of-the-right-answer". The process of finding the right answer now involved a fair amount of pupil choice and interaction, rather than "drill and kill" exercises (Warschauer: 1996).

The final stage named by Warschauer is the interactive one. These CALL-based programs are more dependent on the Internet and connectivity. Instead of relying on repetitive tasks the programs, or rather games, relied on the user – the player – of the game. The computer has evolved into a tool rather than a teacher or keeper of answers. According to Warschauer this is where critics complain. Computers are used in an ad hoc and basically disconnected fashion; it contributes to the marginal rather than to central elements of the language teaching process. These critiques also demanded that in order for CALL to work properly in a learning environment, it had to develop models for integrating the various aspects of the language learning process. This, Warschauer argues, is solved through the computers' ability to use *hypermedia*; to use multimedia resources together so that learners can create *their own path* by interacting with the programs and games; to move from the margin to the center by their own choice without knowing it. This is what separate the "computer as a tool" CALL from interactive learning and gaming (Warschauer: 1996).

Hypermedia creates a more authentic learning environment since it combines listening with seeing and mixes it up with a variety of media emphasizing reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Learners are allowed to go at their own pace and to go back and forth in the virtual environments. It facilitates focusing on the content, without losing a secondary focus on language form or learning strategies. The main lesson can run in the foreground, while pupils are allowed to access other kinds of information to the lesson in the background. Examples of background activities are grammatical explanations, pronunciation, and prompts and questions that encourage the pupils to develop different learning strategies (Warschauer: 1996).

Ken Beatty (2003) has named Computer Assisted Language Learning the new *Terra Incognita*, much as the Atlas to a schoolchild a century ago. He claims that there are several gaps in the research already conducted on the topic and calls for exploration of these gaps. These gaps are due to the rapid changes in technology and connectivity, therefore he confirms the fast changes Warschauer mentions. Beatty also argues that when learners of an L2 are unaware of the objectives, learning becomes a peripheral activity to play. The best educational games are those which embed the pedagogical objectives so that the learners' perceptions are of play, while the teachers' hidden objectives are still achieved. Beatty calls for language teachers, or rather teachers in all, to acknowledge the importance and the benefits of using computers when teaching. He also argues that in order for CALL to maximize its

potential it is important that it should make use of a game-concept. This is to fully capture the interest and motivation of the pupils. This phenomenon Beatty names *Subversive teaching*, and it is an important part when teaching through computers and computer games, and also helps and concentrates on the individual pupil. This point made by Beatty is a secondary objective for this study: could playing World of Warcraft be made into subversive teaching?

Steinberg and Sciarani (2006) support the idea of subversive teaching when arguing that a computer program delivers exactly the material a learner needs and the process of learning can proceed at the learners' pace. This is without the pupils *actually* realizing that they are processing and learning a foreign language. Further, in a classroom setting, CALL can significantly enlarge the class capacity without increasing teaching staff.

Nation (2001) brings the human element into the equation when arguing that a computer assisted vocabulary program showed no correlation between vocabulary gains and similar gains from just reading a piece of text. However, the subjects did not use the program efficiently. This, Nation argues, probably was the result of low motivation, rather than a flawed program, although one could discuss the fact that the program is flawed since it failed to keep the users motivated enough to gain from its usage.

The idea of hypermedia as a foundation for CALL is an important one. If combining subversive teaching with an already well established, and popular computer game, such as World of Warcraft, an important objective for learning could be met; pupils will gain motivation to learn a foreign language by playing a computer game.

2.3 COMPUTER GAMES

In the article *Computer games and foreign language vocabulary learning* Rolf Palmberg (1986) presents the idea of letting school children play computer games to acquire foreign languages. One might argue that he was trying to prove that subversive teaching and computer gaming were compatible. The study was conducted in 1986 on two boys, nine and eleven years old, and the goal was to study whether Swedish-speaking pupils could acquire a larger vocabulary by playing a computer game. Both pupils had also had regular exposure to the English language through school and other media, such as music. They got to play the game for 45 minutes,

during which the experimenter acted as an interpreter during the whole session, providing each new word appearing on the screen with an appropriate Swedish equivalent. When the words reappeared, he checked whether the subjects had understood the word's meaning correctly, making any necessary corrections.

The second session was conducted a month later, without prior notice. The same subjects got to play the same game for the same amount of time, 45 minutes. During the intervening month they had not been exposed to the game. In the second session they were asked to provide any words or text displayed on the screen with Swedish translations or explanations. They were at the same time encouraged to discuss and interact with each other to find appropriate answers. The third, and final, session took place a month later. The same conditions applied: they were not exposed to the game during this time and again there was no prior notice. This time they were given a list of 50 words to translate or, if they could not, describe any associations the words triggered.

According to Palmberg, the pupils did fairly well in their attempts at translating the words given during the third session. This is worth noting since the subjects' English skills were elementary, and that it is much more difficult to recognize and understanding isolated words, than inferring the meaning of words contained in reading passages. Thus, Palmberg concludes, computer games, especially motivating text-adventure games in a foreign language, constitute a good example of material that satisfies the criterion of language needs relevant for young learners, and promotes vocabulary learning (Palmberg: 1986). But, to problematize, Palmbergs study was very limited; only two pupils took part, and he did not compare his results to a more traditional learning environment – such as a classroom situation. His conclusion is therefore drawn from very rough-hewn generalizations. In a way, this study fills the gap by comparing the computer assisted learning with a more traditional learning environment, and this study presents more participants.

Since Palmberg there have been few studies on the correlation between computer games and vocabulary learning. This is not to say that the area goes uncovered. In the study proposal *Evaluating Interactive Gaming as a Language Learning Tool* (2007) Y. Rankin, R. Gold, and B. Gooch aim to prove that language learning could indeed benefit greatly from playing computer games, in this study the MMORPG *EverQuest II*. In their proposal they argue that MMORPGs are an underutilized learning environment for second language learners, and that online role-

playing games motivates players since the game succeeds in: "…creating a virtual world as the context for foreign language students to concentrate on accurate and coherent use of the target language to communicate intent and to assist with completing game tasks" (Rankin, Gold, Gooch: 2007).

Their proposed method bears resemblance to this study in that it will allow learners of a second language to play EverQuest II for a certain amount of time and then evaluate through tests what they have learned – basically what this study does, but on a larger scale. Their study does not, however, focus on the vocabulary learning or have its participants follow a predetermined course through the game. Also it utilizes another MMORPG altogether. This aside, the aim for these two studies remains almost the same: trying to prove that language learning could benefit from playing online computer games.

Why then should a computer-game designed for leisure play and interactivity be used in teaching when there already exist games specifically designed and produced for language learning? Palmberg (1986) argues that the already existing language learning games provide no motivation. The games are simply too dull to encourage learning in a positive way, and as already mentioned, Warschauer (1996) argues that drill-and-kill exercises could destroy a learner's motivation to even continue playing the game. And, as mentioned above, Nation (2000) confirms this when arguing that language learning will stagnate if the game is not motivating enough.

Still, why use a MMORPG instead of newer CALL-games? I believe that MMORPGs promotes learning in a different way since they are often already a part of the learners' world. For many learners today the computer is a lifestyle, and therefore it could be beneficial for teachers to bring the media into the classroom. Linderoth and Bennerstedt (2007) argue that playing World of Warcraft could, and should, be recognized as an organized spare-time activity. World of Warcraft, and other MMORPGs, holds similar group psychology aspects, such as team spirit and motivation through others, as alternative, more accepted, forms of spare-time activities such as football practice. Players get involved in the game in the same way they would in another, sport-related, or another more accepted, spare-time activity, such as football practice, or playing an instrument. Linderoth and Bennerstedt therefore suggest that players of World of Warcraft could be viewed in the same manner as youths with serious sporting interests. Families and friends seems to able to

adapt their time around an active child, even schools make exceptions when important competitions are coming up. Why, since these two separate spare-time activities holds similarities, could they not be viewed with the same preset? It is even suggested that playing World of Warcraft could be implemented into the players' other activities in order to enable them to bring their spare-time interest into their other, outside of the computer-world, life. This is to further the opinion that online-gaming is considered as serious as any other spare-time activity (Linderoth, Bennerstedt: 2007). What then, is a MMORPG, and what is World of Warcraft?

3. WHAT IS WORLD OF WARCRAFT?

In January 2008 Blizzard Entertainment announced that their online computer-game *World of Warcraft* had recently become an interactive playground for ten million players world-wide (Alexander: 27.III.08), and also noted that 10 million World of Warcraft players worldwide equals 0.0016% of Earth's population, that's 1 person out of every 625 that play World of Warcraft.

World of Warcraft is a role-playing game, a Massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORGP), meaning that it is played exclusively online together with thousands of other players, in real-time, creating and acting as a character residing in a fictive world. World of Warcraft takes place in a fictive world called *Azeroth*. This world is fought over by the two factions you are able to side with: the Alliance and the Horde, consisting of playable characters such as trolls, elves, orcs, and dwarves. In addition to which side, you choose a class and a profession that allows your character to use special items or perform certain actions. The many choices make the game seem intricate and arduous, however, this is not the case. In a review of the game, Kreku (2005) writes that:

> "World of Warcraft is designed with inexperienced players in mind, and every step that is to be taken is carefully explained … Blizzard manages to pedagogically explain what is going on in the game without losing the in-game feeling"[3]

Before playing the game you also have to select a *realm* to dwell in. There are different kinds of realms, and they basically govern how serious you want to play the game. The different realms function as smaller communities within the larger World

[3] Translated to English

of Warcraft community. When you play the game frequently you become a part of a community, or as one of my friends explained it: "You get recognized and greeted upon … sometimes when you return to *Orgrimmar*[4] it almost feels like coming home".

The realm used in this study is a so-called *PvP* realm, a player versus player realm, where the battles between the factions stand in focus. Players within the same faction are allowed to challenge each other, and whenever you happen upon someone from the other faction you can attack that player. PvPs are usually referred to as beginner's realms and there are other servers for more experienced players where the role-playing is more prominent.

There is no real goal or aim to fulfill in the game. You could literally spend days just walking in the cities, or gathering plants, or mine for ore. There are quests to do, and upon completion you are granted with experience points (EXP). Enough of these will make you level up, to become stronger, faster, and will enable you to carry and wield better equipment.

What makes the game so compelling is the social life and interaction players in between. It is a social game, where the interaction with other players is crucial to the development of your character, or *avatar*, and without the communication gamers in between the game would not be as successful as it is. There are numerous ways of communicating in World of Warcraft. The simplest form is to type something and press enter on the keyboard. Then the game will display what you wrote as a dialogue window above your character's head and players around you will see this. Other types of communication involve in-game chat, guild-chat, and raid-chat. All in all, World of Warcraft is a highly communicative computer-game.

3.1 Language and World of Warcraft

The hegemonic language in the majority of World of Warcraft realms is English, therefore it is essential for players to some extend know their way around English. Dialogues with non-playable characters (NPCs) are all carried out in English. The menus, information, and everything readable in the game are also in English. When interacting with other players English is the most common language, even if the language used between players in World of Warcraft creates a special kind of

[4] The orcs' capital in World of Warcraft

communication with an influx from a handful of languages. It is not uncommon to encounter English with nuances of Swedish, German, Arabic, and so on. This could generate sentences that hold syntactic and lexical features from all languages.

Another common phenomenon for non-native speakers of English is the re-occurring use of Anglicisms when they communicate in their L1. These are words and phrases influenced by the English language, and are created when adding a non-English morpheme to an English word. As an example we have the verb *to loot*. A Swede would put an *-a* to the ending to create a more Swedish version of the English word, *att loot**a***, creating an Anglicism. In German one might put a *ge-* in front, and an *-en* at the end: ***ge****loot****en***. All languages, except English, create Anglicisms this way in the game.

The language in World of Warcraft is very versatile and mixed, but the base language is still English, ergo most communication is carried out in English, especially when meeting new players for the first time, or whenever communicating with the game's thousands of NPCs. Without basic, and sometimes intermediate, skills in the English language a player might have a hard time discerning what s/he is supposed to do next, or which road to follow and so on.

4. AIM

My hypothesis is that the Massively Multi Online Role-Playing Game World of Warcraft can support second language acquisition, or more explicitly, to help second language learners with increasing, and remembering, their vocabulary. Thus, the learning that occurs in the virtual world can be transferred to learning in the real world. Therefore, the questions I am asking are:

- When in comparison with more traditional teaching methods, could Swedish second-language learners' vocabulary benefit from playing World of Warcraft?
- Are there any generalizations to be made as to which words the participants answered right or wrong, and does a word's frequency (in the learning material) help in vocabulary acquisition?
- Is there any support for computer-games in the national syllabus for the English subject?

5. METHOD

The definition of a MMORPG used in this study is that it is a highly graphical 3D game played online, allowing individuals, through their self-created digital characters or "avatars", to interact not only with the gaming software but with other players' avatars as well. The virtual worlds of the MMORPGs are social and material worlds. These are in turn loosely structured by open-ended narratives, where players are free to do as they please (Braswell, Childress: 2006).

Though there are various genres of computer games, such as pure CALL based games I argue that MMORPGs best support vocabulary learning based on the following factors:

- World of Warcraft provides an immense learning environment that could promote the development of deep, conceptual knowledge of a particular domain, such as vocabulary, by allowing the players to experience the virtual world through sight, sound, participation, and imagination.

- Context is an important part of the learning process. Role-playing fantasy games might help motivate learners, as they are creating a virtual world as a context for foreign language learning. This will help learners to concentrate on correct and coherent use of the target language, English, to communicate intent and to assist other players/learners with completing game tasks and quests. Furthermore, computer games emulate a different approach to second language acquisition by providing an immersive learning experience. This might in turn help create an active learner.

- World of Warcraft is accessible. With 10 million registered players world wide, and with 2 million in Europe (Blizzard Entertainment: 2008), it is a medium most likely already used, or at least recognized, by some of the pupils. An important part of being a teacher is to be able to view things from your pupils' perspective and to incorporate them into the teaching. This is one way of achieving this goal.

This, however, does not indicate that *every* pupil will learn language more effectively this way, only that it is a new media that pupils could benefit from. Some pupils are not fond of the Fantasy-genre, and will not learn as effectively because of this. This is not elaborated that much upon in the study since both groups consist of pupils who claim themselves to be somewhat unfamiliar with both role-playing games and Fantasy-literature, which was a preset when the subjects were chosen.

This study will test whether or not Swedish upper-secondary learners of English could enhance their vocabulary by playing the MMORPG World of Warcraft. This is done by letting 20 pupils take part in an experiment that is explained in more detail in the next section.

5.1 THE TEST AND THE SUBJECTS

The 20 pupils are all 16-17 years old and are of mixed gender, ten of each. They have all studied English in school for six years. None of the participants had ever played World of Warcraft before and none claimed to be overly familiar with Fantasy as a genre. All the subjects' answers are treated anonymously, and the subjects have all been given the opportunity to leave the study whenever they wanted.

The 20 participants were divided by chance into two groups with ten in each. One group got to play a predetermined route through the computer-game where they encountered the 30 words that were to be tested. At the same time 10 other pupils read a short text written by me where they would also encounter these words. Afterwards both groups took the same vocabulary test.

To avoid problems, such as that the pupils might have already known many of the words and therefore the results will be flawed, this study tested all 20 pupils a week ahead of their actual exposure in test II. The pre-test (test I) was masked, which in turn means that the test consisted of grammar issues in general, with the vocabulary part included as a part of the test. When the pupils took part in the experiment, they were also exposed to the game and the text for the same amount of time, 45 minutes, ergo no group had the advantage of longer exposure to the words.

The test was designed so that the participants' active and passive vocabularies were explored. To test their passive ability the participants were being asked to identify the Swedish translation to all 30 words. This was done by a so-called multiple-choice test, as discussed in section 2.1 by Hughes (2003). Thereafter they

were being asked to write sentences containing the same 30 words – this was to test their active vocabulary, as discussed in section 2.1 by Read (2000).

After either playing the game, or reading the text, the participants took the actual vocabulary test (test II), which consisted of the same vocabulary part as they had done in the pre-test (test I). In short: a week before the actual test, all 20 participant took the pre-test (test I). A week later ten of the participants played the game, while the other ten read the text. The ten participants reading the text did so at the same time, under the supervision of a teacher. I supervised the ten participants playing the game. Directly after either reading the text or playing the game the participants took the real test (test II). Both tests are enclosed as appendices 3 and 4. The results were then compared and analyzed.

The correction of the multiple-choice text was facilitated by the fact that there could only be one correct answer to each word. However the sentences were more arduous to mark; a simple split into a right and wrong answer was impossible. Therefore the results of the sentence creation test were grouped in terms of the most common mistakes the participants had done; in many cases they probably had understood the word but used it in an ungrammatical way, or out of its normal context. Four groups were created, instead of the initial right and wrong. These can be seen in section 6.3

This study does not elaborate over every participant's right or wrong answer, they are shown in the tables, but instead aim to lift the anomalies and tendencies that might be found during the analysis. It is also worth noticing that although data has been collected and analyzed there are some potential issues with the results. For example it is impossible to know exactly what the participant thought at the moment s/he wrote his/her answer. It is also hard to discern if the results would have been completely different if participants would change groups, the result might have changed drastically if the random draw would have put the participants in the other group. Finally, although attempts were made to limit the effect of familiarity by having the pre-test (which contained the same 30 words) a week before the actual test, it is hard to discern if a word has been acquired, or if the correct answer could be due to a familiarity effect – people tend to do better when they do the same test a second time. This aside, the probabilities still help create likely generalizations, that can be used in drawing certain conclusions.

5.2 THE WORDS

The 30 words used (see table 1) in this study are all lexical, or content, words, meaning they are nouns, verbs, adjectives or adverbs. A content word's meaning is self-contained –regardless of grammatical context, it basically stands for itself. This is for practical reasons as function words (i.e. words belonging to word classes such as prepositions and pronouns) are harder to discern since they more often signal grammatical relationships as opposed to referring to things, properties or actions in the world.

The words were chosen so that the participants were sure to encounter them during the planned route in the beginning of the game, and also with the preset that they were not too much of World of Warcraft/fantasy jargon, such as common contractions, *imba* (imbalanced; a word used when something is extremely good), or *n00b* (*newbie*; a word that stems from beginner, used to express irritation when a beginner is playing). However, some of the words, such as *blade*, and *quest*, are perhaps more common in fantasy literature and games based on fantasy, than in everyday speaking and writing. This is not perceived as a problem since they are common nouns and should not cause any unnecessary distractions.

This aside, most of the words are of such nature that they could be used in common speech and communication, with the exception of one or two words that perhaps are not used as frequently.

The text was a short story written by me, containing all 30 words. The words reappeared as many times in the text as in the charted route for those who played the computer-game. To make the contexts as similar as possible, the text is written as a Fantasy short story. It is enclosed as appendix 2.

Below is a table with all the words, their function in the game, as well as their frequency. One thing this essay also aims to look for is whether or not more frequent words were learned easier than less frequent ones. This study does not look at which word classes that were the easiest to produce correct answers and sentences around. This is because of limitations in time and the number of words that could be studied.

TABLE 1; WORDS, THEIR FUNCTION, AND THEIR FREQUENCY*

Word	Function	Frequency*
Abbey	Noun	8
Blade	Noun	1
Bracers	Noun	2
Campaign	Noun	1
Cease	Verb	1
Citizen (s)	Noun	7
Cleansing	Verb	1
Distant	Adjective	1
Embrace	Verb	1
Enlist	Verb	1
Foothold	Noun	1
Gratitude	Noun	1
Harsh	Adjective	1
Infested	Verb	1
Influx	Noun	1
Insignia	Noun	1
Layout	Noun	2
Mine	Noun	5
Peace	Noun	1
Purging	Verb	1
Quest	Noun	1
Reduce	Verb	1
Reward	Noun	2
Scout	Noun	1
Slay	Verb	1
Sturdy	Adjective	1
Thrive	Verb	1
Tight	Adjective	1
Unmolested	Adverb	1
Volunteer	Noun	1

***Only counted in dialogue windows with NPCs, not total exposure

6. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The first thing noted during the three days of testing the participants was that they all seemed to enjoy themselves, and that they took the survey very serious. One subject motivated his participation with an argument stating that it might “help revolutionize English teaching”. The three days of testing were arduous and more time-consuming than first anticipated, but it was manageable. The results are interesting.

This chapter is divided into two larger sections: the multiple-choice test and the sentences. These chapters presents the data collected, analyzes the data, and presents results and discusses them as much in accordance as possible with the earlier research that has been made on the subject of secondary language vocabulary learning and CALL media. This is later commented upon in the conclusion (chapter 8).

6.1 MULTIPLE-CHOICE TEST

The table shows the result of the multiple-choice test from the 20 participants. It is divided into four sections, depending on gender and whether the participant played the game or read the text. The numbers shown are the amount of correct answers, where the maximum number of correct answers is 30. In the column marked with an "=", the participants' word-result are given. If the participant did worse on the second test this is indicated with a negative number, and if they improved it is shown with a positive one.

TABLE 2; MULTIPLE-CHOICE TEST

	Test I	**Test II**	**=**		**Test I**	**Test II**	**=**
Text - Male				**Game - Male**			
A	23	21	-2	A1	14	22	8
B	20	21	1	B1	25	25	0
C	22	27	5	C1	17	24	7
D	24	28	4	D1	29	28	-1
E	25	28	3	E1	29	30	1
Text - Female				**Game - Female**			
1	22	23	1	1G	22	25	3
2	16	20	4	2G	18	23	5
3	14	16	2	3G	11	21	10
4	25	23	-2	4G	12	14	2
5	19	17	-2	5G	21	26	5

A large majority of the participants improved their result the second time they took the test; only four did worse the second time, and one got the same score. When looking at which gender provided the most right answers one can conclude that the "score" is even. Male participants A and D1 did not improve their result the second time; neither did female participants 4 and 5. Interestingly, the two male participants were from different categories, one from the group that read the text, and one from the group that played the game, while the females were both from the group who read the text. This aside, as Table 3 shows, the male average was higher than the female average in all tests.

TABLE 3; PERCENTAGE I

	Test I %	Test II %		Test I %	Test II %
Text - Male			**Game - Male**		
A	77	70	A1	47	73
B	67	70	B1	83	83
C	73	90	C1	57	80
D	80	93	D1	97	93
E	83	93	E1	97	100
Average	**76**	**83**	**Average**	**76**	**86**
Text - Female			**Game - Female**		
1	73	77	1G	73	83
2	53	67	2G	60	77
3	47	53	3G	37	70
4	83	77	4G	40	47
5	63	57	5G	70	87
Average	**64**	**66**	**Average**	**56**	**73**
Total Average	**70**	**75**	**Total Average**	**66**	**79**

Why this is, is problematic to answer, but a common belief is that boys more often read, or play, books and games which are labeled as Fantasy. Without making any conclusions as to whether or not this is true, one explanation to the numbers shown in the table could be just that one; that boys are more drawn to Fantasy-related books and games, while girls are not. This theory is not entirely applicable since not all of the words in the study are that much of Fantasy jargon, and none of the participants claimed to read Fantasy literature. Therefore the most likely explanation to why the male score was higher was that they were stronger pupils, or that it is an occurrence of pure coincidence.

Another interesting thing is that the female gaming group raised their average by 17 percentage points, the highest ascent of all four groups. This development suggests that the female gaming group knew very few words when writing the first test, and that the playing of the game helped them remember, or acquire, words that were unfamiliar to them the first time. This could be interpreted that it was the gaming that helped them become motivated enough to acquire the words they were not sure of, or did not know.

Besides the gender-related discussion, the first thing to notice is that those participants who were in the text-group managed to produce a better average result on test I (70%), than those in the other group (66%), but while the text-group increased

their average with almost five percentage points, the game-based group managed to up their average with 13 percentage points. When comparing the results of the male text-group, and male game-group one finds that their performance was almost identical on the multiple-choice test. The gaming group had a slightly better average on both the first and the second test. This shows that the group reading the text was almost equally proficient when writing the first test, but fell behind after doing the second test.

The fact that those who played the game got better results than those who read the text supports the hypothesis. Ergo, according to the results, a Swedish second language learner's passive vocabulary could benefit from playing World of Warcraft. The numbers in both table 2 and 3 clearly shows that both groups made improvements, but that the gaming group managed to improve their results more.

6.2 THE ANOMALIES AND TENDENCIES I

As previously mentioned, only four subjects – A, 4, 5, and D1 – did not improve their results, and one – B1 – matched his score from the first test. Of the four, three came from those who read the text. Why this is the case is impossible to say without a closer look. The participant named 4 gave the correct Swedish equivalent to the word *abbey* in test I, but a wrong one in test II. She also answered *embrace* correct the first time, but answered wrong the second time. Of this two conclusions could be made; either she guessed both of the times, and did not know either of those two words, or she tried to look at the word's morphology and made the mistake of seeing the words as similar to words in her L1, Swedish. Coady and Huckin (1997) names this mistake "false friends", and it is the third category out the five (see 2.1 above), in which deceptive transparency is divided. The word *abbey* could be misinterpreted as the Swedish word *abbot*, meaning a clergyman. That would explain why she circled *biskop* (Eng. *bishop*) the second time instead of *kyrka* (Eng. *church*) as she did the first time. The same argument could be applied to why she answered *embrace* correct the first time, but wrong the second; *embrace* was likely divided into meaningful morphemes, *em+brace*, and the meaning of the word became the sum of the morphemes. This is also a part of the deceptive transparency categories presented by Coady and Huckin (1997). However, this does not explain why she answered the two words right the first time, but not the second. One theory could be that the first time she employed what Nation (2001) calls association. She merely related the word to

things she is familiar with, while during the second test she recognized the word but had to use another strategy, elimination – to rule out improbable options, in order to produce an answer.

Participant 5 made some interesting changes as well. In test number one she answered *väg* (Eng. *road*) to *abbey*, presumably associating the word with the English word *alley*, which translated to Swedish is quite close in meaning to the word *väg*. Another (less) likely possibility is that she made a connection between *abbey* and the famous Beatles album *Abbey road*, where road translated means *väg*. The second time she answered correct, most likely because of encountering the word in the text. Another example is the word *reward*, which she answered wrong both times. The first time she answered *spola tillbaka* (Eng. *rewind*), and the second time she answered *återkomma* (Eng. *return*). This, according to Coady and Huckin (1997), is because of the similar lexical forms. This is also called *synforms*; where the word's form is misinterpreted. Presumably, she thought *reward* to be *rewind* the first time, and confused the word with *return* the second time.

As for the only participant, D1, who played the game and received a lowered score there is one thing to assume: the wrong answer was given due to misinterpretation. The mistake was made at the word *purge*, which he answered correct the first time, but incorrect the second time. The second time he answered *spinna* (Eng. *purr*), a word morphologically similar to the word *purge*. Participant D1 did not provide a sentence for the word *purge* in test I, and in test II he wrote the sentence, "I'm purging this shitcave", making it clear that he obviously had some knowledge of the word's meaning, or at least how to use the word in a sentence, when taking the second test. Why did he fail to provide the correct Swedish equivalent in the multiple-choice test if he managed to write a grammatically, and contextually, coherent sentence in the second test? D1 has created a paradox where he answered *purge* correct, but failed to write a sentence, during the first test, and failed to answer *purge* correct, but provided a correct sentence, the second time. When speculation how this happened the most plausible explanation is that he was not concentrating when doing the multiple-choice test the second time around. He looked at the word and associated it with *purr* instead of the word's true meaning. His passive ability was not as vigorous as his active ability when he wrote the sentence.

Nation (2001) has divided participants' answers in multiple-choice tests into six categories:

(i) You know the answer: the answer was chosen because the learner knew it was correct.
(ii) Association: through relating the word to things existing in the learner's world s/he can figure the word out.
(iii) Elimination: the answer was given by ruling out other options.
(iv) Position of the options: the answer was given because of its position.
(v) Readability: the answer was given because it was the only word the learner could read and comprehend.
(vi) Guessing: the learner simply guessed.

Out of these Nation found that the majority of the answers were driven by some kind of knowledge of the words encountered, making the sixth category the least occurring, to the contrary of what one would assume.

Nation's claims could be strengthened with participant 3G's results, which doubled her number of correct answers the second time. The probability that she would manage, only by guessing, to generate that many correct answers is very low. There is a high probability that after playing the game she remembered, or at least recognized, more words than the first time. This enabled her to at least make more qualified assumptions to which Swedish equivalent was the most appropriate one. Some of the words she answered right the second time are: *gratitude*, *citizen*, and *distant*. *Gratitude* was answered with *gratta* (Eng. *congratulate*), apparently a mistake where she thought the word in English meant the same in Swedish. *Citizen* was not even answered the first time, as many other words in the first test. When I asked her about this she said that it was better to show that you did not know the words at all than to guess and perhaps succeed by chance. *Citizen* was a word that occurred seven times in the game, something she claimed helped her in remembering what the word meant. Hedge (2000) among others, claim that the frequency of a word stands in correlation to whether or not you will recall it more easily. This time the word *citizen* occurred seven times in different contexts, which according to Hedge (2000) and Nation (2001), multiplies the chance of recollection. However, there are slight exceptions to this as well: *abbey* was the most frequently occurring word with its eight times, and out of the 20 participants five got the word wrong both tests. Nine got it right both of the times, six got it right the second time, and one answered correct the

first time, but incorrect the second time. One out of four got the word wrong both times in spite of it occurring eight times. However, this could be countered with the fact that equally many answered the word right the second time *after* encountering the word in both the game and in the text. In any case, the correlation between a high frequency and a better recollection of a lexical item is, as Hedge (2000) notes, an evident one. There is a proverb circulating classrooms in Sweden, probably all over the world in one form or another, that goes: "Repetition är all inlärnings moder" (Eng. "Repetition is the mother of all learning").

Out of all participants, D1 and E1 tied in scoring the highest on the first test, 29/30 words correct, however participant E1 was the only one scoring 30/30 on the second test. The word he answered wrong the first time was *influx*, a word he failed to answer correct both in the multiple-choice test part, and a word he did not write a sentence about. As the numbers show, he acquired the word for the second test and provided the correct Swedish equivalent during the second multiple-choice test. This gives an indication that stronger pupils' passive vocabulary could benefit from playing the game. Participant E1 improved his results to flawless the second time, and showed that the word he did not know the first time, he did learn the second time. The level of challenge could therefore easily be changed to meet virtually every pupil, depending on where they are in their learning.

6.3 THE SENTENCES

The sentences are to test the participants' active vocabulary, to test how they would use the words in their own common writing and speaking. Below is a table showing all participants' results. The two tests are separated by a "/" and the sentences given by the subjects have been divided into four groups. This classification is made because of the fact that the correction of the participants' answers needed more than just a "right" and "wrong" scale, as discussed in chapter 5.1. The numbers represent:

I – The use of the word is correct, grammatically and contextually
II – The use of the word is correct contextually, but not grammatically
III – The use of the word is correct grammatically, but not contextually
IV – The use of the word is incorrect, or participant did not answer the question

TABLE 4; THE SENTENCES

Test I / Test II	**I**	**II**	**III**	**IV**
Text - Male				
A	19 / 18	0 / 1	3 / 2	8 / 9
B	20 / 21	1 / 0	1 / 2	8 / 7
C	13 / 21	1 / 1	0 / 0	14 / 8
D	12 / 21	1 / 1	4 / 2	13 / 6
E	21 / 23	0 / 0	1 / 1	8 / 6
Text - Female				
1	11 /20	0 / 1	1 / 1	18 / 8
2	8 / 13	0 / 3	0 / 1	22 / 13
3	8 / 12	0 / 0	2 /3	20 / 15
4	25 / 23	0 / 0	2 /6	3 / 1
5	11 / 17	3 / 5	5 / 5	11 / 3
Game - Male				
A1	14 / 19	0 / 2	0 / 2	16 / 7
B1	18 / 21	0 / 0	6 / 6	6 / 3
C1	17 / 21	1 / 0	2 / 1	10 / 8
D1	27 / 29	0 / 0	0 / 1	3 / 0
E1	28 / 30	0 / 0	1 / 0	1 / 0
Game - Female				
1G	9 / 20	0 / 0	0 / 3	21 / 7
2G	13 / 14	0 / 1	2 / 3	15 / 12
3G	3 / 16	0 / 0	4 / 3	23 / 11
4G	0 / 10	0 / 0	0 / 2	30 / 18
5G	22 / 18	0 / 1	3 / 2	5 / 9

When interpreting the results it is interesting to note the results in column I and IV since a higher score in column I, and a lower score in column IV ultimately means that the participant has reduced the number of wrong answers, and thus raised his/her number of correct answers. Columns II and III are interesting since they show if a participant have some conceptual knowledge of a word's usage, even if s/he got either the grammar, or the context, wrong.

TABLE 5; PERCENTAGE II

Test I / Test II	**I %**	**II %**	**III %**	**IV %**
Text - Male				
A	63 / 60	0 / 3	10 / 7	27 / 30
B	67 / 70	3 / 0	3 / 7	27 / 23
C	43 / 70	3 / 3	0 / 0	47 / 27
D	40 / 70	3 / 3	13 / 7	43 / 20
E	70 / 77	0 / 0	3 / 3	27 / 20
Average	**57 / 69**	**2 / 2**	**6 / 5**	**34 / 24**
Text - Female				
1	37 / 67	0 / 3	3 / 3	60 / 27
2	27 / 43	0 / 10	0 / 3	73 / 43
3	27 / 40	0 / 0	7 / 10	67 / 50
4	83 / 77	0 / 0	7 / 20	10 / 3
5	37 / 57	10 / 17	17 / 17	37 / 10
Average	**42 / 57**	**2 / 6**	**7 / 11**	**49 / 27**
Total Average	**49,5 / 63**	**2 / 4**	**6,5 / 8**	**41,5 / 25,5**
Game - Male				
A1	47 / 63	0 / 7	0 / 7	53 / 23
B1	60 / 70	0 / 0	20 / 20	20 / 10
C1	57 / 70	3 / 0	7 / 3	33 / 27
D1	90 / 97	0 / 0	0 / 3	10 / 0
E1	93 / 100	0 / 0	3 / 0	3 / 0
Average	**69 / 80**	**0,6 / 1,4**	**6 / 7**	**26 / 12**
Game - Female				
1G	30 / 67	0 / 0	0 / 10	70 / 23
2G	43 / 47	0 / 3	7 / 20	50 / 40
3G	10 / 53	0 / 0	13 / 10	77 / 37
4G	0 / 33	0 / 0	0 / 7	100 / 60
5G	73 / 60	0 / 10	10 / 7	17 / 30
Average	**31 / 52**	**0 / 3**	**6 / 11**	**63 / 38**
Total Average	**50 / 66**	**0,3 / 2,2**	**6 / 9**	**44,5 / 25**

Above, table 5 provides the percentage differences between both the text versus gaming-group, but, as table 2 and 3, also between the genders. As with the multiple-choice text the male side managed to provide the most correct answers. In the text-group it is not as obvious as in the gaming-group. The male text-group managed to score a 57% average on the first test, column I, while the female group managed a 42% score, column I. In the same column, but for the second test, the male-group managed to up their score to 69%, while the female-group upped their score to 57%.

In column IV the male-group scored 34% the first test, while the female-group scored 49%. However, both groups managed to lower that score: 24% for the male-group, and 27% for the female-group. Ergo, the female-group managed to lower their amount of incorrect sentences by almost half. Instead they had an increase in both columns II and III. In other words: they acquired more knowledge of the words but were not able to put them to correct contextual and/or grammatical use. In spite of this, when writing sentences with the incorrect grammatical form or, sometimes, incorrect contextual environment, the mistakes are, as Hedge mentions (2000), merely *disruptive*, not *destroying.* Examples of this are presented in the anomalies-section (6.4) below.

The gaming-group's results look different; the numbers indicate more prominent changes in the scores. The male-group reached 69% correct (column I) sentences, while the female-group managed to score 31%. For the second test the male-group increased their score in column I to 80%. This while the female-group reached 52%. Both groups managed to remarkably lower their amount of incorrect sentences (column IV): the male-group went down from 26% to 12%. The female-group lowered their score from 63% to 38%. Thus, when comparing the groups from a gender perspective the gaming males did much better than the text-group males, and vice versa for the females. The female gaming-group did improve their results after playing the game, not only as much as the female text-group.

When comparing the text-group and the gaming-group as a whole, the results are very similar the groups in between. Test I, column I, gives us the numbers: 49,5% for the text-group, and 50% for the gaming-group – a 0.5 percentage unit better result for the gaming-group. After test II, column I, the numbers look as follow: 63% for the text-group, and 66% for the gaming-group. Test I, column IV, shows the numbers: 41,5% for the text-group, and 44,5% for the gaming-group. Test II, column IV, shows decreases for both groups: 25,5% for the text-group, and 25% for the gaming one. Both groups did decrease their numbers of wrong answers and ended up on very similar numbers. Again the gaming-group shows a 0,5 percentage unit better result than the text-group. This rather small change in results was unexpected and one explanation are that the gender differences; that the gaming males did better than their text equivalent, and that the text females did better than their gaming equivalent, balanced the score in an unexpected way. Still, the results still confirm this essay's theory, albeit not with the difference in numbers that was expected. The belief was

that there would be a significant gap between the two groups, where the gaming group would have done better results than the reading one. However, since the gaming-group did better, albeit slightly, the theory of this study is still intact, or at least not contradicted.

6.4 THE ANOMALIES AND TENDENCIES II

Out of 20 participants A, 4, and 5G lowered their amount of correct answers (column I). However, this does not mean they produced completely incomprehensible sentences. Participant A went from 19 correct sentences to 18, and in his case there was an increase in column IV as well. Participants 4 lowered both the score in column I and in column IV for the second test. Instead she increased her score in column III – the word was grammatically correct, but not contextually – and the increase was tripled from the first test. Why this is, is hard to answer. Supposedly, the participants had some knowledge of the words but were not at all certain how to utilize the words in written sentences. Playing the game, or reading the text, did accordingly not help in their understanding of the words. Or, they might have thought their answers to have been correct the first time and therefore did not bother with the words in the game or the text, still that only explains why the participants who answered wrong with the same sentence two times did so, not why they would change the sentence for the second test.

It is interesting to view how the participants formulated their sentences and compare their sentences from test I with test II. Participant C1 wrote “I saw you on the distant road” when writing a sentence about the word *distant* in test I. After playing the game he gave the following explanation in test II: “I saw the kobolt warrior on the distant path”, a *kobold* being a creature in the game which he encountered when playing. He also wrote “I will reduce your salary, your a bad worker” when writing about the word *reduce* in test I. In test II he changed the explanation to “I got my health reduced when the wolf bite me”. In both examples participant C1 produced a correct sentence the first time, but changed the sentences when retaking the test, the second time clearly influenced by events that he encountered in the game. These are examples of what Hedge (2000) refers to as *cognitive* learning. An example of cognitive learning is associations. The game influenced participant C1 by using the words in perhaps not in entirely new ways, but in different ones. Participant C1 changed his sentences to something he had recently

encountered and had fresh in his memory. Hedge also mentions a difference in errors made by learners, *disruptive* and *destroying* errors. These terms, as their names denote, separate mistakes into ones that disturb the understanding, and mistakes that take away the understanding all together. Participant B1 writes, "The money ceased", as an explanation for the word *cease* in test one. In test II he writes, "He ceased himself". These two sentences are good examples of a word whose meaning is understood but is not put to correct contextual use, thus creating disruptive errors.

Participant E1 was the only participant to score 30/30 on the sentences the second test, he was also the one with the best results from test I. In test I he did not give an answer for the word *influx* and used the word *distant* in the wrong contextual environment, "It will be far in the distant". For the second test he redeemed his mistake and wrote, "It will be far in the distant future", correcting his contextual mistake and earning a correct answer. As for *influx* the sentence, "To spread human culture in *Stormwind*[5] we need a larger influx of humans", shows that when playing the game participant E1 found the meaning and use of a, to him, previously unknown word. This example shows that a pupil with a stronger active command of the English language could benefit just as well from playing World of Warcraft, as a weaker pupil.

Participant 4G chose not to write any sentences the first test, with the explanation that she was really weak in English, and did not want to embarrass herself. But after playing the game she at least tried to provide sentences when taking the second test. As table 4 and 5 shows, she managed to provide 10 correct sentences and two grammatically correct, but contextually incorrect, sentences. Making the percentage change from zero to 33% correct answers, and from zero to 7% grammatically correct sentences. Some of the words she provided correct sentences to the second time include: *quest*, "Do this quest, let it be done", *peace*, "Peace, love and understanding", *volunteer*, "We are the volunteers who shall save the world". This shows that not only did she muster the courage to at least try and write some sentences; it also shows that she probably acquired the words, or can at least produce coherent sentences containing them. However, this does not tell if she has learned the words, or if she just managed to recognize the word class and create a sentence with that knowledge. This does create a dilemma for the teacher, how does one decide

[5] The human's capital in World of Warcraft

whether a pupil has acquired a word, or if s/he simply has learned how to use it in a sentence? This is further discussed in the following chapter.

7. PEDAGOGICAL VIEWS

As a teacher-trainee, with only six months left of my education, I would like to say that it is remarkable and pleasant to witness that a large majority of the participants to the survey actually made improvements when doing the test the second time. It is reassuring and very interesting to see that more alternative vocabulary-learning methods, such as playing a computer-game, work just as well, and for some even better than the more traditional way of learning, such as reading a piece of text. It is satisfactory to be able to prove that not all pupils need to read a text, or book, in order to acquire a satisfactory vocabulary – sometimes, as this study shows, a computer-game otherwise thought to be for leisure, could be used to motivate and help Swedish second language-learners just as well, and better.

As previously mentioned, the idea of using World of Warcraft in teaching came to me when I was doing one of my teacher training-sessions at an upper-secondary school. I had been assigned to a class consisting of pupils that were described to me as: “Very hard to motivate”. And they were. Traditional teaching, where I stood in front of class trying to deliver my knowledge to them, or trying to get them to read the texts I had printed out for them, failed miserably. I was at a loss. Until I happened upon some of the pupils in the library, where they discussed and browsed different Internet pages containing information about different kinds of computer-games, World of Warcraft included. The pupils, both male and female, had lively discussions about quests, equipment, and characters that belonged in the computer-game. I made a note out of this.

Later, at home, I printed out screen-shots from the game depicting dialogues, scenes, and equipment from the game. I decided to use them precisely the same way I would use a piece of text to see if there was any difference in their behavior and motivation. The results in class were astonishing. Not only did they listen, they spoke, discussed, and did the assignments I had prepared for the screen-shots, such as fill in the blank word in this dialogue, or continue writing, in your own words, what happens when you leave this place. And all communication was all done in English, something they had never done before. My mentor was as astonished as I initially was. Through

a simple change of content I had the class motivated to learn and to produce. When my practice-period was at an end, I asked them about their reaction. There was one simple answer: “You gave us something that we saw value in learning, and we felt more connected to World of Warcraft, than to a text-book”.

Subversive teaching is a term founded by Beatty (2003), and was mentioned in the background chapter (chapter 2.1). Subversive teaching is when the pupil’s actual learning becomes a peripheral activity to “play”; that the excitement of doing something new or interesting, such as playing a computer-game, shadows the fact that the pupil is actually learning something. World of Warcraft could be construed as subversive teaching. The computer-game carries the ability to charm and to make a pupil forget that s/he is learning something by playing the game. According to Beatty (2003) the perception of what constitutes as a *game* and what constitutes as *learning* is, ultimately, in the learner’s eyes. The perception of the game’s user determines whether or not s/he is playing a game, or if s/he thinks that s/he is learning something. Braswell and Childress (2006) confirm the idea that subversive teaching could be implemented to the MMORPG-label when stating that through the MMORPGs potential to be integrated in virtually any field, they will provide learners and teachers with a plethora of pedagogical options; that MMORPGs, despite being a rather new medium, carry the potential to revolutionize teaching and learning.

The problem of deceptive transparency is an enigmatic one. This study did not put that much emphasis on whether or not playing World of Warcraft could mitigate the problems Swedish L2 learners might experience when studying a foreign language. On the contrary, the problems still existed, and it is my belief that as long as an L2 learner is developing his/her language skills deceptive transparency mistakes will always occur. One positive thing is that one way to come to terms with deceptive transparency is to contextualize a word as much as possible, and to not isolate the troublesome words (Hedge: 2000). World of Warcraft does provide an immense environment in which words are contextualized, visualized, and utilized by the player.

This study aimed to test whether Swedish second-language learner’s vocabulary acquisition could benefit from playing the MMORPG World of Warcraft, and the results of this study suggests that there is a benefit, especially in comparison with more traditional ways of acquiring vocabulary. The 10 participants who played the game did manage to do better both on the multiple-choice test and when forming the sentences. Learning and acquiring did occur for both groups, even if the gaming

one performed better, making it rather safe to draw the conclusion that computer gaming could work as a complement to ordinary teaching, and that the variation it provides works to both the learners', and the teachers' advantage. Lessons could be made more colorful, and more "in-touch" with the some of the learner's familiar environments, other pupils might just welcome the variation. As the numbers show the majority of the 20 participants made improvements, which by itself if a very satisfying fact, and as an additional benefit the study showed that weaker pupils made good improvements after playing the game.

In spite of this result, no teaching is to be performed without finding support in the syllabus. The Swedish National Agency for Education states in the curriculum for English A that:[6]

> "The English language and other forms of culture from English-speaking countries are widely accessible in Swedish society. Pupils encounter today many variants of English outside school. They meet English in a variety of contexts: on TV, in films, in the world of music, via the Internet and computer games, through reading texts and via contacts with the English-speaking world… the subject aims at pupils maintaining and developing their desire and ability to learn English."

In addition to the fact that the English subject should encourage and help develop pupils' desire to learn English, it should also make sure that a pupil reads and understands written fiction in order to better understand foreign cultures and societies connected to the English language (Lpf 94). Also, the English subject should encourage different learning-techniques for acquiring new vocabulary and phrasal expression. The syllabus clearly states that the English subject's aims are to encourage further language development, and to help pupils help themselves. It is mentioned in the syllabus that Swedish pupils, through computer games and the Internet, encounters English. This shows that the Swedish National Agency for Education recognizes the new medium as a source where many learners will encounter English, and experience new words and phrases. The challenge is for teachers to use this medium so that pupils will learn how to learn themselves, to make the learners motivate themselves into developing their own language.

[6] http://www3.skolverket.se/ki03/front.aspx?sprak=EN&ar=0708&infotyp=8&skolform=21&id=EN&extraId= [22.V.08]

Vygotsky (1978) names this process the *Zone of Proximal Development* (ZPD), to assess what the learner can do without help, and what s/he can do with help. World of Warcraft could be fitted into the frame of the Swedish National Agency for Education's stated goals for the subject of English. The virtual world works as a melting pot for language and language acquisition, and it works as a worthy complement, or in some cases replacement, for more traditional ways of learning new lexical items. The game also lets its players communicate with other players from all over the globe, and the language preferred is English. In addition to this the game is compellingly designed in order to help motivate players to return, this works for learners as well. The border between the player and the learner becomes very indistinct; playing World of Warcraft might help your pupils to help themselves.

This appraisal aside, there are of course downsides to World of Warcraft as a teaching supplement as well. Without proper lesson-plans and guidance there will be no lesson learned. Without teaching, the pupils are put in an environment without any equipment or goal. This study does not aim to replace books or other texts as primary providers of new vocabulary, this study tries to make World of Warcraft a complement to ordinary teaching, which it could be if worked with properly.

CALL-based games are not to be ruled out either. They can still be beneficial, if they manage to capture the interest of their users enough to make them use the CALL-program in the right way. Otherwise, as Nation (2001) argues, you might end up with learners not learning due to the wrong usage of the CALL-program. If the CALL-program is not compelling enough it could work in accordance to the world's best pedagogical ways, pupils still would not learn a thing because of its dullness.

There is also the problem of deciding whether a pupil has really acquired a word or not. As previously mentioned a pupil might have figured out how to use a word in a sentence without actually understanding the word in full. This is a problem teachers face frequently; you cannot be entirely certain of a pupil's acquisition on the basis that s/he managed to produce a coherent sentence. As in the case with participant C1, he managed to produce a sentence after playing the game, influenced by the game's contents. The problem is that a word seldom occurring, as *reduce* in the game, presents the word in a limited, special, context which does not provide enough information to a learner to positively say that s/he has acquired and learned the word's full meaning. He associated, but did learning really occur? That is perhaps why participant 4G has created awkward, but coherent, sentences using word's she did not

dare to try when taking the first test. The sentence “Do this quest, let it be done”, shows that even though she might have understood how to use the word, she may not know its meaning.

Finally, Linderoth and Bennerstedt (2007) claim World of Warcraft, and MMORPG gaming in general, could be recognized as a “valid” spare-time activity, and that it is already accessible by many learners. Blizzard Entertainment (2008) claims 2 million users in Europe, and 10 million worldwide. This provides for many meetings, many dialogues, and above all, many opportunities to hone your language skills. What if your pupils, who you knew played computer-games frequently, got to play the game(s) as a homework assignment? Why not join your pupils for a quest or two and act as a teacher within the game as well?

These are, perhaps, utopian views on the subject at hand, but they are most certainly not entirely unreal. It will take a great deal of devotion and work, but if done properly, the reward will be worth it. After all, as a teacher it is your job to incorporate and teach every pupil, to the extent, and beyond, of his/her abilities.

8. Conclusion and Comments

I always wanted to do this study. I wanted to before I tried to implement World of Warcraft into my own lesson plans. The first thoughts of World of Warcraft as a pedagogical tool trace back to the days when the game was first released. I noticed subtle changes in one of my friend’s usage of English that I had not noticed before. His speech seemed more elaborate, colorful, and he seemed more certain of his abilities. He claimed it was because he had been playing World of Warcraft.

With six months left before becoming a teacher of History and English, I wanted to do something new, something entirely unique, to contribute, to the research in my field of operation, teaching and learning. I remembered that screen-shots from World of Warcraft had been beneficial to the motivation and learning of one of my classes, but there was no way to prove that scientifically at the time, and so the idea was put to rest, until it re-emerged a couple of months ago. The thought was revived, what if such a study could, in fact, be made? What would I prove? What could I prove? My doubts were cleared when I got the approval for doing this essay, that it could, in fact, be a very good idea to try and prove the values of alternative medium at work in school.

My findings are positive. Not only did the study support my hypothesis – that World of Warcraft could be beneficial for a Swedish language-learner's vocabulary. The numbers provided show that the participants who played the game scored a higher average, even if those who read the text also did remarkable positive changes, but this study also shows that World of Warcraft could act as a pedagogical playground for pupils and teachers, that when used properly it could serve as a complement to books or texts, all in accordance with the subject's syllabi and the goals that the Swedish National Agency for Education has decided upon.

The downside to this study has been mentioned before: that in order to secure a better, more reliable, result it should have engaged more participants. The 20 participants could create an uneven result that does not stand in correlation with the rest of the pupils in that age group. It is also hard to generalize over that many pupils, when the 20 pupils that chose to participate in my study are the representatives to an entire generation of English A course-takers. There are no absolute truths, only probabilities and assumptions based on the results and what other studies have found. This aside, this study manages to create the groundwork for something of a larger scale, the numbers are still a result that could inspire further, more elaborate, research.

Another important thing to remember is that this study only looked at 30 words, how – and if – they were acquired, it has not mentioned anything about the actual social part that makes World of Warcraft the world's largest interactive playing-ground. During the gaming session many of the game's other players wanted to start conversations with the participants, something I forbade at the moment. How much more, if any, new lexical items could the participants have learned if they started interacting with other players in the game? How much would they have to use circumlocution, and how many new phrases would rub off on their language abilities? And would these new acquisitions, made by playing the game, lead to good or even acceptable English? These are several aspects that are important to consider.

Finally it is important to note that there was more to be mentioned in this study, but there simply were not enough time or words to make this happen. Were additional time and words allowed the study could easily grow to twice its size, that is how much data and questions this study has generated. This aside, the study has fulfilled its goal, and it found support for its hypothesis, and answered the questions asked properly, even if it suffers from being too small to make more accurate generalizations. Hopefully, this study will provide a stepping-stone to further, more

elaborate, research in the field. The world of computers and the world of teaching are as changing and alive as the imaginative world inhabited by millions of players, World of Warcraft. As important as it is to keep your character alive in the game, it is equally important to keep up with the latest changes in the wondrous world of the school. I have learned a great deal when writing this essay, things that range from theories on how a word is acquired and eventually learned, to realizing computer-games are not as detrimental as they are depicted as; it is only a matter of how you choose to use them. Something I am most definitely going to do.

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APPENDIX 1;

INSTRUCTIONS

- Walk up to the man with an exclamation mark (!) over his head. His name is Deputy Willem. Right-click to talk with him.
- Read the dialogue window and accept.
- Go inside and speak with the man with a question mark (?) over his head. His name is Marshal McBride.
- Press 'complete'.
- Read the next dialogue window and accept.
- Go north of building to find the kobolds. Defeat **ten kobold vermin** and return to Marshal McBride.
- Go back outside to speak with Deputy Willem, accept his proposal to speak with Eagan Peltskinner.
- Go around the building to speak with Eagan Peltskinner, accept his proposal.
- When finished with collecting 8 pieces of wolf-meat (to collect right-click the body of the wolf and left-click the meat. Note: not all wolves drop meat, if a wolf does not continue with another) go back and speak with Eagan Peltskinner again. Give him meat and choose the right reward.
- Go back inside building to speak with Marshal McBride again, accept his letter.
- Read the letter; press 'B' on keyboard and right-click the letter.
- Go to warrior trainer Llane Beshera and speak with him. Complete assignment.
- Speak with Marshal McBride again.
- Accept "**Investigate Echo Ridge**" and defeat **ten kobold workers**.
- Return to Marshal McBride and accept the new assignment.
- Walk to the left side of the building and speak with the woman with the staff in her hand.
- You are all done!

Thank you for playing!

APPENDIX 2;

THE TEXT

A BAD DAY, PERHAPS

It was known simply as the **Abbey1**. It stood as a symbol for religion and worship, its lone tower as a spire of eternal **peace1**. Located in a forest, as deep as it was **harch1**, the **abbey's2 layout1** reminded of a mighty cathedral combined with more simple features. Still, it was a grand sight, especially in the morning when the sun's first rays seemed to **embrace1** it, highlighting the edifice, **purging1** it from shadows.

Other than the **abbey3** there were no other architecture of significance in the small village, that is, if you did not count the **mine1**. A dug, black hole in the ground, the community depended on the **mine2** for its survival, without it the **citizens1** would not be able to **thrive1**. Without the **mine3** the Crystal Empire would not have **infested1** the, by humans, previously **unmolested1** borderlands of Azeroth. The Empire had spread its borders far in the last decade, and as a **citizen2** of the Empire you would have to be made out of **sturdy1** material in order to survive. The Crystal Empire expected this out of its **enlisted1 scouts1**. And in return, to **reward1** and to show its **gratitude1** for opening the **mine4**, the Crystal Empire had funded and raised the **abbey4**. This, together with opportunities of work, created a huge **influx1** of people. **Citizens3** from all over the Empire came to **volounteer1** as workers in the **mine5.** One of these participants was Jonathan Crisp.

You could conclude three things about Jonathan Crisp just by looking at him, and not looking in a "staring" sense, it would suffice just to throw a glance or two his direction. The first thing you would notice was his icy-blue eyes, like two blue marbles showing great intelligence and curiosity. The second thing was rather peculiar way of moving, almost as he was floating one the ground rather than treading on it. The third thing was his ridiculously large **bracers1**. One on each wrist, the **bracers2** were sealed **tight1** to his two limbs, looking so big and heavy that you would think it was a miracle he could move his arms at all. Any other feature on Jonathan Crisp was **reduced1** thanks to these three attributes.

As another **citizen4** of the Crystal Empire he had arrived to provide physical labor, but also to see the magnificent **abbey5**. Jonathan was honestly impressed by the **abbey's6 layout2** and considered it proof of near perfect architecture. He cast a quick

glance at a sign posted on a notice board beside the **abbey7.** It called for a **campaign1** against bandits and rovers that had created a **foothold1** in the area. Apparently there were brigands in the woods to **slay1**. He shook his head as he strolled onwards back to the village. He suspected that the **citizens5** of the village would undertake the **quest1** without much hesitation. The thought was **distant1** to him, he would not participate. He went home and to bed.

Jonathan dreamt. It was the same dream this night as it had been countless nights before. Always beginning with a battle, always about the same persons, and always with the same outcome. It was about a queen and her struggle for survival, and Jonathan slowly drifted into the dream. The familiar scenario replayed itself.

Queen Ashe only had one thing in mind when she realized she was going to fall, to get up as fast as possible. The fall was over in an instant and she regained her footing almost as fast. She oriented herself and managed to face her opponent before he could get to her. He was much older than she, perhaps even twice her age, but he moved with grace and certainty. He bore the **insignia1** *for the Crystal Empire on his left shoulder. This was not his first fight and by the look of it, he had decided that it would not be his last either. He brought his sword out, attacking her from the side. She immediately started a parrying routine when the man sprang into her instead, knocking the breath from her lungs. She decided to roll with the punch and as she fell backwards she swung her sword before her. She made a backwards roll and regained her balance. The man stood clutching his left thigh and she saw blood trickling out between his gloved fingers. First blood was hers. She then looked the man in the face and was terrified of what she saw. His whole face expressed madness and insanity. He was enjoying this; he actually got satisfaction from the challenge. He lunged again and hit her in the face with his free hand. The blow connected solidly with her temple and she felt the world starting to spin, she fell. When she regained enough consciousness to open her eyes she saw his sword descending in slow motion. She grabbed the blade in mid air and deflected the mortal blow. Instead of piercing her heart the blade entered her chest plate, through her armor into her left shoulder, nailing her to the ground. The pain was excruciating and she screamed with agony still holding the blade with her right hand. The laughter continued; unending it was the only thing she heard. He was enjoying this. That is why he slowly turned the blade in her shoulder, sending waves of agony through her body instead of just killing her. But he gave her time when doing so, time she sought to put to good use. Deep within her she felt determination and anger welling up and somehow enabling her to act. With her left hand she felt the ground for her sword and found it. She thrust it upwards, hitting the man in his right eye. He immediately let go of the sword and fell away with a howl. She fell back and dropped her sword to her side. She managed to get up on her elbow and watched as the army of Imperial* **citizens6** *scattered with some Coalition forces in close*

pursuit. She looked for her attacker but found nothing but a small trace of blood leading away from the battle. She had survived against all odds that day.

It was early morning and Jonathan woke when the sun's early rays hit his face. He was always slow in the morning and this day would not be an exception. But his choirs were waiting; the animals would not feed and milk themselves. He got up and got the shivers when his feet touched the wooden planks. He rose and stretched his tall and lean frame. He scratched his head, fixed his mop of brown hair and yawned for what would be the sixth time since he woke. He dressed himself and went out to the stable he had wall to wall to his small house, his icy eyes were slowly moving over the small bit of land he had carved out for himself. He noticed the **abbey8** in the distance and his thoughts traced back to the day before. The **citizens7** of the village would come to him and ask for his support, and when not giving it he would become an outsider. Not a good start for his new life.

He squinted against the sun's warm spring rays and opened the latch to the stable. The goats and his cow stood in their pens, eagerly waiting to be milked and fed. To the right was his horse, Shimmer, and she muzzled him when he greeted her. Soon enough he was finished and it was time for breakfast. He prepared the meal and sat on his small porch eating bread and cheese and washing it down with milk, while savoring the warmth. Caught up in his own thoughts he almost jumped a meter in the air when a voice said 'Daydreaming again are we Johnnie?' Alean, Jonathan though. He had completely forgotten that he would drop by today. 'And I guess you haven't learned not to sneak up on a person like that, especially not when he's eating his well deserved breakfast,' Jonathan answered with feigned irritation. Alean laughed and sat down beside him, they **ceased1** their phony argument and ate together. Perhaps it would be a good day after all, only time would tell, Jonathan thought…

APPENDIX 3;
TEST I

TEST I

WHO ARE YOU?

__Female __Male

E-mail_____

INSTRUCTIONS:
This is a test to measure your overall knowledge of the English language. It will not be shown to your teachers in English, the only one who will look at them will be me.

Try to answer as many of the questions as you can. If you do not know the answer just leave the field blank.

- Thank you!

1. MIXED GRAMMAR EXERCISES
Correct the grammatical errors in the following sentences;

1. I didn't knew him before the war.

_____

_____

2. I will met you here in a hour.

_____

_____

3. The dog's were barking under the entire dinner.

_____

_____

4. He is taller then you and I am.

_____

5. They didn't thought for them selves anymore.

_____

2. VOCABULARY

Define the words to the left by circling the Swedish translation;

1. Abbey	Kyrka	Väg	Präst	Biskop
2. Volunteer	Frivillig	Volym	Djur	Uppgift
3. Blade	Blödde	Klinga	Kruka	Växt
4. Unmolested	Förstörd	Orörd	Oförberedd	Ledsen
5. Bracers	Hålla tag	Vän	Armband	Bysthållare
6. Tight	Fast	Nätt	Löst	Reslig
7. Campaign	Camping	Kompanjon	Champinjon	Kampanj
8. Thrive	Trivas	Utvecklas	Trevligt	Undra
9. Cease	Fett	Fred	Upphöra	Behaga
10. Sturdy	Pålitlig	Studie	Störd	Punktlig
11. Citizen	Människa	Medborgare	Mänsklig	Många
12. Slay	Slav	Slev	Slut	Döda
13. Cleanse	Städa	Sopa	Redogöra	Rena (från skuld)
14. Scout	Skott	Spejare	Spion	Mössa
15. Distant	Avlägsen	Diskant	Avlägsna	Drömma
16. Reward	Spola tillbaka	Belöning	Berömma	Återkomma
17. Embrace	Embryo	Omfatta	Omfamna	Omkrets
18. Reduce	Minska	Minimera	Maximera	Mycket
19. Enlist	Listig	Mönstra på	Lista	Enligt
20. Quest	Kvast	Äventyr	Uppdrag	Tvång
21. Foothold	Fotarbete	Fot	Fotboll	Fotfäste
22. Purge	Spinna	Rensa	Resa	Städa

23. Gratitude	Gratäng	Tacksamhet	Gratta	Grönsak
24. Peace	Bit	Fred	Persika	Del
25. Harsh	Ogästvänlig	Otrevlig	Otrolig	Orolig
26. Mine	En min	Gruva	Mindre	Mesig
27. Infest	Fest	Infestera	Frånta	Investerad
28. Layout	Struktur	Ligga (ute)	Lagra	Låna
29. Influx	Tillströmning	Flax	Modern	Rörlig
30. Insignia	Signatur	Insikt	Gradbetäckning	Inriktning

3. THE USE OF THERE/WHERE/WERE

Fill in either *there/where* or *were* in the blank spaces;

_____ is my dress I bought yesterday?

_____ it is!

I want to be _____ my boyfriend is.

I want to go _____!

My living room will be on the ground floor, _____ I will have a TV.

I love going _____.

_____ are you?

You _____ there yesterday!

You _____ at the police station to report a crime yesterday.

4. APOSTROPHES

Write the word where the apostrophes are supposed to be in the blank spaces;

Ex: At my mum place. ___mum's___

At my father place. _____

The childrens rooms. _____

Where are the dog toys? _____

5. FORM SENTENCES

Write sentences using the words in bold showing that you understand the word;

1. **Distant**

_____

2. (a) **Reward**

_____

3. **Embrace**

_____

4. **Reduce**

_____

5. **Enlist**

_____

6. **Quest**

_____

7. **Foothold**

_____

8. **Purge**

_____

9. **Gratitude**

_____

10. **Peace**

_____

11. **Harsh**

_____

12. (a) **Mine**

_____

13. **Infest**

_____

14. **Layout**

_____

15. **Influx**

_____

16. **Insignia**

_____

17. **Abbey**

_____

18. **Volunteer**

_____

19. **Blade**

_____

20. **Unmolested**

_____

21. **Bracers**

_____

22. **Tight**

_____

23. (a) **Campaign**

_____

24. **Thrive**

_____

25. **Cease**

_____

26. **Sturdy**

_____

27. **Citizen**

_____

28. **Slay**

_____

29. **Cleanse**

_____

30. **Scout**

_____

~THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION~
~THE END~

APPENDIX 4;
TEST II

TEST II

WHO ARE YOU?

__Female __Male

E-mail_____

INSTRUCTIONS:
Try to answer as many of the questions as you can. If you do not know the answer just leave the field blank.

- Thank you!

1. FORM SENTENCES

Write sentences using the words in bold showing that you understand the word;

1. **Distant**

_____

2. (a) **Reward**

_____

3. **Embrace**

_____

4. **Reduce**

_____

5. **Enlist**

_____

6. **Quest**

_____

7. **Foothold**

_____

8. **Purge**

_____

9. **Gratitude**

_____

10. **Peace**

_____

11. **Harsh**

_____

12. (a) **Mine**

_____

13. **Infest**

_____

14. **Layout**

_____

15. **Influx**

_____

16. **Insignia**

_____

17. **Abbey**

_____

18. **Volunteer**

_____

19. **Blade**

_____

20. **Unmolested**

_____

21. **Bracers**

_____

22. **Tight**

_____

23. (a) **Campaign**

_____

24. **Thrive**

_____

25. **Cease**

_____

26. **Sturdy**

_____

27. **Citizen**

_____

28. **Slay**

_____

29. **Cleanse**

_____

30. **Scout**

_____

2. VOCABULARY

Define the words to the left by circling the Swedish translation;

1. Abbey	Kyrka	Väg	Präst	Biskop
2. Volunteer	Frivillig	Volym	Djur	Uppgift
3. Blade	Blödde	Klinga	Kruka	Växt
4. Unmolested	Förstörd	Orörd	Oförberedd	Ledsen
5. Bracers	Hålla tag	Vän	Armband	Bysthållare
6. Tight	Fast	Nätt	Löst	Reslig
7. Campaign	Camping	Kompanjon	Champinjon	Kampanj
8. Thrive	Trivas	Utvecklas	Trevligt	Undra
9. Cease	Fett	Fred	Upphöra	Behaga
10. Sturdy	Pålitlig	Studie	Störd	Punktlig
11. Citizen	Människa	Medborgare	Mänsklig	Många
12. Slay	Slav	Slev	Slut	Döda
13. Cleanse	Städa	Sopa	Redogöra	Rena (från skuld)
14. Scout	Skott	Spejare	Spion	Mössa
15. Distant	Avlägsen	Diskant	Avlägsna	Drömma
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24. Peace	Bit	Fred	Persika	Del
25. Harsh	Ogästvänlig	Otrevlig	Otrolig	Orolig
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~THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION~
~THE END~