Micro-Paper 32: *Language-as-Victory*

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Defining the Term

One reality of today's gaming literacies is that gamers are starting to use second languages as a key tool in their gameplay. Gamers are becoming proficient in the English language just by playing online games with native English speakers. Some of these gamers have never even practiced their English skills outside of their gaming communities.

However, learning and using English in the gaming area involves a very particular necessity: Gamers are learning very particular vocabulary in order to be successful in their games. Without the communication skills they are picking up while playing online, they would not be able to be victorious in their gameplay. This is due to the fact the video games are becoming more complex every day.

As the games get more complicated, so do the commands and interactions between players. Another important factor we have to take into account is the type of games being played. Depending on the game, the vocabulary, commands or even acronyms the gamer must know vary greatly.

Our idea of Language-as-Victory, or LaV, intends to make sense of these new interactions and needs for English learning in the context of videogames. LaV, therefore, refers in our particular context, to the use of English (and other second languages that have emerged in other games) as the key element to achieve victory in the different games and genres in which second-language users participate on a daily basis.

Connecting it to LSLP

We have begun to actively describe and understand LaV as a literacy practice. We believe that LaV holds key insights into how gamers are improving their literacy skills by playing online video games. These verbal- and text-based communications have their own unique learning processes that gamers could help us understand.

Looking at how these communication skills are allowing gamers to be successful could add valuable information to our research. In addition, LaV could also help us understand how to use video games to improve second language learning curves.

Expanding Second Language Research

At LSLP, we have dared to coin the term Language-as-Victory to describe how gamers are appropriating second languages to apply them in their games. As we continue our research on gaming literacies, we believe that this concept can add some valuable input to making sense of how to use culture more effectively in language classrooms. Also, LaV might offer teachers some inspiration to find meaningful ways to promote language appropriation with their students.

References

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