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To Game, or Not to Game?:

Addressing the Question of Cultural Scripts and Game Use in Language Learning

By

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Introduction

Cultural scripts are defined in cognitive linguistics as a clear way with which speakers articulate culture-specific norms, values and practices in accessible and precise terms to cultural insiders and outsiders alike. In addition, these scripts can be easily explained to those outside of the cultural norms (Achard & Niemeier, 2008; Goddard, 2009; Littlemore, 2009; Sharifian, 2014). Cross-cultural understanding is made possible because scripts are written and formulated in tight, constrained grammatical patterns with simple concepts that are likely to have equivalents in other languages. Cultural scripts exist at different levels of generality and may be related to various aspects of reasoning, thinking, behavior and speaking. They are, therefore, intended to capture background norms, guidelines, templates, or models used to govern the way people behave, act, or feel in a specific cultural context. Although cultural scripts indicate much about practices in speech, they are not a description of behaviors in a particular cultural context.

Introducing language learners to cultural scripts in the target language encourages a greater understanding of the L2's culture as well as helping learners achieve a more "natural" use of the target language. The end goal is for the learner to be able to communicate in the language learned without interference from L1 cultural or linguistic issues. Culture influences how language is used, and this affects people's representation of a situation. For example, some standard styles of speaking such as "directness," "formality," or "involvement" are influenced by cultural scripts (c.f., Goddard, 2009). English speech patterns can be described as "direct" in comparison to Japanese; however, English can be seen as "indirect" when compared to Hebrew (c.f., Mizutani & Mizutani, 1987; Katriel, 1986

in Goddard, 2009). These kinds of differences are sometimes discussed in language learning, but they can be difficult for learners to remember and follow. The theory of Cognitive Grammar (CG) (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, 1987; Langacker, 2008) can be used within a communicative task-based approach to teach cultural scripts. That means, in such a cultural context, the grammar will not be used as a formal system that operates independently of its meaning, but rather the grammar in itself is constructive, meaningful, and differentiated from semantics. The theory also emphasizes the need to study the cognitive principles that may give rise to the organization of languages, making it easier for people within a particular cultural context to communicate with ease.

The CG approach assumes that there are no underlying structures or derivations in language. Instead, speakers learn grammatical rules through hearing the language (Langacker, 1987; Lakoff, 1987). It is also claimed that grammar is natural and can offer theoretical austerity and conceptual unification. CG, as a usage-based theory, corresponds with the communicative principles of language teaching (Achard, 2004). The language that people within a certain cultural context make use of to communicate must be appropriate to the situation at hand, the speaker's role, the register, and the setting in order to ensure that the people involved in any communication understand each other well. The theoretical (CG), and pedagogical, cultural script (CS), frameworks can be used together to expose learners to more instances of linguistic cultural norms through more focused activities that associate grammatical form to meaning (Vygotsky, 1968; Lantolf, 2009; Negueruela-Azarola & Garcia, 2016). The students, instead of making the uphill battle from grammatical to lexical to metaphorical, can begin with the lexical and metaphorical and then the instructor can

introduce the grammatical after students are comfortable with the semantics (Achard, 2004). That means that students have to first understand the communicative context that relates to the vocabulary of a specific language and then connect it to the symbolism of a thing within the communicative content. Then after the students are comfortable with interpreting the meanings of these words and phrases, they can be introduced to the grammatical issues, and this way, communication and understanding of a certain language within the cultural context will have been made possible. The application of this theoretical framework can be made in various fashions.

I propose that second language (L2) acquisition from a CG approach (c.f., Roche & Suárez, 2014) can be made more effective by the use of analog games (AG) as a way to teach cultural scripts. Analog games can be broadly classified as work done on a tabletop or role-playing live-action games such as card or board games. The themes from analog games can then be transferred and remapped as a role-playing game (RPG), which can be used as a digital tool in computer-assisted language learning (CALL). The idea is that through character, students can create a degree of separation between their day-to-day stresses (school, grades, work, etc.) and their time working with the language. The students also get to interact with each other during such games, and this can lead to the development in the cultural knowledge of the students. The themes of the games reflect concepts from cultural scripts, and the students work through those themes through their characters. Personal narratives create a powerful tool when learners reform their identity within the target language and culture (Kramsch, 2000; Lantolf, 2009). Language learners feel confronted by the need to construct a "new history, or a new narrative" each time they get to interact with

each other during such physical activities. (Kramersch, 2000). Through clear connections of language to culture and a focus on character building, learners would not have to encounter these feelings alone. Lessons focused on communication through cultural scripts, and the association of possible cultural keywords, could provide learners with tools to restructure their identity as emergent bilinguals. This method of collaborative learning by use of games fosters the development of language in different cultural contexts, especially because the learners have to see a reason to make use of the language in order to interact with each other. These collaborative tasks could cause faster development of the language and lead to an enhanced development in the cultural awareness of the different learners.

Before Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (ST), some treated social processes and language separately from one another. The language was studied within social contexts, but outside of that, language was a system of arbitrary signs or symbols (Kramersch, 2000). There were also fewer interactions from the cultural contexts of the learners, and therefore the development of the language was less divergent than it is currently. Based on Vygotsky's theory, however, scholars have claimed that social activity necessarily precedes the emergence of language (c.f., Vygotsky, 1968; Achard, 2004; Blake, 2020). The theory places emphasis on the language, culture, and internalization that affects the development of a child specifically. Sociocultural Theory showed that parents, peers, caregivers, and the culture within which one was raised were responsible for the development of high-order functions. The theory suggested that the cognitive development of a child was affected by the cultural context in which they are raised in specifically two ways. First, children gain more of their knowledge or simply the contents of their thoughts from the culture to which they are

exposed. Second, not only does the culture teach children how they ought to think but also how they ought to think in their process of growth. Intellectual growth will then emerge out of the process, in which the experiences of problem-solving are shared with parents, peers, siblings, and language instructors. The theory also suggested that children can solve some of these problems on their own, but the more challenging problems that they get exposed to require help from other social agents such as their parents. Vygotsky gave the difference between what children can or cannot do a name, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). He argued that if the zone is not respected either through helping the children complete the tasks on their own or not helping them through the difficult tasks, it could act as a barrier to cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1968; Achard, 2004; Blake, 2020). Being exposed to collaborative learning methods such as games to learn a language helps children gain understanding in a faster and reliable way. Children need to be comfortable to learn effectively and the speech intended to teach them will play a vital role in ensuring successful learning. The more comfortable children and students feel with speech production and working within cultural scripts, the better prepared they are for real-world communication and cultural understanding.

Purpose

This thesis focuses on the application of collaborative learning methods in Sociocultural Theory through the use of games. As previously discussed, society plays an influential role in the development of a child. Sociocultural Theory, which suggests that human learning is largely a social process, focusses on interactions present in human development. To enhance language development that occurs as a result of cultural and

societal influence, this paper identifies a collaborative learning technique that can be used. Games are an interactive way for students to easily learn about the language of another person. Students need to learn the language of their peers in order to interact during the games. In addition, students will also need to understand their opponents, especially when they are involved in a competition. This paper discusses the various benefits and challenges of using games within the framework of Sociocultural Theory. It also aims at identifying the impact of this collaborative learning method in order to come up with even better ways of integrating games into classroom learning.

Overview

This thesis begins with a brief history of the theory of language, various learning theories and finally language learning theories. These are ordered on a scale from the least compatible with collaborative learning first to the most compatible with collaborative learning last. I discuss theories that are incompatible with the cognitive learning process in order to differentiate between the most applicable processes. At the end of this section, I discuss theories of language learning that support the idea of pairing gaming and collaborative learning. In addition to these theories, the concept of games as a collaborative learning method will be discussed. The thesis will conclude by making pedagogical suggestions that show that language instructors can use games as a collaborative learning tool in the classroom.

History and Theory

Over the years, various scholars have developed theories of learning in order to codify the process of learning. With the advent of linguistics as a discipline, scholars turned their attention to describing the process of language learning. This section discusses relevant theories of learning as well as theories and methods of language learning with an eye to assessing its compatibility with collaborative learning in the form of games during the learning process.

Theories of Language

Theories of language are designed to answer questions about language properties and the origin of the language. Philosophers and linguists are the leading proponents of theories about language. Most philosophers and, of late many linguists, assume that language and culture are intertwined, and social factors are responsible for language acquisition. Early philosophers believed that members of society had formed their language step-by-step to satisfy their psychological need to communicate (Bühler, 1990). In this view, language is a mental invention of communication techniques resulting from interaction with others in an environmental setting. The brain adapts to the sounds within its environment, which contributes to language perception.

Theories of Learning

Learning theory was founded by great philosophers and psychologists such as Plato, John Locke, John Watson, B.F. Skinner, and Ivan Pavlov. Plato believed that knowledge is present at birth and all information that an individual learns is due to the previous

recollection of ideas. Therefore, he concludes that it becomes difficult for a person to learn if someone did not previously have knowledge (Wells, 1994). On the other hand, Locke says that human beings are born without innate knowledge and learn language through perception and sensation. When a baby is born, the brain learns from what is present in the environment. These ideas fit with the assumptions of CG that consider language to be learned in a societal context as a response to external stimuli.

Psychologists like BF Skinner came up with Behaviorism to explain how an individual perceives language. Operant conditioning is a method that Skinner used to study this theory. He used a chamber of reinforcement where he placed a rat inside with food pellets and a pedal. Whenever the rat stepped on the pedal, food pellets would drop for its feed. Thus, whenever the rat needed food, it just had to step on the pedal (Skinner, 1963). The theory was used to illustrate how behaviors can be enhanced through reinforcement. The theory shows that the human brain is conditioned to what it is used to hearing since repetitive sound perception becomes language perception (Skinner, 1963). This learning theory has faced criticism and has been regarded as unhelpful (Wells, 1994). The reason behind this was that learning is not only based on repetitive actions but also influenced by social contexts (Langacker, 1987).

Grammar translation

Grammar translation theory (GTT) was based on the faculty concept that body and mind are separate, and that the mind is formed from three parts, will, intellect, and emotion. The intellect could be improved to control emotions, and the will could be improved through the study of Greek, classical Roman literature, and mathematics. Therefore, the method of

grammar-translation was influential in teaching these subjects. An individual whose intellect had been sharpened by this education was considered mature enough to face any form of life challenge.

GTT is not compatible with student centered learning because it is better taught by the language instructor directly. It involves translating foreign words and grammatical structures into the native language with the instructor providing guidance and correction. There is no place for co-constructed learning or the discussion of culture. Grammar-translation is an exercise to train the mind and not an opportunity to delve into a new society and culture. In spite of the innate incompatibility of grammar-translation and collaborative learning, one study has argued that language instructors can use games effectively with grammar-translation with young learners (Guliyev, Imamverdiyeva, Hamzayeva, Mahmudova, Mammadova & Gruzina, 2017).

Situational Language Teaching (SLT)

Situational Language Teaching (SLT) was introduced to replace grammar-translation by bringing a new approach to teaching language. British applied linguists, Harold Palmer and A.S. Hornby, founded SLT in the 1930s (Smith & Loewen, 2018). It marked an important transition in language learning history by introducing a second language grammar and vocabulary in natural situations. This teaching approach was based on a structural view of language, speech, and basic vocabulary structures. Proper use of vocabulary items and mastery of grammar rules was emphasized, leading theoretically the correct use of grammar and proper pronunciation.

SLT assumes that the language being taught is realistic; words must grow out of a situation which makes the meaning of words dependent on the situations they are tied to. The approach broke down after much criticism from other scholars. For example, Chomsky (1957) stated that students' learning behavior could not be possibly achieved by repetitive sentence structure. According to him, there is something more like an innate predisposition that encourages linguistic competencies. For more on the distinction between Chomskian linguistics and CG, see Lakoff 1987, Langacker 1987, Langacker 1991. As mentioned above, CG relies on practice and entrenchment as tools of language acquisition, which makes language learning similar to learning other skills. However, the assumption that we learn by doing does not exclude the idea that some learning is innate, i.e., pattern recognition or force dynamics (Talmy 1988, Langacker 1987).

The compatibility of SLT and collaborative learning through games is questionable since it involves teaching only vocabulary and sentence structure, including identifying the intonation of words. This method is incompatible with collaborative learning since language instructors need to select what sentences to teach and spell out words in order to enable learners to grasp the rising and falling intonation of different words. There is no intent to teach how the words and sentences fit into a wider cultural pattern.

Audio-lingual Approach

This approach was initially referred to as the Army Method. It originated from the education offered to the army during World War II (Alemi & Tavakoli, 2016). The army

needed to learn the language of their enemies during the war; hence this marked a new language acquisition era. Individuals widely used the method in the 1950s and 1960s (Alemi & Tavakoli, 2016). It had one aim which was to impart the structure of language to the army without necessarily understanding the words used. Learners acquired many language errors, however, since they did not actually acquire the language in a social context. The method also did not result an improvement in communication that lasted long term; hence, it was regarded as unhelpful with time. This theory seems to be the language learning version of Behaviorism.

Games are incompatible with this teaching method because their main goal is to impart language to individuals without their necessarily understanding the structure or its meaning at first. Learning the structures and words first and then the classification scheme in a foreign language is comparable to children who learn a specific word first and use it to refer to all other things in the category. For example, a child learns dog first and then dog is used to refer to all animals before the child understands that the word animal is used to label the category. The Audio-lingual Approach is not meant to be used as a theory of higher order categorization, but rather as a way to quickly teach speakers to produce memorized sentences to influence a certain outcome.

Communicative Language Theory (CLT)

Michael Halliday developed Communicative Language Theory (CLT) as a response to Noam Chomsky's theories of the 1960s (Savignon, 1987). CLT is a primary method of teaching language because it provides a place where students can share their experiences in the target language. The theory highlights the role of an instructor in this method as a facilitator rather than an instructor because it is a student-based approach. Instructors use this theory to measure the ability of learners to speak their target language individually. Further, the theory requires instructors to use prior teachings and readings before embarking on new topics, which helps create a base for a new language for learners (Savignon, 1987).

CTL has been termed a practical approach in language teaching (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). By grouping learners together, learning through sharing their life experiences acts as a motivating factor; hence, understanding language becomes much more manageable. The method also breaks the monotony of language instructor-centered teaching by giving learners a chance to be instructors (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

The learning process described here is compatible with games since it is a process that is student focused and motivating to the students. Students have considered studying in groups a motivating factor since they learn from their peers, and group interaction acts as a break from the language instructor being in control. In addition, games are used in this method to reduce students' anxiety and increase fluency in students' speech as it generates a platform to compete actively.

The Natural Approach

Krashen (1987) proposed the theory of Natural Language Acquisition in the 1970s, and Terrell applied these ideas in various language textbooks, including Spanish and German (Krashen & Scarcella, 1978). In this approach, language is not forced but instead allowed to emerge freely within a given setting/ environment. Within a classroom, language acquisition happens when classroom activities are related to real-world activities. Terrell believes that both conscious and subconscious brains are responsible for language acquisition. The conscious brain helps study grammar as the subconscious perceives the language at hand (Terrell, 1982). The approach was difficult to apply in adult learners because their cognitive systems are well developed and can store aspects of language as working and long-term memory concurrently. The method is very compatible with games while instructing because playing games is an activity that occurs in the real world and requires real language use. Furthermore, an instructor can use games to ease learners' anxiety and direct them towards their peers.

Systemic Thinking (ST)

The term “Systemic Thinking” originates from Ludwig von Bertalanffy’s General Systems Theory (GST) which is the interdisciplinary study of interrelated groups. In Gallón (2019), the definition of ST is the ability to theoretical and practically “observe, model, simulate, analyze, design, and synthesize” connections across disciplines, people, cultures, etc. in ways that lead to insightful solutions. Four central constructs within ST are relevant to language teaching: dialectics, verbal thinking internalization, cultural mediation, and monism. Dialectics, as mentioned previously, is defined as the understanding that humans

are a cross composition of the sociological, anthropological, and psychological. These cannot be separated when it comes to understanding humans and how they learn. Language exists in a dialectical relationship with culture meaning that language influences culture and culture influences language. According to Baker & Galasinski (2001), language is not independent of culture and vice versa. Hall (1997) also argues that culture is a set of shared meanings derived from language interpretation. Therefore, language has been termed as a core feature in a cultural setting. Through language, people sharing a culture can construct meanings, understand them in their minds, and communicate effectively. According to Hall (2001), a culturally set up communication can only happen with a shared language code. Many researchers have pointed out the link between language and culture, since with every language, there is a culture, if not multiple cultures, linked to it (Kramsch, 2011; Levison & Waters, 2017).

Systemic Thinking emphasizes that learning occurs best when the learner actively transforms his world and does not merely conform to it (Donato & MacCormick, 1994). The task-based approach is a transparent bridge between ST and language learning, as it focuses on the importance of social and collaborative aspects of learning (Turuk, 2008). Through interaction and collaboration with peers, a collective Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) can be established, I will look more at ZPD later on in this paper (Shayer, 2002 in Shayer, 2003). Also, learners scaffold for one another, i.e., the more knowledgeable peer assists the less knowledgeable, which is an essential concept in ST.

Systemic Thinking is compatible with games since games can act as mediators between culture and language. Different games are derived from different cultures, which

means that language in these games is also distinct. Therefore, while teaching Spanish, the instructor can use video games that use the Spanish language, or when teaching French, a game that is a cultural product of France.

The Genre Approach

The Genre Approach (Gee, 1997; Badger & White, 2000), which teaches the relationship between the context in which language occurs and the actual language being used, emphasizes the social uses of language according to context. This approach employs Vygotsky's ideas about the role of language as a social tool for communication. Students should not be focused on mastering skills which can negatively affect meaning construction, competency, fluency, and flexibility with digesting texts as readers and writers. When the social aspects of language are ignored, they lead to a fixed routine and a dogmatic treatment of skills. The student develops one-way thinking and rejects any new knowledge that does not already conform to their current understanding (Kennedy, 1998; Kubota, 1998).

The Genre Approach has since been criticized because it uses an “invisible pedagogy.” (Bernstein, 2004). Its invisibility means that it does not enlighten instructors on what to teach or how to assess language input. Although the Genre Approach addresses the disconnect between language and society in language pedagogy, it does not entirely address active learning.

This approach can go hand in hand with games because it focuses on social context, which the games can introduce. As the students play games, they can acquire language easily by using repetitive words in the game or reciting phrases. Since language instructors in this

approach do not assess the extent of language acquisition, gaming would be crucial in helping them get a visible pedagogy for assessment (Bernstein, 2004).

Constructivist Approach

Vygotsky (1896–1934) derived the constructivist approach from his theory on language, thought, and mediation by society. He argued that a child gradually internalizes external, social activities like communication as they grow up. Although adults internalize these social activities, they conform to what was already internalized in childhood. Vygotsky used an experiment of a child and a more competent individual to gauge the child's reasoning level. His experiments suggested that language instructors should support learning through a guided interaction. A more competent individual should guide a child in communication to construct the proper grammar, sentences, and meanings (Williams & Burden, 1997). Students' assessment in this approach is through formative and summative learning. Formative assessment is done through ongoing portfolios during instruction, while summative assessment is done through tests administered at the unit's end. The language instructor's role in a constructive classroom is to act as an expert while guiding the learners in problem-solving. Over the years, many scholars have also used the constructivist approach in studying cognitive processes. Piaget (1896-1980) is one of the pioneers of this approach. He used it in studying human mental developmental stages. He concluded that intellectual development happens through adaptation and organization (Littlemore, 2009). Vygotsky and Piaget's two arguments are contrasting since Vygotsky believes that learning results from guided interactions, while Piaget believes learning results from adaptation. The contradictory nature of these approaches has attracted several critics. For example, Carl Bereiter argues

that CA is usually regarded as project-based learning rather than language learning.

Additionally, John Anderson, Lynn Reder, and Herbert Simon argue that constructivism has limited assessment procedures, and it is a method that is rarely used in schools (Liu & Matthews, 2005).

An instructor can use a constructive approach with games in classroom instruction. The instructor can involve students in the play, assess the performance, and grade each student based on how well they communicated. In the game, the instructor should also guide students depending on how well they ought to perform their characters within the play. They should select the grammar and vocabulary for use by the students.

Methodological Approach

Vygotsky used this approach to study the relationship between thinking and the language process (Mahn, 1999). He did a close examination of people's social origin and use of language through internal mental systems. Vygotsky concluded that the meaning of words was a result of genetics, structure, and psychological activities. The origin of the meaning of words is within an infant's cognitive processes. The infant is born with language, and it is shaped in the cultural environment the child grows up in. The initial use of language in a child is evident through signs to communicate to an adult. Vygotsky calls this a *pseudo-concept* where a child uses different forms of communication to pass messages to an adult (Mahn, 1999). Eventually, the child makes sense of word meanings as the interaction continues. A learner can learn effectively with proper guidance from the instructor and the rest of the students in a classroom setting. However, this approach does not account for slow

cognitive processes in some children. It is evident that not all students learn the same and there are no allowances for this fact.

Another focus of MA and language learning is internalization, which creates the learner's identity within a created norm or set of values. Vygotsky emphasizes the movement from the concrete to the abstract understanding of concepts. Concrete facts would be particular objects and situations that the learner has not yet cognitively processed or understood; this is where abstractions can emerge as they try to change and transform specific aspects of these facts (Chaiklin, 2003). Students should be taught and encouraged to manipulate and adjust learning activities to fit their personal identities, thereby making the material easier to understand and remember than isolated facts. The students work their way from the concrete to the abstract and back again with their own personalized understanding of the concept, a process that motivates them and encouraging them to learn.

Social Cultural Theory (SCT)

Vygotsky's research group during the 1920s and 1930s began with trying to understand the unique cultural nature of human activity compared to other species. The group identified that humans interact with the world through cultural artifacts and means (Negueruela-Azarola & Garcia, 2016). In SCT, learners are viewed as active meaning-makers and problem-solvers, who should be presented knowledge in all its complexity rather than by parts in isolation (Turuk, 2008). Incorporating skills such as planning, voluntary attention, logical memory, problem-solving, and evaluation is essential for creating a meaningful and relevant experience for the individual and helping to work on development in the person (Lantolf 1994; Williams & Burden, 1997). Vygotsky perceived the mind as an

interconnected system of meaning which combined multiple mental processes—such as visual, aural, tactile, emotional, linguistic, mathematical, artistic, and musical—which humans use to understand their environments (Lantolf & Poehner, 2008). Vygotsky defined *meaning* as the internal structure of the sign operation, which refers to a human's unique ability to recognize and use symbolic representations (Vygotsky, 1987; 1994 in Lantolf & Poehner, 2008). Vygotsky viewed meaning as having two definitions: sociocultural meaning as an individual's experience born into a particular social situation. The other meaning refers to the internal system that humans develop through signs and symbolic representation. Vygotsky called the unification of thinking and speaking processes *verbal thinking*. This distinct process of thinking and speaking is what occurs as children acquire language. Children must first construct a generalization as a foundation before developing their skills through social interaction. For Vygotsky, the human mind and social activity are postulated as a unified whole. This framework highlights that the social and the cognitive are culturally interrelated and form complex dialectics. Dialectics within SCT describe how contradicting processes or phenomena can work together to form a more complex unity (Novack 1971; Negueruela-Azarola & Garcia, 2016). Although separating the social, the cultural, and the psychological appears to be a convenient epistemological move, it is an ontological mistake as humans are private beings in social settings who think through and use cultural artifacts, i.e., language (Negueruela-Azarola & Garcia, 2016). This means that our identities as humans are all at once, social-psychological, historical, and cultural, so our learning must work in this same multifaceted way.

Vygotsky and his colleagues were convinced that traditional testing methods did not reveal a student's full range of abilities (van der Veer & Valsiner, 1991: 337 in Lantolf & Poehner, 2008). Their research indicated that students on their own performed entirely differently than when prompted or given hints; this led to Vygotsky's construction of the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). At first, Vygotsky aimed to change the conventional intelligence testing, only later seeing the ZPD as a way to organize learning activities (Lantolf & Poehner, 2008). The concept of the ZPD can be precisely defined as "the distance between a child's actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving, and the higher level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Wertsch, 1985 in Turuk, 2000, p. 249). The ZPD focuses on the interaction between instruction and development, specifically how to transition a learner from "working with assistance" to "independent work." Simply put, "what the child is able to do in collaboration today he will be able to do independently tomorrow" (Vygotsky, 1987, p. 211). During ZPD, proper mediation is essential, and learners must become more autonomous (Lantolf & Poehner, 2008). The term *learner reciprocity* was coined by Lidz and colleagues and defined as a scale to evaluate the learner's quality of reciprocity (Lidz, 1991; Van der Aalsvoort & Lidz, 2002 in Lantolf & Poehner, 2008). This scale is significant as the change in reciprocity can be used to gauge learner development.

The ZPD has become a well-known idea as it is now widely referred to throughout studies about teaching and learning across many academic disciplines and professional areas from reading, writing, second language learning (e.g., Dunn and Lantolf 1998; Lantolf and

Pavlenko 1995) to nursing (e.g., Holaday, LaMontagne, & Marciel, 1994) and occupational therapy (e.g., Exner, 1990; Lyons, 1984 in Chaiklin, 2003). This concept relies on the interaction between “less” knowledgeable students and the “more” knowledgeable students and language instructors. On top of this, there are three concerns to keep in mind 1) the language instructor's ability to identify a learner's ZPD 2) how to teach in a way that will be sure to engage the zone of proximal development, and 3) the idea that this should be done smoothly and joyfully which can significantly accelerate learning (Chaiklin, 2003).

While Vygotsky believed that there were many systems of meaning, his focus was primarily on the ways that children created meaning as they acquired and developed spoken and written language (Vygotsky, 1887, 1994 in Lantolf & Poehner, 2008). This meant that Vygotsky viewed children's learning processes as a frame of reference for second language learners. By the time children become students in classrooms, they have already had meaning-making experiences and developed their unique meaning systems. To understand and appreciate each child's unique systems, one must understand the sociocultural contexts the students have derived their meaning-making from. It is essential to understand that when students are in educational institutions, their systems change qualitatively when introduced to academic concepts and knowledge systems (Lantolf & Poehner, 2008). Education cannot be considered “value-free,” meaning that it must be connected to sets of beliefs about the kind of society being constructed and what implicit and explicit messages are being conveyed by those beliefs (Williams & Burden, 1997; Kramsch, A'Ness & Lam, 2000). Vygotsky saw the mimetic properties of communication as a part of language, and argued that body, language, and mind are combined when trying to understand or communicate. The multi-faceted

conception of this language learning underscores that L2 teaching and learning benefit from the utilization of the embodied contexts within an activity (Lantolf & Poehner, 2008; Masuda, Arnett & Labarca, 2015; Turuk, 2008). The idea of embodied language learning stands in direct contrast to the dominant approaches to language learning in the 1960s and 1970s that see language as a set of discrete grammatical items combined with the memorization of vocabulary and rules (Achard, 2004; Achard & Niemeier, 2008; Littlemore, 2009). However, as the cognitive aspect of language learning came to be acknowledged, students began being taught “systematic thinking skills” (Horowitz, 1986). This begins with planning, setting goals, drafting, and generating ideas to teach strategies in the L2 classroom (Turuk, 2008).

Social-cultural theory is highly compatible with collaborative learning through games. Games can guide students as they share ideas in their selected groups. Games can be designed to target the student’s ZPD because they provide a platform for problem-solving.

Cognitive Grammar

Schematic images in language learning have proved essential in instructing grammar. Grammar tends to be monotonous and tedious; hence, a more modern approach would be welcome in a classroom setting (Achard & Niemeier, 2008). A cognitive grammar approach is one method that has been introduced that is different from other current linguistic approaches (Arnett & Suñer, 2019). In essence, it uses imagery in the instruction of grammar. The problem with other current theoretical approaches is that they ignore figurative language (metaphors, idiomatic expressions, and semantic extensions). They ignore definitions of basic traditional grammar (nouns, verb, and modifiers). Cognitive

grammar has taken care of the two problems with other current theoretical grammar approaches by enacting new concepts, terms, and notions. The notions include semantic structure, which is based on conventional imagery, symbolized semantic structures, and a continuum of symbolic structures in lexicon, morphology, and syntax (Langacker, 1987). Cognitive grammar has additionally analyzed language and mind by use of figurative language (Arnett & Suñer, 2019). The argument here is that imagery and metaphor are not peripheral aspects of our mental life.

What's In A Game?

Games, in particular digital games and the practice of digital gaming, have been of interest to CALL professionals since their inception in the 1980s (Phillips, 1987 in Reinhardt, 2014; Blake, 2020). The popularity of digital games has expanded broadly and an increasing amount of L2 learners play digital games outside the classroom. Just as digital games continued to expand and recreate favorites, the same has occurred with analog games. Well-known table-top games such as Dungeons & Dragon or Settlers of Catan have gained even more popularity as the amount of gateway games, those made with beginners in mind, has increased. Recently, there has been a resurgence in board games designed to educate or to clarify complex real-life problems (Wonica, 2015).

One way to ensure collaborative learning is through games. Both digital and analog games situate players in relation to a constructed narrative (Wake, 2019). This means that although a player's beliefs may not align with that of the game, once placed into a specific

discourse, players find themselves necessarily speaking from their position within the game. Game players must collaborate with one another, reformulate facts to abstractions, and form their own identities, in turn prompting a more individualized and communicative learning experience, this begins the connection between games as tool for active learning and sociocultural theory. People become players that can be immersed within a game; they are transported and set into a simulated place and the players must ask themselves “to where have we been transported? What exactly are we playing at?” (Wake, 2019). These questions prompt players to connect with the subject matter as well as the people around them, not as strangers, but as fellow players who share the same objective.

Collaborative Learning

Modern learning and teaching practices, especially in language learning, have shifted from conventional language instructor-based teaching to student-based learning. Learning a language requires a lot of hard work, especially from the learner. The learner also needs the maximal opportunity to receive input and practice with others and in natural settings. Collaborative learning has been shown to be effective as a learning process at the classroom level (Piirainen–Marsh & Tainio, 2009). Games play a vital role in realizing and achieving collaborative learning objectives in language learning in the classroom. This overview of collaborative learning research will give insight into the grounding and foundational objectives of collaborative learning. The subsequent discussion will be focused on 1) demonstrating the role that games play in collaborative learning with specific attention to the way that games facilitate interaction, which is central to language learning; 2) the way that games establish and extend learning efforts; 3) how games enable the overpowering of

interpersonal and intercultural differences; and 4) the way that they increase learning curiosity. Games also facilitate cooperative learning, which is central to collaborative learning.

Rote memorization, a learning technique that emphasizes the repetition of facts and figures, was long revered in the learning process. The teaching and learning of language, however, is different. Swain (1993) explains that language requires higher levels of inclusivity than other learning processes. Therefore, collaborative learning is necessary to bridge this gap and ensure that learning is realized, especially in language learning. In collaborative learning, learners work together on projects in focused discussion groups that are strategically constructed and formulated to bring the learners to a debating table, where they listen to each other, establish concepts, and reframe them to the point of coming to an agreement that is lasting and mentally reinforced. I primarily summarize Swain: however, there is no shortage of scholars who have shown the benefits of collaborative learning in language classrooms.

Collaborative learning is beneficial to learners for a variety of reasons. Swain (1993) explains that it primarily transforms learning from being receptive to being an active process. For example, a Socratic Circle is an active process where a learner tries to understand a text through posing and answering questions. While learners are presenting their ideas to each other, they start off attached to the rationale they give for the various ideas they offer. In the process, it becomes apparent to the passive learner, especially after listening to the rest of their peers present their arguments, that their peers could be wrong, and that their ideas could be better clarified. Considering the process of the debate, the learner will embrace other

learners' viewpoints and learn from them, which then makes them more open-minded and receptive to new knowledge.

Collaborative learning effectively instills quick and critical learning skills in learners (Swain, 1993). A debate or a discussion with different individuals requires one to take in the opponent's argument as quickly as possible, criticize it and develop a counterargument. Critical thinking encourages the application of logic, which is the science of correct reasoning. Critical thinking usually aims at eliminating rash conclusions that have not been developed from the available premises coherently and convincingly. While the learners are in a group and are debating about a language pattern, conclusions and eventual arguments are developed from working with the language (Swain, 1993). A learner who seemingly goes against the normative process is usually countered by their peers, who will refute their arguments almost instantly. That will then make the learner apply logic and critical thinking, which are essential in learning as a process and in life.

Public speaking and listening are skills that might turn out to be challenging for a learner for a long time if not learned early enough. A learner who fails to learn how to speak and how to listen is bound to face challenges growing up and in particular in higher learning levels where one needs to defend their arguments and thoughts for them to be said to be contributing to the professions and disciplines in which they have been trained. As learners communicate to their peers, they become more confident while expressing themselves as well as being more attentive while listening to their peers express themselves, thus developing these highly valued listening and speaking techniques.

Collaborative learning is vital in learning a language whose reception might vary from one learner to the next in terms of the complexity of the language. Language games can then be used in the learning process. The effectiveness of a language game is dependent on the level of interactivity and interest that it creates in the learners, but also on the ease of application such that the learners do not have to be straining to understand the game and use it in the classroom (Swain, 1993). When effective, language games can be encouraging to learners, and they might help shy learners to overcome their anxieties and grow into confident learners who can express themselves and judge the issues articulated by their peers (Dede, 1996).

Interaction plays a significant role in second language learning. In this context, interaction means interpersonal activities that occur both electronically and face-to-face between individuals, individuals and computers, and intrapersonal interaction within our minds (Chapelle, 2001). Foreign language interaction has been proven to enhance the acquisition of language. As has been established in the field by many scholars, CL helps in generating comprehensible input (Krashen, 1985), enhances meaning negotiation (Pica, 1994), and promotes output (Swain, 1985). The output hypothesis by Swain argues that for second language acquisition to be successful, understanding output alone is not enough. It posits that language learners must be allowed to practice a new language and come up with comprehensible output through the interaction. In return, the learners acquire skills that make them competent in the target language. We will return to these concepts below in the section on Vygotsky and the ZPD.

Community building is an integral part of most digital and analog game play even if it is not expressly necessary within the game. Players have overlapping goals, and must continuously problem solve, which invites social interaction, whether that is turning to a peer or posting on a forum; players navigate games by being social (Squire, 2011). Games allow players to create an affinity space that removes interpersonal and intercultural differences, which helps to promote cooperative collaboration (Godwin-Jones, 2014 in Blake, 2020). To work cooperatively on a game uncovers a social and emotional space that failing together can create (Maynard & Herron, 2016). Although failure is often depicted as unpleasant, the social journey game players embark on together in itself is valuable. When players are immersed and playing cooperatively, the memories they create go beyond recalling words on a page. They have real lived experiences that they can refer to. Instead of failure as a negative or even discouraging force, players come to realize the positive effects like seeing new details and depth within the game (Juul, 2013). After a game is finished, players can try to make sense of what went wrong and how they can improve (Maynard & Herron, 2016). However, it depends on the game itself as to how much players can immerse themselves and remain invested.

The position and value of interaction in enhancing second language learning activities is now largely unchallenged by scholars in the field. Interaction, in this instance, refers to interpersonal activities ranging from face-to-face interactions, learners and computer-aided electronic devices, and intrapersonal interactions in the mind. According to Krashen (1985), interaction in a foreign language plays a key role in enabling learners to acquire knowledge because it has been instrumental in facilitating comprehensible input. Pica (1994) and Swain

(1993) determine that interaction does so by enhancing meaning negotiation and promoting output, respectively. In the argument by Swain (1993) mentioned above, she argues that acquiring a second language is not solely dependent on understanding output. It becomes clear that learning a language requires much more than using the language. It requires practice and comprehensible extensive production, which is facilitated by interaction. The more the learners interact at their group level, the more they understand deeper issues concerning the language they are learning, which makes them more capable and mature in differentiating between the language and the mistakes that are bound to be experienced.

Long (1996, p 451-452) explains that interaction facilitates the process that learners use to acquire a second language because it connects what learners hear and read, what they understand or internalize and thus what eventually comes out of the language acquisition process is productive and rewarding. Swain (1993) explains that what interaction does is allow the learner to receive input and feedback that they can understand and comprehend, thus utilizing or adopting the same language's subsequent applications. Muho & Kurani (2011) did an analysis of second language acquisition theories to determine and explain what role interaction plays in understanding and reinforcing the second language learning process. They determine that both Vygotsky (1980) and Krashen (1987), just like the rest of the interactionist theorists, have high regard for interaction in second language acquisition (SLA). Krashen (1987), Lee and Van Patten (2003) and many others stress the need to have a comprehensible target language and not always provide feedback. The rest of the interactionist theorists value two-way communication (Blumer, 1966; Hughes, 1971), complete with feedback. Whereas there are scholars such as Krashen (1987) who tend to

hold a differentiated view of what interaction means to them, they agree that interaction is vital in SLA.

Games are usually designed to have players engage with each other at an interpersonal level and within themselves at an intrapersonal level. Interpersonal interaction is such that one learner has to initiate the process, and the other learners have to play their roles until the end of the game is reached. In some cases, the end of the game can be when the target language has been learned and the desired output assessed and marked to have been successfully learned. Short term games among students in class refer to face to face games that the class adopts for the sake of breaking monotony and motivating learners. On other hand, online game play refers to the use of computers or smartphones to engage in a game via the internet. Online games are more engaging than one on one games. Therefore, what games contribute to the established collaborative learning concept is central to effective learning, especially language learning. Games create these outcomes by generating conversations. Swain (1993) recognizes that conversations between class members are valuable, and they make excellent input in the eventual development of grammar. That then means that through playing games that are usually in the form of conversations, the learners practice the target language's grammar, thereby contributing to their learning objectives (which may not be only grammar). Muho & Kurani (2011) point out that there is a possibility of having learners who are reluctant to engage in gaming activities. In these cases, asking them direct prompts during the game process will compel them to participate, and in the process, they will develop confidence and subsequently be part of the gaming teams.

According to Wake (2019), games usually operate on an established narrative. The utility and progressive application of the game builds on the relative narrative until the end of the narrative. While playing, roles are randomly given to the learners depending on the game, and the learners have no option but to stick with the roles they have been assigned until the game comes to an end, at which time when they all drop their roles and take on different ones. Therefore, these players, who are also learners, find themselves speaking the language, the target language framed in the game. Group games are such that many individuals come together and perform their relative differentiated roles, pegged on the game's narrative. At an individual level, these learners develop their unique positions in the game, using and learning the language uniquely from the others who are also learning it their way. In the long run, all the learners within the game will have learned the game in a personalized yet unique way.

Saha & Singh (2016) studied the impact that games, as a form of collaborative learning, had on the language learning process in the classroom. They point out that learning a second language is inseparable from consistency. Consistency is the cornerstone that has an eventual impact on how learning takes place and its end impact. Consistent learning requires efforts that are overt and repetitive. Wright, Betteridge & Buckby (2006) explain that using games incorporated in the intended relative language skills in learning a language eventually proves to be a compelling approach. Considering this fact by the trio, games are usually designed so that after they have come to an end, they can motivate the relative learner groups to restart and replay them repeatedly, reinforcing various kinds of knowledge and insights they had learned earlier. Some games are intentionally formulated to be addictive, such that maximum reinforcement is realized, with maximum impact. Therefore, the value of games

concerning second language acquisition is based on the fact that effort breeds consistency. This leads to an immense likelihood that the language learned will be understood better and reinforced more in the learners' minds.

Making an effort, for the learners, is not always easy. Instead, it is a process that requires creativity because learning is highly vulnerable and responsive to an environment that is less accommodating or a little bit more threatening. Shu-Yun Yu (2005) designed a study in the form of an experiment that sought to put a game experience into practice and study the impacts it had on learners. Shu-Yun Yu (2005) concluded in the experiment that games played a central role in creating fun, engendering a non-threatening learning environment, and promoting communication which leads to teamwork, all of which are conducive to learning. Taheri (2014) agrees that using games in teaching and learning vocabulary led to positive outcomes in the eighteen students who were assessed using games as a way of teaching them vowels. In sum, games as forms of collaborative learning are effective in language teaching because they establish and allow students to maintain the effort necessary for language learning because it translates to consistency.

Biases are inevitable in the learning process of a language. There are fears and beliefs that a learner holds about a language that are bound to reveal themselves, principally when they are devoted in their mind to learning the target language. These biases can be self-imposed from a personal angle or cultivated by society. Swain (1993) discusses how players usually have overlapping goals when using games to learn a language. Playing the relative games requires that these players solve the various problems and challenges that the game presents them with by letting these learners engage and interact. Interaction levels may differ

with the game because the way interaction would occur in the face-to-face game would be different from interaction in a computer-mediated environment or an online platform. Regardless of the platform, interaction does happen, and it happens in such a way that it is central to the navigation and operationalization of the game. Therefore, using games and being social are conducive to each other. According to Blake (2020), games give the learners who are equal players an opportunity to establish an environment of unique occupation which can eliminate inter-personal biases and inter-cultural biases, thus enhancing cooperation, which then facilitates collaborative learning.

Maynard & Herron (2016) note that learners are subjected to a situation where they must win together as a team or allow themselves to fail together as a team while executing a group game. When they fail as a team, the same social and emotional impacts are unleashed, making them more inclined towards the value of group cooperation. While the result and goal are usually to ensure that the target language is used, the group process of agreeing on the tactics and experiences most likely to yield a winning strategy impacts the learners. They reinforce the eventual output more than a group or individual taught using rote memorization. Juul (2013) explains that while understanding the value of games in group learning, the failure of one group is not entirely perceived and regarded negatively, as is the case in the typical normative world. Instead, through loss, learners get to see from a group's viewpoint the in-depth version of what they failed to achieve and thus they can appreciate that they could not recognize the strategies to win but can do so in the future and beat the opponent.

Maynard & Herron (2016) point out that care and concern should be taken when designing the game to ensure that as many learners as possible are engrossed in the game and their attention is held until the end. It is through such immersion that a learner can individually overcome their personal and cultural biases. Personal biases are a great hindrance to learning a language. A negative attitude formed in the mind of a learner eventually affects how they will perceive the learning process of the new language. Some might develop biases towards the language instructor, other learners, or the language itself. But through immersion and practical challenges, these learners can create better and more accommodating attitudes that are productive for learning. Therefore, collaborative learning, in general, brings learners of different views and cultural orientations together. In gaming, these differentiated learners play towards winning, making them undergo the same challenges and pressures to succeed. In the long run, language learning becomes more reinforced. Swain (1993) discusses the fact that it is not always that a loss would mean failure for the relative group. While it generates negative meaning among the players, it is a chance to learn more openly as learners and to take time to understand what made them lose and, In the process, they engage the target language more closely. Thus, games support collaborative learning by facilitating the removal of interpersonal and intercultural differences.

Earning the attention of the learner is an endeavor of almost every game designer. It is through grabbing and retaining attention that the game performs its function of teaching language. The learners' interest is kept activated and stimulated for the period of the game whether or not they are aware that they are learning. To et al. (2016) explains that attention

and stimulation of curiosity are vital as they help make the learners dig deeper into the nature and basis of the game, making them learn more. While interest might work negatively considering that a learner might not be comfortable getting so engaged in a game that they do not know much about, To et al. (2016) argue that it is possible for a game to be designed so that it is interesting and appealing to an array of learners with their differentiated levels of curiosity. Curiosity is essential in learning a language. It is through interest that a learner will have the motivation to re-assess material. Through curiosity, the learner-player will re-visit the game to better understand the game, and, in the process, they will have understood and comprehended the target language more.

Swain (1993) investigates how curiosity can be applied in higher learning from a general point of view. She explains that every learner's mind is faced with conflicts of differentiated forms and intensities. If these mental tensions strain the learner's mind more than they can control them, the learner becomes overwhelmed, and this affects their learning process. She justifies the value of curiosity in forming a mentally focused mind that can receive knowledge. Swain (1993) develops the subject of curiosity further and argues that it is valuable and productive to have learners' curiosity triggered and developed because it supports their learning process. She explains that learners develop curiosity in learning for two reasons: learning and utility. Regardless of the purpose and reasoning behind curiosity, most scholars agree that curiosity is instrumental in learning.

Having established the value of curiosity in learning, it would be helpful and worthwhile to point out the role that games play in generating and forming curiosity, thus facilitating collaborative learning. Games, especially computer-aided games, are constructed

and designed to look as fascinating as possible, which increases their aesthetic value and utility. Through the computer sounds, the user manuals, and other associated supportive features, learners' fears that they might not have the same level of knowledge and experience as their peers are countered and minimized. As the groups continue challenging one another, the tension to find the winner increases, making the learner or the player more attached to the course of the game and its end. To et al. (2016) explain that having many information gaps reduces the game's flow for an individual. Reduced flow minimizes their curiosity, and they slowly begin detaching from the game because they cannot relate to it. Therefore, a game with minimalized information gaps generates high levels of curiosity, increasing collaborative learning, especially in language learning. To et al. (2016) explain that there has been an enormous investment in the design and construction of modern-day games. The gaming industry, not necessarily education-based, has set the pace for the development of more captivating, realistic games. It has then been easier for educational game designers to borrow insights from this established sector. More captivating games are bound to be developed considering the continued advances in technology.

Curiosity is a key component of game design. Without curiosity players are less engaged with the game, which inhibits their immersive experience. This important psychological state or trait of humans can cause players to further explore, manipulate, or question aspects of the game (To, et al., 2016). Although players will have varying levels of comfort with uncertainty, games can be designed through their mechanics and content to be appealing to different levels of curiosity (To, et al., 2016). If curated mindfully, uncertainty in games that trigger curiosity can activate and support increased levels of student-player

engagement and entertainment (To, et al., 2016). It is curiosity that appeals to the most inherent qualities of learners, and of humans in general.

We are (1) speakers of tongues, homo loquens; (2) both conscious and intuitive analyzers, homo analyticus; (3) social beings, homo socius; (4) tool users, homo faber; (5) game players, homo ludens; and, above all else, (6) storytellers, homo fabulans (Blake, 2020).

Games are a way to awaken intellectual curiosity in that, they encourage us to speak, analyze, socialize, use tools, play, and tell stories, all of which connects to our most basic nature. Curiosity can be seen as the tension between the players' pleasure and the flow of the game, i.e., whether a person is able to become absorbed in the game. Information gaps can be created through tactics like foreshadowing such that the player is driven by the challenge or uncertainty of their pursuit (To, et al., 2016). The players can then take exploratory actions to reduce these gaps finding pleasure in solving the uncertainty.

Games also offer a specifically designed experience that can be tailored to a specific group's wants or needs (Blake, 2020). In the play environment, risks are minimized if not totally dissolved, and learners are able to prepare for lived language experiences without threatening their psychological well-being (Blake, 2020). This fosters the learner's creation and acceptance of their third space within neither their identity as in their L1, nor entirely within their target language (Kramsch, 2009 in Blake, 2020). As previously mentioned, Sociocultural Theory looks to social interaction as a vector for progress. Just as new learners are navigating their new multi-lingual identity games players must similarly problem solve and reorient themselves within a game. The nature of game play encourages players to turn

to one another for help, which can promote less experienced language learners to look to more experienced learners for help (Steinkuehler, 2004, 2006; Soares, 2010 in Blake, 2020). Cooperative game play can help to shift student mindsets about peers from “possible competition” to “possible assistance,” creating a more cohesive learning environment. Games provide a space for players to learn what identity means and how differing perspectives create a more complete understanding of a topic, in that no one singular viewpoint can fully encapsulate the multi-faceted cultural and linguistic concepts of language learning. Instead of trying to understand their target language through the perspective of their L1, players are given direct guidelines as to how to use their target language, and then given the space to do so repetitively through social interactions.

Blake (2020) provides players with an exclusive experience that can be adjusted to fit the needs and obligations of the relative group. While playing a game, players transcend the real world and enter the game world where there are fewer risks, especially risks associated with the rules of a language. The learners also play with the psychological understanding that they are playing, and not necessarily learning, and this will separate their psychological well-being from the game's activities. While playing, learners in the same group constantly care for one another. They will hold close discussions, derive solutions to puzzles, develop viable strategies, and advise each other within their associate teams that will propel their game forward giving them advantages over opponents. Blake (2020) confirms that it is common for peers to view the other team as competitors rather than as aiders in a game environment.

By playing in a group and in a cooperative style, students transform their viewpoints about others by appreciating their supportive roles in their growth. With persistence in these

games and a more close-knit relationship among the students, they eventually grow and boost their inter-personal bonds. These bonds and cordial relationships eventually replicate and reflect themselves in the learning processes of these learners. Blake (2020) adds that there are high chances that learners who engage in a particular group game and bond favorably will take their friendship to their classroom setup because they will presume, in their subconscious mind that they are undergoing the same issues as their friends and thus need to come together. These connections will be replicated even in learning contexts. Therefore, besides the games being helpful in learning language, they help construct bonds that can prove supportive after the lessons have been learned because the same learners use these same issues and insights outside of the classroom.

Swain (1993) describes a game as a performative activity that works by making the players in the relative gaming unit compete for decision-making positions to attain set objectives. She adds that games support collaborative learning by encouraging cooperation among learners with a specific scenario within the same group and between one learner group to the next because they have to cooperate to agree on the winner of the game. Cooperation, especially in a social context, is highly valued, considering its rewarding outcomes. The social training of skills requires using language, considering that interpersonal interaction requires language for the effective connection between units. Games provide a space for players to construct their identity in the game and to learn how differing perspectives create a complete understanding of a topic. This can be applied more broadly such that no one singular viewpoint can fully encapsulate the multi-faceted cultural and linguistic concepts of language learning. Instead of trying to understand the target language

through the perspective of their L1, players are given straightforward guidelines as to how to use the target language and then given space to do so repetitively through social interactions.

From the ample evidence we can conclude that collaborative learning is a more focused learning approach that emphasizes the student and deviates from the conventional methods and styles that put the language instructor at the center of the learning process. Collaborative learning operates by facilitating interaction between learner groups, whether at a face-to-face level or between an individual learning group and an electronic device facilitating the game in an electronic format. The use of games in teaching language is one approach that is grounded in the collaborative learning approach. Games aid collaborative learning by facilitating student interactions, establishing and extending learning efforts, helping counter and remove interpersonal and intercultural differences, increasing learner curiosity, and enhancing cooperative learning. Of all these benefits, interaction is the most important. Interaction is a central in the establishment and actualization of collaborative learning. When games play the role of facilitating and ensuring that interaction is realized among learners they are valuable in the classroom.

Cultural Scripts and Language Learning

The use of cultural scripts in language learning is possible because they are formed within the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) from semantic primes. Primes are simple words and grammatical patterns that have equivalents across all languages (Goddard 2009). Some examples of primes are evaluators (e.g. good, bad), quantifiers (e.g. one, two, some, all, much/many, little/few), or descriptors (e.g. big, small) (Levisen & Waters, 2017; Goddard & Wierzbicka, 2014). Through cultural scripts a language learner experiences

language from the same point of view as native speakers. Instead of receiving the target language as a translation of their L1, learners first encounter culturally significant words, those which include local values, social categories, speech-acts, etc. (Goddard, 2009).

There is a cultural gap between language teaching and language use; however, communicative and functional approaches focus on bringing the learner to an understanding of L2 cultural values from which the learner can negotiate their own identity within the interpretive frame of the target language (Achard & Neimeier, 2008). As mentioned in the introduction, English would be considered more “indirect” in comparison to Hebrew. This view stems from the general Anglo-American cultural value or cultural keyword: freedom. This cultural keyword works within cultural scripts and proscribes a specific way of speaking which values another person’s individual freedom of action and of opinion. Because of this cultural value Anglo-Americans would not directly state “I want you to do something. You have to do it because of this” (Achard & Neimeier, 2008). The Anglo-American would use politeness forms to protect the other’s freedom to choose whether to do something or not, i.e. “Would you be able to do something for me?”. A wide variety of Anglo-American ways of speaking are linked to concepts of politeness, freedom and other cultural assumptions (Wierzbicka, 1991). Naturally, not every speaker in a speech community agrees with or conforms to these shared assumptions; however, cultural scripts provide an interpretive backdrop for day-to-day interactions (Sharifian, 2014). Moreover, cultural scripts do not exist separately, but are interconnected and may crosscut, compete with, or reinforce each other. Individual scripts are also not entirely unique to a particular language (Sharifian, 2014).

The allure of games and multimedia animations within the language learning classroom is not only to have students retain and understand more about their target language, but also to shift students' perspectives of success from grades to a deeper connection with language. The goals of game play do not strictly revolve around winning, players' goals can be to socialize, to take a break from the real world and responsibilities, to engage in something mentally challenging, or purely to create memories (Maynard & Herron, 2016). Animation and scripts similarly allow for students to engage with language in meaningful ways that do more than just ask for repetition and memorization. Second language learning is an additive endeavor that opens our minds from that of a single cultural mind-set and so conceptual knowledge of the language should not be taught separately from the situations in which it is used (Blake, 2020). Games, animations, and scripts provide second language learners with the framework for how the language is used by native speakers, which pushes learners to break from the idea that they are just using new words within the same single cultural understanding of the world.

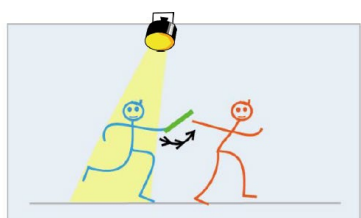
An image-schematic approach, one that uses animations or images, helps to make cognitive linguistic explanations more transparent (Arnett & Suárez, 2019). Cognitive linguistics when used with multimedia animations leads to significantly better learner outcomes than one or the other on their own (for examples see Scheller, 2009; Kanaplianik, 2016 as cited in Arnett & Suárez, 2019). Images and multimedia animations help learners create mental models of grammatical concepts (e.g., force dynamics) that help organize and interpret our understanding (Langacker, 1991; Arnett & Suárez, 2019). The two schematic images on the next page provide learners with a multi-faceted depiction of a radial category,

conceptual metaphor, and perspective. The first image shows the various uses of the English preposition “out.” The radial category is all the senses of “out,” the conceptual metaphor is the way that the senses are tied together and perspective is where “out” is located with respect to the speaker or salient object in the clause. The second image shows the use of an easily understandable pedagogical metaphor from everyday life that is the spotlight. Students can see where the focus is on German light verb constructions. Although these images provide a clear structure for learners to understand how they should use language, simply presenting these images is not enough. As SCT contends, the learner must be able to work with the language themselves and transform their concrete understanding into an abstract one through an active engagement in meaningful learning (Arnett & Suñer, 2019).

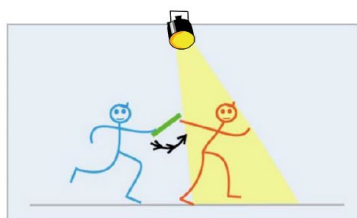
Semantic categories of out	Schematic images
1. The basic sense of out: entities moving out of physical, concrete containers e.g: <i>come out, take out, pop out</i> 1(a) metonymic extension: e.g. <i>hew out, carve out</i> 1(b) metonymic extension of (1a): <i>print out, make out</i>	
2. People moving from inside to outside a container e.g: <i>go out, invite out</i>	
3. Sets, groups are conceptualized as containers e.g: <i>filter out, take out, pick out</i>	
4. Bodies, minds, mouths are viewed as containers e.g: <i>say out loud</i>	
5. States/situations are viewed as containers e.g: <i>come out (of a situation)</i>	
6. Act of appearance and visibility is out. e.g: <i>check out, find out, make out</i>	
7. Trajectors increasing to or beyond maximal boundaries e.g: <i>sent out, put out, splash out</i> 7(a) boundaries are occupied, but not surpassed. e.g: <i>draw out, fill out, write out</i>	
8. Trajectors decreasing to or beyond minimal boundaries e.g: <i>run out, cancel out, phase out</i>	

Figure 1. Semantic categories and their corresponding schematic images. From “Applying cognitive linguistics to second language learning and teaching,” by J. Littlemore, 2009, Copyright 2009 by Jeannette Littlemore.

The spotlight as grammar metaphor shows the focus shifting within the same conceptual base



Usain Bolt gibt seinem Teamkollegen einen Auftrag
 (Engl. *Usain Bolt gives his teammate a mandate*)



Der Teamkollege erhält einen Auftrag von Usain Bolt
 (Engl. *The teammate receives a mandate from Usain Bolt*)

Figure 2. Depiction of spotlight as a grammar metaphor/schematic image. From “An image-schematic approach to teaching light verb constructions in German,” by F. Suñer, 2018, Copyright 2018 by Ferran Suñer.

Active engagement can be provided in various forms. Images and multimedia animations set the scene for game play in language learning. Games provide learners a cultural backdrop and schema to work with while also connecting further with learners through the direct and personalized application of concepts. Game play can promote the internalization of functional meanings through an immersive experience (Vygotsky, 1986; Lantolf, 2007; Williams et al. 2013 in Arnett & Suñer, 2019). Images and animation can be personalized and reformatted to fit a more interactive student experience, but games go a step beyond that by asking the player to step inside the conceptual metaphor and interact with it directly. Language learners tend to participate when they feel not only linguistically competent but motivated to do so (Dörnyei, 2009 in Jenson, 2019). Because the focus of game play is on performance, action, experience, and communication this allows learners to be less concerned with their competency and more motivated to use their target language (Gee, 2012; Jenson, 2019).

Vygotsky Type Learning

Vygotsky sought to learn how different people learn in a social environment (Alemi, & Tavakoli, 2016). Vygotsky knew that the language instructor has the power to define the type of environment and educational setting that the learners will be in, and he knew what environments would aid their learning process. SCT proposes that the more than one interacts with a certain issue in the environment the more they are likely to grow fond of it and learn more about it (Scholz, 2017). The tasks, responses, and behaviors of the student in the class setting are likely to be determined by the social setting of the class and the activities in which they are engaged in their daily learning.

According to Blake (2020), Vygotsky encouraged more activities in the class setting to make learning easier and more interesting for the students, which then improves their cognitive growth by creating an environment that encourages collaboration, constructive feedback, and productive discussions. SCT also emphasizes acquiring knowledge related to the culture of the target language and its society (Achar, 2004).

Vygotsky argued that language is the main basis on which knowledge and the speed of learning are determined. The language that is used in raising the child is such a great factor in determining how well a child will learn to read and write. The ability of a child to have the required logic and reasoned thinking is influenced by the speakers they learn from (Badger, & White, 2000). With respect to language learning, Vygotsky developed strategies to support the growth of literacy as well as oral language. Language instructors should encourage collaborative learning, leadership, and thoughtful discussion in the classroom, as it is from these things that students learn how to communicate with one another. Bernstein (2004) argues that the main purpose of SCT was to develop tasks that would allow students to have meaningful discussions that would impact their cognitive growth and development (Blake, 2020). The language instructor is expected to facilitate the learning process by directing the type of language used in the discussion and the dialogue process, and with that they will ensure that every student is contributing to the different issues that are being raised in the classroom (Bühler, 1990).

The main role of the language instructor in the classroom context is to ensure that they facilitate learning through guiding the students on how they should go about engaging in different discussions. Creating a community that is engaging is one of the ways in which the

language instructors can help the student have fast cognitive growth and development (Benson, 2011). Many language instructors have used the social connection strategy in their class to ensure that they engage more of their students in the learning process. This has positive results as shown by the responses that the students give and the different ways in which they engage in their discussions (Chik, 2014). Social settings and the learning process are closely related as they are fundamental needs of cognitive growth and determine how well students will grasp the issues taught in class. The strategies that a language instructor uses must connect with the social context of the students to ensure that the learning process is effective and that it actually influences their cognitive development (Ersoz, 2000).

Cognitive Development and the Social World

Sociocultural Theory emphasizes that the social world is not only about the interactions that the student has with language instructors and peers but also the community. The behaviors that students have learned at home mix with the behaviors of the students in the classroom. Gee (2014) argues that cognitive development and the learning process are defined by the culture, language, and the role of the individual in the community. The culture of a community is defined by the values and the morals that define how the community runs. Accepted attitudes and morals can only be communicated through language. The culture of a community is shaped by various events and language is used to convey particular information to the members of the community regarding how they should behave in various circumstances (Goddard, 2009).

The different stages in child development have been researched to further explain the relationship that exists between learning and culture. A baby has elementary functions that

are meant for their survival which include crying, recognition of the mothers' scent, and the voices that they find familiar around them (Goddard & Wierzbicka, 2014). The functions tend to fade with time due to other external stimuli. With time, the environment teaches children how to deal with problems surrounding them through reasoning and bargaining for the best situations (Jensen, 2017). The temporary functions of a baby are replaced by the values and beliefs of the community as they define how the child will behave in different situations and how they will react to the issues surrounding them (Chaiklin, 2003). Issues like etiquette are taught by parents and society. Lack of attention to etiquette can come with punishing consequences that guide the child to modify their behavior.

Language is the basic way in which the child learns about the environment because adults and others in the child's life use language to communicate the values and the beliefs of the society (Juul, 2013). The language the child learns is a huge determiner of how the child deals with the problems they face. The language used is likely to define the internal and external speech that the child develops, which they use to express their feelings at an early age and when they are well developed at the age of three (Krashen, 1987). At the beginning of learning language, the parent expresses the reactions of the child through speech which builds the internal speech of the child, and in due time they learn how to express it to the world as external speech (Littlemore, 2009). External speech is used in the early days of learning by others but lays the foundation for the speech that the child will use in the long run. The inner speech that they build in the first year is the basis for their ability to reason and learn about their thoughts (Chik, 2014). The moment that they learn about their speech

they learn to interpret the reactions that they make, which further defines their proper development of speech.

Language that language instructors and children use in their normal classroom has an effect on the cognitive development of the child (Liu, & Matthews, 2005). The environment that the child lives in is likely to affect their attitudes and perspectives towards the world and they cannot build concepts by themselves. Once children learn more about the classroom environment, they understand why different people react and behave the way they do and with that, they will create a way to understand the environment in which they live. The observations that are made will be related to the culture and the beliefs that they know from their background and can determine their learning process. The culture defines the individual and through it, they will learn how to shape their society which shows the relationship that exists between two (Liu & Matthews, 2005). Conclusions about a student's behavior should be done with regard to their social setting (Glenberg, 2004). The ability to learn for the student is determined by how well they can manage to learn in different social settings that they have encountered. The tasks that are introduced in the learning process have a very huge impact on the learning ability of the student.

Language instructors should use games so that students are involved in different levels of learning which improve the students' learning process. The main points regarding learning are as follows: 1) There is a close relationship between the language instructor and the student in relation to learning (Juul, 2013); 2) Society and culture have a common influence on the beliefs and attitudes of the student that they have towards education (Reinders & Wattana, 2012); and 3) The attitudes and the perspective that the student has

about society is likely to affect them in their learning process and affect their intelligence as well. Having games and programs that are student-led is very essential in creating a social interaction that is focused on their social and cognitive development.

Zone of Proximal Development

The Zone of Proximal Development refers to the ability of the learners to complete the tasks that they have been given with the assistance of other people. Learning through the Zone of Proximal Development involves assistance that structures of cognitive development and is understanding of the learning abilities of the students in a given setting (Sharifian, 2014). The Zone of Proximal Development is essential in identifying the different ways in which the culture impacts individuals and influences their performance in terms of cognitive development and their intelligence as well. Students are much more likely to benefit from the interactions that they participate in in-class as it is through them that language instructors learn about their various weaknesses and are thus able to foster their development (Smith & Loewen, 2018). The Zone of Proximal Development is defined as the difference between the present level of cognitive development and the future or the potential level of cognitive development of an individual (Mynard, 2016). An individual or a student is in a position to reach their goals in learning through the assistance that they get from their language instructors.

The difference that exists in the Zone of Proximal Development is defined by the structuring of the learning capabilities between the two levels and the amount of assistance that the child gets and how much the language instructor has invested to ensure that they improve their performance (Squire, 2011). The space between the gap is navigated in order

to achieve the learning goal, which requires effort from both the student and the language instructor. The language instructor has a key role in development as do classmates or the circle that the student interacts with directly. Indeed, it is only from in relation to their peers that the intelligence of the student can be measured (Maynard, 2016). If the student does not achieve the main goal at this particular level, they might have a hard time even in class and their cognitive development might lag behind, which will affect their learning abilities (Turuk, 2008).

There is need for the language instructor to involve the students in some sort of game so they will learn their weaknesses and understand how to handle the students in due time before the situation gets worse (Wake, 2019). Learning about the students' background might not be easy especially within the traditional form of learning where the students sit, and the language instructor gives orders. In this case, the students will not be free to share their opinions and identifying their struggles in the learning program will be harder without constant engagement (Reinders, 2012). Creating games will ensure that the students engage in meaningful discussions which will create evidence of how productive they are in what they do (Wonica, 2015). Creating purposeful and meaningful interactions is essential in discovering the different ways in which the students learn and the relationship that their language has to their learning process.

Sociocultural Theory assumes that the learning process is dictated by the cultural and social characteristics surrounding the students. The culture that the student comes from is likely to influence their learning progress and how well they interact with different people in the classroom society (Reinders, 2012). Creating an interactive session is important for the

learner as they get time to converse and share with their peers, and with that the language instructor will be in a position to learn of their weaknesses and maybe learn how they function (Wake, 2019). In this case, the language classroom should include collaboration, open discussion, and conversations that can be used to measure how well the student is doing in terms of cognitive development.

Multimedia Approach Enhances Engagement and Outcomes

A study in 2006 performed by Rankin et al. uses the 3D game, *Ever Quest 2*, as a learning tool for English as a second language (ESL) students. The game has an immersive, virtual learning environment that was based on massive online role-playing games (MMORPGs) and used second language methodology in its design. Both intermediate and advanced learners increased their English vocabulary by 40% as a result of interactions with non-playing characters (NPCs) and were able to practice their conversational skills with other playing characters (PCs). This study provides support that intermediate and advanced learners benefit from an immersive game-play approach to language learning.

Another study to note is Jensen's 2017 study of young ESL students in Denmark. This approach focuses on the use of Extramural English (EE), i.e., English outside of the classroom. Students recorded their time spent gaming, listening to music, reading, talking, watching television, writing, and other EE activities. The outcome was a noticeable difference in the vocabulary scores of boys, who had gamed significantly more than girls. Games that allowed for oral and written input versus only written were both strongly related to the increase in vocabulary scores. Jensen also cited a list of previous gaming studies that showed benefits to varying parameters of language learning, some of which are reviewed in

this thesis: Benson & Chik, 2011; Cheung & Harrison, 1992; Marsh & Tainio, 2009; Miller & Hegelheimer, 2006; Olsson, 2011; Rankin, Gold, & Gooch 2006; Reinders & Wattana, 2012; Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2012; Sundqvist & Wikström, 2015; Thorne, 2008; Turgut & Irgin, 2009.

Scholz (2017) studied the used of game-based language learning on vernacular games and focused on the extramural setting that they are designed to be played in. The students in this study played the MMORPG *World of Warcraft*. Participants learned linguistic constructions that were reinforced though game play. Terms like *jetzt* (“now”) and *verkaufen* (“to sell”) would be observed initially and then used multiple times thereafter. Participants showed correct utilization of these terms and were able to reflect on learning these constructions through gameplay. Scholz found that MMPORGs can function as beneficial immersive language-learning environments when approached with willingness and an eagerness to engage with the game and the language.

In the International Journal of Computer-Assisted Learning and Teaching, Benson and Chik (2011) indicated that technological developments such as video gaming help foreign language learners as tools of learning. CALL (Computer-Assisted Learning and Teaching) has three phases: communicative, behavioristic, and integrative (Warschauer & Healey, 1998). These three phases are the basics to understanding the complexity by which CALL influences language acquisition. Benson and Chik analyzed the relationship between second language learning (L2) and digital gameplay. This study investigated the use of games by young people in and out of the classroom context for L2 and autonomous language learning practice among gamers in the community. The findings indicated that when gamers

play offline on their own, L2 was restricted to in-game text interactions. On the other hand, the gamers playing offline with friends provide added interactions that increase language learning possibilities. Also, games out of class such as “My Japanese Coach” start as incidental and end up as intentional learning when the gamers opt for educational games.

Klanova and Kacet's (2017) literature review on the effects of information and communication technology on language learning mentioned that well-designed video games contribute to second language acquisition. This comprehensive review investigated current gaming practices in relation to their contribution in enhancing the English language particularly. While drill-based games and games based on practice, such as memorization, contribute to a student's formulaic skills, they teach “when” and “what” and not “how” and “why.” According to the review, game-based language learning enhances the language learning process by exposing a student to the target language auditory and visually. Additionally, video games have a significant role in improving the vocabulary of the players. The two recommended the use of commercial games since they have all the elements of a good game. However, the review asserted that gaming may only be effective in language learning when the gamers play it with consistency. Since learning is a continuous process, regular and organized practice is necessary to be consistent. Critics of this review suggested that consistency in video games would lead to addiction. Therefore, their subsequent studies strived to address this controversy.

Reinders and Wattana (2012) did a study to show that video games affect the interaction patterns of L2 learners by investigating the relationship between the interaction of a student with a language and computer games. This study was based on the results of an

experiment done to determine the effects of a digital multiplayer game on L2's quality and quantity. Computer games can affect the interaction patterns of L2 depending on learning and teaching environments (Sandquist & Wikstrom, 2015). The subjects of this study were students who frequently engaged in online multiplayer video games who expressed excellent language skills as opposed to the students who did not engage in video gaming.

Another study by de Haan et al. (2010) focused on the difference between playing computer games versus watching them. Both playing and watching influence the delay or immediate recall of vocabulary use among Japanese learners. The participants involved in the study were made to play a particular music game in which they were to complete songs by pressing a controller button at a specified time, interacting only with the computers without collaborating. A significant aspect that also served as a limitation is that the subjects did not have to be conversant with English to play. The study indicated that playing the game led to less acquisition of English vocabulary than watching (though both significantly enhanced language learning). A post-study analysis showed no difference in the mental efforts of students, and the study's findings were influenced only by their interaction during the game. In this experiment, language was not an area of focus for the participants, and they could complete the song without any attention to English vocabulary. Studies that involve participants noticing the language are therefore necessary.

It is possible to notice linguistic elements where the focus area is not the gaming environment's language. Piirainen-Marsh and Tainio (2009) proved this by using conversation analysis to evaluate two teenage boys' behavior during gaming. The experiment focused on the boys' involvement in the game while trying to make sense of the game.

Recordings of their interactions in the game indicated frequent repetitions by both and attempts to reconceptualize the game's utterances. In conclusion, repetition is a flexible resource that the subjects in a game can use to pay attention to the game's essential features. Sadly, this experiment did not examine the impact repetition typically has on linguistic skills.

Zheng et al. (2009) focused on gaming's impact on the construction of discourse practices between non-native and native speakers in *Quest Atlantis*, an educational game. The game has a collaborative nature that calls for intense interaction between the two players. It enhanced the development of syntactic, pragmatic, and semantic knowledge between non-native and native speakers. These scholars refer to this kind of interaction as *negotiation for action*.

A commercial role-playing game known as *Neverwinter Nights* was created by Chen and Johnson (2004) to examine whether a video game in a foreign language learning context could promote “flow” and offer extrinsic motivation to the players to practice Spanish language skills out of the classroom environment. The authors used video transcripts, questionnaires, post-game interviews, and field notes and discovered that there were notable differences in the level of experiences the subjects had while playing the video games, and this affected the successful playing of the game. For instance, a participant who had prior experience in the game was more composed while playing, spent less time and effort playing, and presented a high enjoyment level. This study shed light on the advantages of adequate training on the game to enhance success in playing and decrease the presence of differences among the players.

A blended techniques study performed by Hitosugi, Schmidt, and Hayashi (2014) investigated the effect of *Food Force (FF)*, an educational, or “serious,” game published by the United Nations World Food Program (WFP) in 2005. The study focused on student influence and jargon learning. The videogame was coordinated into an educational program and two studies were performed. Study 1 inserted new jargon in task sheets. Study 2 presented *FF* jargon unequivocally and incorporated an evaluated unit test. In the two examinations, members took three *FF* spelling quizzes (pre-, post-, and delayed) and an end-of-unit influence overview. Study 2 additionally included course book spelling quizzes and meetings. Results showed a positive effect on student influence and an inclination for game-mediated exercises over ordinary activities. Members from the two studies recalled new *FF* jargon five weeks after the fact at the equivalent rate as they had immediately after the unit, while they altogether forgot words from the course reading. Study 2 showed preferable vocabulary building techniques of *FF* words over Study 1. No gender distinction was found in spelling quiz results. Positive *FF* impacts may be proof that advanced game-based learning encourages profound learning. Not only was there a positive effect on average, but students also showed individual differences in attitudes and vocabulary retention.

Conclusions and Pedagogical Suggestions

Having gained knowledge about the different ways that people learn languages within the sociocultural context by making use of collaborative ways of learning—in this case, games—pedagogical suggestions can be made to advance those types of learning techniques. These suggestions include practices that are found beyond the normal group interactions among students, and they aim at making the student gain an understanding of what they are

taught with the main focus being the use of games for collaborative learning. These suggestions include the use of constructivist, integrative, reflective, and inquiry-based learning techniques to learn language, especially based on the sociocultural context.

Constructivism is the theory that suggests that people who intend to gain knowledge about certain issues construct their knowledge instead of just taking in the information passively (Aljohani, 2017). As these learners gain experiences in their daily social interactions, they can build and reflect upon them. This way, they are in better positions to build their own representations while incorporating new information into the knowledge that they already have. In this case, games are an exciting way to engage the students, and language instructors use these games to teach their students different concepts in and out of their curriculum. For the students, they will not just take in the information given but rather will use the information to build upon their own knowledge. For instance, language instructors may use baseball to teach their students the need to remain keen and concentrate on what they do, as is the requirement of the game. However, the students can construct further knowledge from this, such as teamwork and the need for ethics in whatever they do for them to succeed. Constructivism can occur in two different processes. First, the person can take in the new information and fit it in in his own schema, a process known as assimilation (Clark, 2018). Second, the person can take in the new information and use it to revise or redevelop a schema that exists in a process which is known as accommodation, provided the knowledge that they develop from using games as a way of collaborative learning is applied to their everyday lives.

Integrative learning is a learning approach where the people who are involved in the process of learning bring together the knowledge and experiences that existed before with the aim of supporting newly acquired experiences and knowledge (Leonard, 2012). The main concept behind this form of learning is for students to take ownership of their own methods and skills of learning and become critical inquirers. By analyzing the information and making connections between the various disciplines within the sociocultural context, they can make use of this critical thinking on their real-life problems. As students draw the connection between their own knowledge and the newly acquired knowledge, their skills of implementing this knowledge in their real life becomes possible (Brown Leonard, 2017). For instance, students may have knowledge from other sources before engaging with their language instructors. Language instructors can make use of a collaborative method of learning to integrate the knowledge they have with that of the students. A game such as soccer can be used as a collaborative method of learning because there are rules that are expected to be followed while playing this game. Students may also have an idea of how certain rules apply in their social and academic lives. Using this game, the language instructors can integrate the knowledge of the rules applied in soccer to the social and academic rules the students may already know. As a result, when this knowledge is integrated, it creates a student who is advanced and can handle more complexities within their social and academic lives while applying these rules as a guide. Therefore, events such as The Sproul Cup, where language specific soccer teams play (in the target language) and advance towards a final, is more than a fun, social activity that advertises the language programs by playing on the Quad. The students must use their language skills to collaborate as a team, understand the rules and follow the instructions of their coach. This requires a

broad range of vocabulary and syntactic structures as well as knowing when to use what language.

Reflective learning is a form of learning in which the students must reflect upon their own experiences for them to come up with meaningful results (Miettinen, 2020). The theory of reflective learning states that learning is a complex and intentional process that involves the learner recognizing the role of social experiences and contexts. The goals of this process are, therefore, the creation of meaning and knowledge in terms of self which can then lead to the conceptual perspective change. The learner is able to understand the experiences they face in the real world, and this enables them to act accordingly and in ways that bring about the best results. A simple game can be an easy way of making an individual reflect upon their own experiences. This is because it takes the mind away from the temporary bad experiences they may have encountered in life and replaces them with all the good experiences they may have had. Language instructors can use several different types of commonly used board games that they modify slightly so that students may reflect on their lessons. For instance, a task such as Jenga is just challenging enough to focus a student but can provide a sense of completion once their turn is over. Language instructors can make use of different games to teach students that although language learning is challenging there are many milestones along the way.

Inquiry-based learning is an approach in learning that places emphasis on the role of the students to enhance the learning process. That means, instead of the learner being given information firsthand by the people responsible for their learning processes, they are encouraged to explore materials that would make them learn. They are allowed to ask

questions so long as they bring about knowledge generation and they are also allowed to share ideas that they generate among themselves (Chu et al., 2021). These processes can involve small groups where the people within that group can explore, ask questions, and share ideas for them to learn a certain concept within their environment. Instead of these people engaging in the act of memorizing facts or different materials, they learn by getting into action and doing whatever they are expected to learn. An easy way to encourage this is for language instructors to allow students to use games that engage the mind, encouraging them to research more on whatever they engage in as a method of learning. For instance, a game such as Life would require students to interact with real world vocabulary, while also asking that they brainstorm with one another depending on how the instructor sets up the game. In the end, they end up learning and generating knowledge that they can apply in their academic and social lives. This means that games are an easy way of allowing students to come up with their own knowledge about an issue and develop a solution to it, which results in learning. Therefore, learning may not be an easy process, especially in instances where new knowledge or a new concept is being introduced to the students. Games can be the easiest way of collaborative learning that language instructors can use to solve the complexities that may develop in the process of learning.

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