

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Language has become one of the most important skills we need to learn. Mastering one language only is not enough anymore. Lots of people in the world communicate in some certain common languages for many purposes. For many years, English has become one of the most common languages used around the world. From doing business, sports, to daily life activities, English has been spoken by people around the world. Today, English is not the only language used for those activities. Another language from the eastern part of the world, Mandarin has also become one of the most common languages used by people around the world to communicate since China has become a very strong and developed country, in Industrial and even in Educational aspect. Due to the development in these aspects, the language has become a big influence in worlds business. By mastering Mandarin, people will have the advantage in Chinese market. Not only in business, the culture itself which has thousands of year's history attracted people around the world to learn things about China.

In Indonesia, there are still some obstacles faced by teachers to teach Mandarin language to the students, especially Junior High and High School students. Using traditional in-class method to teach students in schools did not turn out so well. Various students show no motivation in learning due to some reasons. Some students cannot understand what the teacher taught them in the classroom because of unsuitable teaching

method. Some other who never learned the language before thinks of the learning process is very boring, especially when they are in the classroom. To solve this problem, we need to develop or create a new method of how to help the students learn Mandarin in a different and more exciting way, where this method can increase and create a new motivation for students to learn the language which became very important in the present days. One way to increase their motivation in learning the language is by making or creating a tool which can attracts their attention, such as games, in this case, computer games.

Computer games have become a very big influence in students' motivation in learning. Not only games are attractive, students also tend to enjoy their time in playing it. If those games are used for education, it can increase their motivation in learning, or even makes them learn while playing the games. Many education games have been created to include certain knowledge such as historical moments and biological terms, and proven to be successful.

1.2 Scope

This thesis is about a proposal of a new method of learning Mandarin in more interesting and efficient way. Developing an educational game which has a real gaming experience will surely improve the efficiency in learning Mandarin.

The scope of the thesis:

- To develop an interesting learning method for learning Mandarin and implement in a computer flash game.

- In game scope:
 - Interactive interaction with the users because it is using Flash
 - Introduction of the Mandarin characters by showing each character along with the *pin yin* (text) and pronunciation by embedding audio files.
 - A storyline for the game that encourage the users to finish a mission to go to the next round
 - The use of clue cards that is used to finish a mission and the clue cards will contain Mandarin characters to be formed into a sentence for unlocking the next stage

Methodology

In this thesis, the method to find the solution is stated below:

Pre-Game Production:

- Assist with the research and survey.

Game Production:

- Design the logic of the game play.
- Create and implement the idea of the concluded research to the actual game using Adobe Flash CS3's ActionScript 2.0 as the programming language.

Post-game Production:

- Test the actual games in the market.

- Gather the information from the test to see whether the method is successful or not.

1.3 Aims and Benefit

The thesis will be developed and aimed for some certain targets. Teenagers like Junior High School and High School students are our main target for playing the game. If possible, it is necessary for the students to learn a little bit of the language before playing the game, so they can at least understand what the game will actually teach them.

Aims:

- To develop an interesting learning method in learning Mandarin
- To attract students in learning Mandarin by showing them that Mandarin can be learned by an interesting method.
- To help students in learning and understanding Mandarin vocabulary.
- To help students in improving their reading skill
- To help students in learning how to make and arrange sentences in Mandarin

Benefit from the game:

- Increase the user's motivation in learning Mandarin by having fun
- Helps the user to understand Mandarin in more interesting method
- Improve students' vocabulary in Mandarin
- Improve students' Mandarin reading skill
- Improve students' ability in making and arranging sentences in Mandarin

1.4 Structure

The thesis will be written in seven chapters as listed below:

- Chapter 1: Introduction
 - An introduction to the thesis topic and the explanation of the reason in choosing the topic.

- Chapter 2: Theoretical Foundation
 - Explanation of the frameworks and theoretical foundation which supports the thesis making.

- Chapter 3: Analysis on games for education
 - The explanation of analysis performed during the thesis making, including the analysis on the advantage and disadvantage of the current educational games.

- Chapter 4: Design New Concept for Educational Games
 - The details of the decided concept of Educational Games which is concluded from the problem analysis.

- Chapter 5: Testing and Implementation
 - The details on the testing and implementation process for the game perfection

- Chapter 6: Discussion
 - Evaluation on the result achieved from the testing process.

- Chapter 7: Conclusion and Recommendation
 - The conclusion of the thesis.

1.5 General Notes

Job Division:

- Irianto (CS2010 1000884671) responsible for designing the logic of the game play and developing the game.
- Monica Effendy (CS2010 1000888291) responsible for researching and developing more interesting teaching/learning method along with the proper learning material

Both of us are responsible in implementing the learning material into the game and developing the storyline and artworks.