


## Analysis of Instructional Imperatives in *Genshin Impact* for EFL Vocabulary Acquisition

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### ABSTRACT

Digital games are increasingly recognized as supplementary sources of language input in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context because they provide interactive and context-rich language use. However, previous studies have mainly focused on game mechanics or learner motivation, while linguistic features of in-game instructional texts remain underexplored. This study examines the types and functions of imperative constructions in *Genshin Impact* and their potential as linguistic input for incidental EFL vocabulary acquisition. A total of 93 English instructional texts were collected from the primary quest “The Forgotten Thief” during approximately 120 minutes of gameplay. Using a descriptive qualitative design with content analysis, the data included dialogue-based instructions, tutorial prompts, and quest objectives. The findings show that simple and inclusive imperatives are most frequent, followed by compound, negative, courteous, and idiomatic forms. These imperatives provide repeated exposure to functional language, suggesting their potential to support EFL learners’ vocabulary development and pragmatic awareness.

**Keywords:** *Digital Games, Instructional Texts, Vocabulary Acquisition, EFL Learning, Genshin Impact*

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### INTRODUCTION

A strong vocabulary is crucial for learning English because it supports learners’ skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing effectively (Nation, 2022). However, many learners, especially those studying English as a Foreign Language (EFL), face ongoing difficulties because of limited vocabulary knowledge. With fewer chances to use English outside the classroom, EFL learners often find it difficult to comprehend texts, articulate ideas, and communicate fluently. As a result, their vocabulary knowledge tends to stay passive rather than active, limiting its practical use in real communicative contexts (Zaitun Qamariah, 2023). The absence of meaningful and contextual exposure to English further hampers vocabulary practice and long-term retention (Aidil Akbar Rahman & Muallim, 2025).

To address these issues, educators have increasingly adopted digital game-based strategies that simulate real-world language use. Research on Digital Game-Based Language Learning (DGBLL) indicates that digital games can enhance vocabulary acquisition by increasing learner motivation, engagement, and retention, making them a promising complement to traditional teaching methods (Bouzaiane & Youzbashi, 2024; Vnucko & Klimova, 2023). Studies have demonstrated that mobile games can enhance learners’ motivation and facilitate vocabulary acquisition by providing interactive, game-like environments for language practice (Aditya & Kalisa, 2025). Such interactions allow learners to encounter new vocabulary within meaningful contexts, thereby promoting deeper cognitive processing and improving vocabulary retention (Zainuddin et al., 2020). Within this domain, role-playing games integrate language into storylines, quests, and missions, enabling learners to acquire vocabulary incidentally while pursuing in-game objectives – often without explicit memorization (Ghorbani & Rahmandoost, 2012).

From the perspective of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), instructional language within digital games can function as meaningful input for vocabulary development. The Input Hypothesis, proposed by Krashen (Kavanagh, 2006) asserts that language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to comprehensible input supported by contextual cues. In *Genshin Impact*, the instructional texts provide comprehensible input augmented by visual cues, actions, and immediate feedback, thereby enabling learners to infer meaning through active engagement with gameplay. Additionally, usage-based learning theory (Javadi & Kazemirad, 2020) contends that repeated exposure to imperative verbs such as “go,” “take,” and “activate” within meaningful contexts facilitates incidental vocabulary acquisition through usage rather than rote memorization. Moreover, affordances theory (van Lier, 2004) suggests that the environment within the game offers opportunities for language learning by requiring players to interpret instructions and act accordingly, thereby creating conditions conducive to incidental vocabulary development.

*Genshin Impact* is one of the most popular free-to-play action RPG developed by miHoYo (Blake, 2020). Since its global launch, the game has gained widespread popularity and commercial success worldwide. Besides entertainment, it features engaging rich storytelling, interactive dialogues, and structured quests that immerse players in a linguistically rich narrative. Previous research suggests that role-playing and MMORPGs expose players to extensive thematic vocabulary related to fantasy, geography, history, and science (Cacho Corpuz, 2024). As players complete quests, follow instructions, and interact with non-player characters, they actively read and interpret contextual language, facilitating incidental vocabulary acquisition through problem-solving and task completion (Arnold-Stein & Hortobagyi, 2022). For independent EFL learners, *Genshin Impact* offers more than passive exposure; it encourages sustained interaction with authentic English content in meaningful gameplay contexts (Rahma Nuriyah et al., 2024).

A growing body of research has indicated that digital games can facilitate incidental vocabulary acquisition by presenting language in engaging, purposeful, and repeated contexts (Masduqi & Fatimah, 2021). Role playing games in particular, are regarded as promising tools because their narrative framework and mission-based progression require players to process functional language embedded in instructions, dialogues, and objectives (Guo (Chu), 2025). Even brief instructional texts, such as quest directives or system prompts, can introduce learners to new lexical items in memorable and relevant ways, thereby supporting vocabulary retention without reliance on rote memorization (Qin & Hua, 2020). Research in the Indonesian EFL context similarly confirms that online games contribute to vocabulary growth and learner motivation through sustained exposure to English texts during gameplay (Rahma Nuriyah et al., 2024).

Despite increasing interest in DGBLL, much of the existing literature has focused on multiplayer online games that emphasize spoken interaction and real-time communication (Calvo-Ferrer & Belda-Medina, 2021). While these studies underscore significant communicative benefits, they often neglect the role of reading-based language input within games, particularly instructional and directive texts that players must comprehend to progress. Single-player RPGs, which rely extensively on textual instructions such as quest objectives, tutorials, and dialogue-based directives, have received comparatively limited scholarly attention (Lin & Guo, 2021). Furthermore, prior research has frequently prioritized learner perceptions or quantitative learning outcomes over a detailed analysis of the linguistic features present in game texts (Presentación-Muñoz et al., 2025). As a result, a methodological gap persists in understanding how instructional language—particularly imperative constructions—functions as potential vocabulary input in role-playing game environments. To date, no prior study has specifically examined imperative constructions in single-player RPGs as potential vocabulary input for EFL learners.

To address this gap, the current study conducts a qualitative content analysis of instructional texts within the single-player RPG *Genshin Impact*. The potential for vocabulary acquisition is primarily assessed through the analysis of instructional imperative constructions, as these form the core of the language used to guide player action and decision-

making in role-playing games. By systematically analyzing the syntactic, pragmatic, and lexical features of these imperative forms as they occur in quests, tutorials, and dialogue instructions, this study aims to evaluate their pedagogical relevance for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners.

The investigation is guided by the overarching research question:  
How do instructional imperative constructions in *Genshin Impact* function as potential linguistic input for incidental vocabulary learning among EFL learners?

## METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research design, with content analysis as its primary methodology. A qualitative approach was selected to facilitate an in-depth examination and characterization of instructional language within a digital game, alongside its potential effects on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) vocabulary acquisition. Instead of formulating hypotheses or collecting statistical data, this method emphasizes understanding how language functions in an authentic digital environment. Qualitative content analysis is particularly effective for identifying patterns in meaning, structure, and function within textual data that naturally emerge during gameplay (Krippendorff, 2022).

The primary data source consists of English instructional texts encountered within the single-player role-playing game *Genshin Impact*, developed by miHoYo. This game was selected due to its extensive integration of instructional language through gameplay mechanics, story-driven quests, and interactive tutorials, making it an appropriate context for investigating incidental exposure to EFL vocabulary. Data collection was conducted through participatory observation, wherein the researcher assumed the role of a player-observer during live gameplay. This methodology allowed the examination of instructional texts as they naturally appeared on screen within their interactive, contextual environment, thereby grounding linguistic analysis in authentic gameplay conditions.

Data collection focused on the main quest, titled "*The Forgotten Thief*." This quest was deliberately chosen as a representative analysis unit based on specific criteria: (1) it contains a high density of instructional and directive texts, (2) it requires players to perform various goal-oriented actions guided by written instructions, and (3) it combines instructional language with visual and contextual cues to facilitate meaningful vocabulary analysis. Restricting the data to a single, self-contained quest enabled detailed and manageable qualitative analysis while preserving contextual coherence.

Instructional texts were defined as any in-game written material that directed, commanded, or guided player actions. These included quest objectives, tutorial prompts, dialogue-based directives, and interface commands. Inclusion criteria stipulated that texts must (1) explicitly instruct the player to perform an action, (2) appear during active gameplay, and (3) be in English. Narrative, decorative, or descriptive texts lacking a directive purpose were excluded. An observation checklist served as a supporting instrument to evaluate instructional texts for clarity, linguistic simplicity, repetition, contextual support, vocabulary-learning potential, and pedagogical relevance. This checklist ensured consistency during data selection and supported the analytical process.

Approximately 120 minutes of gameplay were documented across multiple sessions using screen-recording software, ensuring comprehensive data collection. All instructional texts encountered during the selected quest were manually transcribed, and screenshots were captured to preserve contextual information such as task objectives, instructions, and interface elements. Each instructional text was recorded in a researcher-developed table that included the text itself, the gameplay context, the quest stage, and the linguistic form. A total of 93 instructional texts met the inclusion criteria and were considered sufficient for identifying recurring linguistic and pragmatic patterns within the selected quest.

The coding process adhered to a qualitative content analysis framework comprising three stages: data reduction, categorization, and interpretation. Coding was performed in two iterative cycles. The first cycle involved reviewing all transcribed texts to eliminate duplicates

and exclude items that did not meet the instructional criteria. The observation checklist informed this initial data reduction and preliminary categorization, ensuring that only pedagogically relevant instructional texts were retained. In the second cycle, texts were coded and categorized based on two analytical dimensions: (1) linguistic structure and (2) pragmatic function.

Linguistic coding focused on grammatical and lexical features, including imperative verb forms, verb phrases, modal constructions, and phrasal verbs. Pragmatic coding addressed the functional purpose of each instruction, such as directing movement, initiating interaction, completing tasks, managing resources, or issuing warnings. Coding was conducted manually using tables in Microsoft Word, allowing meticulous attention to linguistic detail and contextual interpretation.

The coding scheme was developed inductively from the data and refined through repeated comparisons across texts. An expert in English education reviewed the coding framework to evaluate the clarity and consistency of category definitions. Feedback from this review informed subsequent revisions to the coding scheme. Peer debriefing sessions were also conducted to discuss coding decisions and resolve ambiguities, thereby minimizing researcher bias and enhancing analytical rigor.

To ensure credibility and dependability, expert review and peer debriefing were employed throughout the analysis, consistent with best practices in qualitative content analysis (Lim, 2025). Since the study involved no human participants or personal data, ethical approval was not required. All data originated from publicly accessible game content and were utilized in accordance with fair-use principles for academic purposes, with appropriate attribution.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study analyzed 93 English instructional texts extracted from the quest “*The Forgotten Thief*” within the role-playing game *Genshin Impact*. The analysis concentrated on instructional utterances that functioned as directives guiding player actions during gameplay. These texts predominantly appeared in three contexts: quest objectives, character dialogues, and tutorial-like instructions embedded within the gameplay. Table 1 presents the distribution of imperative forms identified in the data.

Table 1. Distribution of Imperative Forms in *The Forgotten Thief* Quest

Imperative Form Type	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Simple imperatives	45	48.5%
Inclusive imperatives (“let’s”)	22	23.7%
Other directive forms	16	17.2%
Negative imperatives	7	7.5%
Polite/softened imperatives	3	3.1%
Total	93	100%

As shown in Table 1, simple imperatives were the most commonly used instructional form, making up nearly half of the dataset (48.5%,  $n = 45$ ). These imperatives usually consisted of a base verb followed by a noun phrase or complement, serving as direct commands. Examples include “Solve the magical puzzle,” “Watch the magic show at the opera house,” and “Go to the cemetery to look for Jemma.” Inclusive imperatives using the phrase “let’s” were the second most frequent form (23.7%,  $n = 22$ ). These imperatives often appeared in dialogue-based instructions that presented actions as shared activities between characters and the player. Examples include “Let’s take a closer look” and “Let’s go interview Lenny.”

Other directive forms, including conditional, interrogative, and idiomatic imperatives, constituted 17.2% of the data ( $n = 16$ ). These instructions exhibited greater structural diversity compared to simple imperatives. Examples include conditional constructions such as “Activate all the magic steps without stepping on the same one twice,” and idiomatic imperatives such as “Keep an eye on Lorenzo.” Negative imperatives were less common, accounting for 7.5% ( $n = 7$ ), and were primarily employed to restrict player actions in high-risk or sensitive situations. An example of this category is “Do not say anything and do not

look back." Polite or softened imperatives represented the least frequent category at 3.1% (n = 3), and were predominantly used in socially sensitive or affective interaction contexts. These imperatives were typically marked by politeness markers, as exemplified by "Please take good care of that rainbow rose."

Instructional texts were systematically employed across all categories to assign tasks, regulate actions, direct movement, and facilitate transitions within gameplay. These instructional features appeared in tutorial prompts, dialogue-based instructions, and quest objectives. The findings indicate that *Genshin Impact's* instructional language is deliberately integrated into gameplay to support player decision-making and task progression. The data indicated that compound and sequential instructions, which involve managing multiple actions or constraints, extend beyond basic commands. Examples include directives with restrictions, like "without stepping on the same one twice," and coordinated tasks, such as "Go somewhere quiet and ask about the truth." These types of instructions were primarily employed in puzzle-solving and investigative activities.

Inclusive imperatives employing the form "let us" were identified within dialogue-based instructional texts, as exemplified by expressions such as "Let us take a closer look." These directives depicted actions as shared endeavours between the speaker and the participant, rather than as explicit commands. Although *Genshin Impact* is predominantly a single-player game, such inclusive imperatives frequently appeared in character interactions that guided players toward cooperative or joint activities within the narrative, thereby emphasizing discourse-level collaboration. Negative imperatives functioning as safety or warning instructions were also identified within the dataset. Instructions such as "Do not speak or look back" were used to restrict players' behaviour in potentially hazardous, urgent, or stressful scenarios. These directives typically appeared at critical junctures within missions, where inappropriate actions could impede progress or lead to unfavourable in-game outcomes.

In-game players were exposed to a diverse range of lexical items within the instructional texts. These included phrasal and idiomatic expressions such as "head back" and "keep an eye on," high-frequency action verbs such as "go," "take," and "press," as well as procedural verbs including "activate," "observe," and "solve." These vocabulary terms were repeatedly encountered across various educational contexts and gaming phases. Furthermore, quest objectives, dialogue-based instructions, and puzzle-solving activities often incorporated these lexical components. Since each instruction linked to a specific player response, understanding this terminology was crucial for in-game actions and objectives.

Instructional vocabulary was consistently integrated within meaningful gameplay actions and was supported by visual cues and immediate in-game results. Lexical items were incorporated into problem-solving exercises, navigation instructions, combat directives, and goal-oriented tasks rather than presented in isolation. Instructional texts played a vital role in facilitating progress within the game across the dataset. Consequently, advancement through quests relied on accurate interpretation of instructional language, indicating a strong correlation between vocabulary comprehension and task completion.

The analysis indicated that the most prevalent instructional texts within the dataset consisted of simple action and navigation commands. Examples include directives such as "Solve the magical puzzle," "Attend the magic show at the opera house," and "Proceed to the cemetery to locate Jemma." These instructions comprise the core instructional language used in *Genshin Impact* and primarily serve to guide player movement, observation, and task completion.

From a linguistic perspective, these directives are mainly expressed as straightforward imperatives or imperatives followed by purpose clauses. They typically feature a base verb accompanied by a noun phrase (e.g., "solve the puzzle") or an infinitive clause (e.g., "go to the cemetery to locate Jemma"), resulting in a grammatical structure that is succinct and formulaic. This structural pattern is consistently observed across all quest objectives and in-game prompts.

From a lexical standpoint, most of the verbs employed in simple action and navigation instructions were high-frequency action verbs, such as go, watch, take, solve, and look for.

These verbs frequently recurred across different gameplay stages and educational contexts, indicating a consistent lexical pattern within the instructional texts of the game.

From a pragmatic perspective, simple action and navigation instructions served as direct commands that required prompt responses from the player. As each command was closely linked to a specific in-game activity, successful progression in quests depended on accurate interpretation of these instructions. Spatial mobility, visual cues, and in-game outcomes further reinforced the intended meaning of the instructions.

The analysis identified a class of compound and sequential instructional imperatives that differ both structurally and functionally from straightforward action and navigation instructions. These directives required players to manage multiple actions, conditions, or constraints within a single command, unlike instructions that involve a single action. Examples include commands such as "Go somewhere quiet and inquire about the truth" and "Activate all the magical steps without repeating any one." Such instructions are frequently associated with investigation, puzzle-solving, and exploration quests, where completing tasks necessitates following specific steps in a designated order or within particular constraints. Consequently, within the broader instructional framework of the game, these forms represent a more advanced mode of directive language.

From a syntactic perspective, coordination and subordination are commonly utilized in compound and sequential instructions to signify procedural relationships between actions. The conjunction serves to connect two imperative clauses within the directive, exemplified by the statement "Go somewhere quiet and ask about the truth." This form of coordination indicates that the activities are not independent alternatives but are instead sequential and interconnected. The correct execution of the initial step is crucial for the successful completion of the subsequent step. Such grammatical structuring demonstrates that instructional texts explicitly incorporate procedural order within their syntactic framework, requiring individuals to comprehend the logical relationships between actions.

Similarly, the directive "Activate all the magic steps without stepping on the same one twice" includes a subordinate clause introduced by "without" following the primary imperative phrase. This syntactic structure requires players to simultaneously understand the associated constraint and determine the appropriate course of action. The condition embedded within the subordinate clause restricts the execution of the main action. Such instructions, characterized by this structure, are predominantly encountered in puzzle-based gameplay scenarios where strict adherence to rules is essential for task completion. These syntactic patterns demonstrate that conditional logic was often encoded grammatically within instructional discourse.

In practical applications, compound and sequential instructions functioned primarily as procedural and rule-based directives rather than commands requiring immediate action. These instructions necessitated participants to organize their actions systematically, monitor progress, and evaluate results in accordance with specific circumstances. This approach contrasts with simple imperative statements that prompt direct and immediate responses. A precise understanding of the instructions' limitations and the sequence of steps was crucial for successful task completion. The importance of these instructions in regulating gameplay behaviour through explicit procedural guidance is underscored by the fact that deviations from the prescribed order or constraints typically resulted in the termination or reset of the task.

From a lexical perspective, compound and sequential instructions frequently incorporate procedural verbs such as activate, step on, and ask about. These verbs were frequently used in comparable task types and were strongly associated with particular in-game dynamics. Repeated interactions with gameplay systems and feedback from task outcomes helped to clarify their meanings. Players frequently had to repeat tasks and reprocess the instructional language after misinterpreting these lexical pieces, which resulted in unsuccessful efforts. The procedural nature of the terminology employed in challenging educational contexts was strengthened by this frequent exposure.

The results indicate that compound and sequential imperatives constitute a distinct category of instructional language within *Genshin Impact*. Compared to simple imperatives, these instructions exhibit increased structural complexity and serve specific functions. They are consistently employed in gameplay scenarios that require adherence to rules, action sequencing, and problem-solving. The persistent association between these instructional forms and cognitively demanding tasks suggests that the game deliberately employs linguistic complexity to facilitate structured progression and effective task management.

The analysis identified a specific category of instructional language in *Genshin Impact* characterized by inclusive imperatives constructed with "let us" or "let's," followed by a base verb. Unlike simple imperatives such as "go," "solve," or "defeat," these structures explicitly include both the speaker and the addressee as joint participants in the instructed action. Linguistically, inclusive imperatives situate the player and in-game characters as collaborators rather than as a command authority to a recipient. This grammatical form distinguished inclusive imperatives from other directive types within the dataset and reflected a different interactional orientation within the game's instructional framework.

Inclusive imperatives predominantly appeared in conversational instructional contexts, particularly during investigations, group explorations, and narrative modifications. Typical examples included phrases such as "Let us take a closer look" and "Let us go interview Lenny." These directives were integrated into character dialogue rather than system-generated quest objectives or tutorial messages. Their placement within conversations indicated that the instructions were embedded within ongoing storyline interactions. Consequently, instructional messages were communicated through character speech rather than explicit system commands, emphasizing dialogue as the primary method of instruction delivery within the game.

Functionally, inclusive imperatives functioned as collaborative directives that framed actions as shared decisions or collective activities. Rather than issuing direct commands, these forms encouraged participation and alignment between the speaker and the participant. The directive strength of these instructions depended on inclusion rather than obligation, positioning the participant as an active partner in the action. Comprehending these instructions required recognizing not only the action to be performed but also the interpersonal stance implied by the inclusive wording, which distinguished them from more authoritative imperative forms.

The analysis further demonstrated that the interpretation of inclusive imperatives is highly context-dependent. For example, the phrase "Let us take a closer look" was used during moments when characters collaboratively examined clues or objects. Conversely, the instruction "Let us go interview Lenny" indicated a transition to the subsequent stage of investigation. In each instance, the instructional meaning was inherently linked to the surrounding narrative context, character interactions, and the progression of the quest. These findings suggest that inclusive imperatives serve as narrative-driven instructions whose meaning is derived through social interaction and shared activity within the gameplay environment.

Apart from simple, compound, and inclusive imperatives, the dataset also encompassed polite, negative, and idiomatic imperative forms as supplementary variants within the instructional language of the game. Although these forms appeared less frequently than other imperative types, they contributed significantly to the structural and functional diversity of the dataset. These variations illustrated that the instructional language in *Genshin Impact* extended beyond direct action commands to include a broader spectrum of directive strategies, which were adapted to various gameplay contexts and narrative elements.

Polite imperatives are characterized by the inclusion of politeness markers such as "please." An example identified in the data was "Please take good care of that rainbow rose." In this construction, the politeness marker attenuates the directive force of the imperative and frames the instruction as considerate rather than authoritative. Such forms are typically observed in socially sensitive or emotionally significant interactions, rather than in time-critical or action-oriented gameplay segments. The presence of politeness markers indicates

an interpersonal orientation that distinguishes these imperatives from more direct instructional forms.

Negative imperatives were frequently constructed using the contraction "don't" and served as restrictive or cautionary directives. Instructions such as "Do not speak or look back" exemplify how the repetition of the negative marker emphasized prohibition and urgency. These imperatives predominantly appeared in tense or high-risk gameplay scenarios where player actions required regulation or limitation. Their instructional significance was further reinforced by narrative cues and immediate in-game consequences, underscoring the importance of compliance with the prescribed restrictions.

Idiomatic imperatives were also identified, including expressions such as "Keep an eye on Lorenzo." These instructions necessitated interpretation beyond their literal meaning and relied on contextual information derived from narrative events, character behavior, and gameplay objectives. Compared to literal directives, idiomatic imperatives were less transparent and required players to infer their intended meaning based on situational cues. Their inclusion indicated that the game incorporated figurative language within its instructional texts, thereby adding an additional layer of linguistic complexity.

The presence of polite, negative, and idiomatic imperatives indicates that instructional discourse in *Genshin Impact* encompasses more than mere commands, extending to interpersonal subtleties and figurative meanings across various gameplay contexts.

Polite imperatives are characterized by the use of politeness markers such as "please." An illustrative example is: "Please take good care of that rainbow rose." In this construction, the politeness marker diminishes the commanding nature of the imperative, framing the instruction as considerate rather than authoritative. Such forms are generally employed in contexts involving emotional sensitivity, interpersonal communication, or narrative engagement, rather than in situations requiring immediate or urgent action. This indicates that politeness strategies are selectively utilized to ensure that instructions align with the social tone of the interaction.

Negative imperatives were typically constructed using the contraction "don't" and served as restrictive or warning directives. The instruction "Don't say anything and don't look back" emphasized prohibition and urgency through the repetition of the negative marker. These imperatives predominantly appeared in tense or high-risk gameplay scenarios where player actions needed to be constrained. Their instructional effectiveness was reinforced by contextual narrative cues and the potential for immediate in-game consequences, rendering accurate interpretation essential for the successful continuation of the task.

Idiomatic imperatives were also identified, including expressions such as "Keep an eye on Lorenzo." Unlike literal directives, these instructions necessitate interpretation beyond their explicit meaning and rely on contextual cues derived from character dialogue, narrative progression, and gameplay events. These idiomatic imperatives are less transparent than other forms of directives and require players to infer their intended meaning through situational context, thereby emphasizing their distinct lexical and pragmatic characteristics within the instructional system.

Overall, the use of polite, negative, and idiomatic imperatives has expanded the range of directive forms employed in *Genshin Impact*. Compared to inclusive and straightforward imperatives, these variations introduce interpersonal nuance, emotional intensity, and figurative meaning into the instructional language. Their systematic presence across various gameplay contexts demonstrates that the game utilizes a diverse array of imperative strategies to regulate player behavior and guide progression beyond simple command structures.

This study examines imperative constructions in *Genshin Impact* to analyze their function as linguistic input for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. By investigating the types, structures, and pragmatic functions of imperative forms within the game, the research addresses questions related to instructional language and its potential as EFL input. Findings indicate that imperative forms predominate the game's instructional discourse, reflecting the action-oriented nature of digital gameplay. These forms appear in various formats – simple,

compound, inclusive, polite, negative, and idiomatic – demonstrating that instructional language is not only functional but also pragmatically diverse.

From the perspective of digital game-based language learning, the frequent use of concise, goal-oriented imperatives supports efficient task completion while facilitating learner comprehension. Instructions are consistently reinforced through visual cues, spatial navigation, and immediate feedback, which reduce cognitive load and enable learners to focus on meaning rather than linguistic form. This aligns with prior research suggesting that multimodal support enhances comprehension and engagement in game-based environments (Dwi Prastiwi & Lestari, 2025).

From a second language acquisition perspective, instructional texts promote meaning-focused processing and establish conditions conducive to incidental vocabulary acquisition. Learners interact repeatedly with imperative verbs and expressions across various quests to achieve in-game objectives, thereby reinforcing form-meaning connections through practical application. This corroborates earlier studies indicating that vocabulary acquisition within digital games often occurs without explicit memorization (Calvo-Ferrer & Belda-Medina, 2021; Gunel & Top, 2022).

Further analysis indicates that imperative constructions serve a range of pragmatic functions, including navigation, action and combat, problem-solving, collaboration, and safety warnings. These functions demonstrate that instructions are embedded within meaningful, goal-oriented activities rather than being presented as isolated commands. Such pragmatic language use is consistent with communication strategy research, which emphasizes learners' ability to interpret input, negotiate meaning, and manage language use during task-oriented interactions (Kalisa, 2019).

More complex structures, such as compound and sequential imperatives, impose higher cognitive demands by requiring planning and procedural reasoning. However, the game environment mitigates this complexity through repetition, visual scaffolding, and immediate feedback, enabling learners to process complex input effectively (Rajendran et al., 2024). Inclusive imperatives, exemplified by "let's," further model collaborative language use and enhance pragmatic competence, aligning with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) descriptors for interactive communication (Council of Europe, 2018). Polite, negative, and idiomatic imperatives add sociopragmatic nuance and figurative meaning to the instructional language. These forms aid learners' awareness of politeness strategies, warnings, and idiomatic expressions, thereby broadening vocabulary knowledge beyond literal meanings (Council of Europe, 2018; Leow, 2020).

In summary, the study suggests that vocabulary learning within *Genshin Impact* is predominantly incidental, contextualized, and reinforced through repeated use across diverse gameplay situations. By integrating language with action, narrative, and problem-solving tasks, the game offers a linguistically rich environment that fosters lexical development and pragmatic competence. Consequently, this research contributes to digital game-based language learning by demonstrating the critical role of imperative variation in enhancing EFL learners' vocabulary acquisition, particularly at the A2–B2 proficiency levels.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the instructional imperative constructions in *Genshin Impact* to assess their potential as linguistic input for incidental vocabulary acquisition within English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. The results demonstrate that the game utilizes a variety of imperative forms – including simple, compound, inclusive, polite, negative, and idiomatic imperatives – that are systematically integrated into goal-oriented gameplay. This suggests that instructional language in commercial role-playing games is not solely functional but also exhibits notable linguistic patterns. From a second language acquisition perspective, these instructional imperatives serve as meaning-focused input that necessitates comprehension for successful task completion. Repeated and contextually embedded exposure to these imperative constructions facilitates the development of form-meaning associations and aligns

with input-based and usage-based theories of language learning. The presence of procedural and idiomatic imperatives further indicates opportunities for expanding vocabulary depth and pragmatic awareness through gameplay. Limitations of this research include its focus on a single quest and the lack of direct measurement of learners' vocabulary gains. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted as indicative rather than definitive. Future studies should consider extending the analysis to multiple quests or employing learner-centered methodologies to investigate the influence of interaction with instructional imperatives on actual vocabulary development.

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