

By [Filippo](#), Games Editor

[WoW to Teach Chinese Gamers English](#)

Good thought. Why not set up one server that teaches everyone else Chinese?

Last month's [Game Developers Conference](#) held an impressive number of events, more or less interesting but all game related. Professor Edd Schneider and Kai Zeng, student of Information Communication Technology presented their idea (based on a project that originally ran two years ago), of using [MMOs](#) such as [World of Warcraft](#) to teach [Chinese](#) gamers English. What, Chinese people don't speak English? The project is entitled: English Speaking Players as In-Game Content: New Ideas for Marketing to Youth in Asia. In their interview with Gmasutra, the two revealed how it all started and why they felt it was necessary for something like this to happen. Edd Schneider said: "Beyond the marketing thing, it just bothered me that games are supposed to let us play together, then [for most MMOs] they split everyone up on servers. I think that's totally asinine. If you play WoW, wouldn't you like to play against the best players from China? Everyone would say "yes." What we're hoping people are going to do is say, "Let's make an ESL-friendly server. Tell the Americans that not everyone is going to have perfect English, but they're going to want to learn." True..., true. But if you're a gamer right?, and you're aware of World of Warcraft (what it does, how it plays) and you get yourself up on one of the servers and in a raid group, you'd probably have some knowledge of English to get to that point, right? I can't imagine anyone not having a clue, being able to play video games at the fullest, especially WoW. Besides, it doesn't matter because you can make your own party, so you get to choose. But in other words, dummies can play WoW just as good. Not saying that if you can't speak English, then you're a dummy. Why am I apologizing here? I'm writing in English. But that's not the case here, as you first have to be able to speak to someone and communicate your intentions, in order to join a party." "That would be an attractor," Schneider said, "because the other thing that bothered me was that these online games get bad PR. People say, "You can't be in my clan unless your English is perfect." That's a small number of gamers, I think, and if you had this ESL server with a million people it would show that the majority of gamers are open-minded." "That last part, I'm not so sure about. I mean, you see that you've gotten yourself in a group where everyone speaks Chinese, and you don't have a clue, but you continue anyhow? Not likely. Spoiled gamer brats aren't that open minded. They're open minded when it comes to finishing an instance, but not this. Anyway, let's hope it all turns out fine. After all, English has become everyone's second language.