



One game, many approaches: How teachers can use a single game with any teaching methodology

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Key points

- **What is this?** A set of in-depth examples that frame a single game into different pedagogical approaches.
- **Why did you make it?** We felt that the literature on game-based learning lacks examples of HOW to use a game with various methodologies and curricular goals.
- **Who is it for?** For teachers that would like to try using games in their language classroom but are stuck in limbo between theory and practice.
- **Why do we need this?** We think that practical examples on how to use a game in more than one way might help spread the love for more instances of Ludic Language Pedagogy.
- **What is it not?** This is not a paper that promotes MONOPOLY as the best option to teach languages with games.

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Tweet synopsis

Thinking about a language teacher that wants to but never did use games in her classroom, we realized that practical examples on how to use the same game in more than one way might be what she needs to feel safe in embracing a more Ludic Language Pedagogy.

View at the LLP Playground:

<https://www.llpjjournal.org/2021/09/21/spano-one-game-to-rule-them-all.html>

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WARNING:

This 42-page paper is NOT 42 pages long!! It's five pages of introduction plus the approach you would like to know more about. However, we hope that it *does* become a 42-page manuscript for you as you see how different pedagogical approaches allow us to teach with any game.

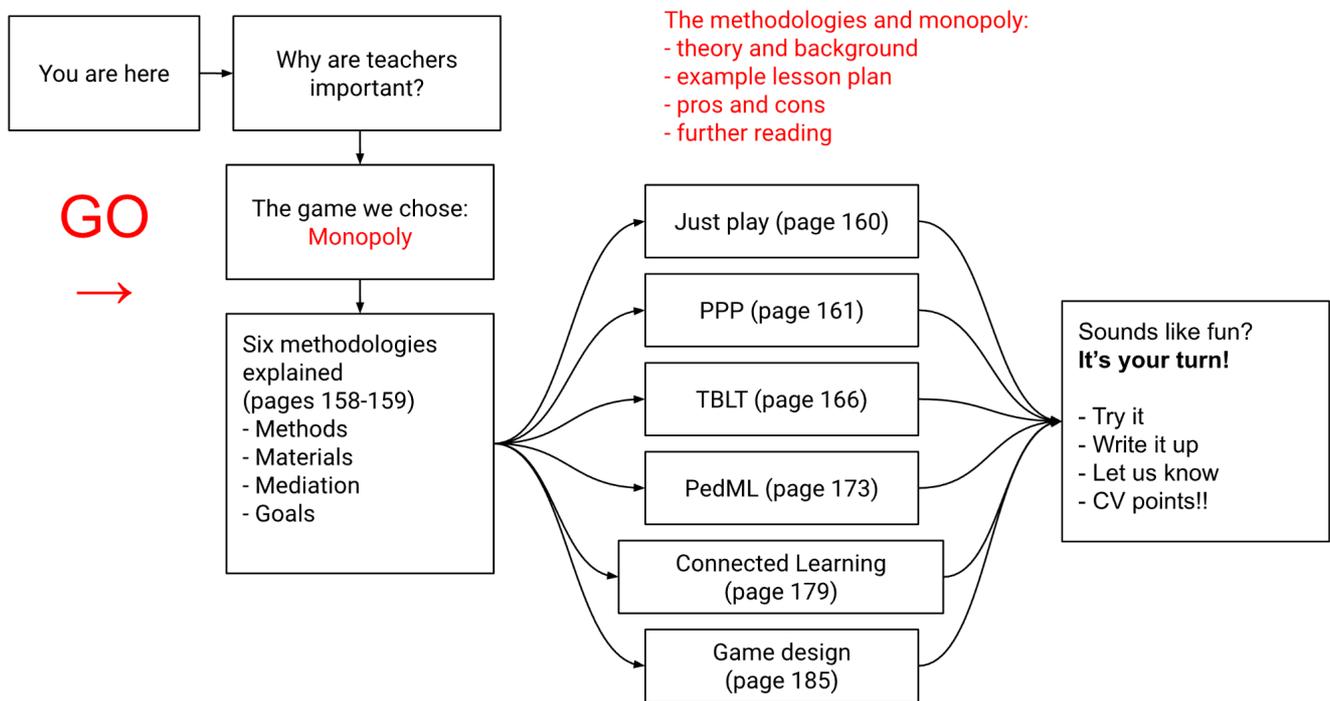


Figure 1: This paper's reading guide

Introduction

Even after 40 years of research, games in education have not been normalized in curriculums and it seems that teachers are still hesitant in introducing them into a classroom. Researchers have blamed this stagnation on an overabundance of game-based language learning (GBLL) theoretical papers that “fly high” above real practice, also lamenting the lack of empirical studies with real application of games in a classroom (Zhou, 2016; York, 2019b; deHaan, 2019, 2020b, 2020c). Fortunately, in response to this need, the number of articles describing practical ludic pedagogies with games is steadily growing (Miller and Hegelheimer 2006; Ranalli, 2008; Hanghøj & Brund, 2010; Wang, 2019; York, 2019b; deHaan 2019). However, we feel that there might be another gap: this time between game-based language teaching (GBLT) practical examples’ contexts, and other language classrooms.

Every learning environment is unique in terms of curriculum, student level and needs, time available, teachers proficiencies, and more. Yet, the practical literature on game use, even when offering successful examples of game application in a classroom, appears to be applicable only to one curriculum, or one goal. For example, the work of Miller and Hegelheimer (2006), Ranalli (2008), and Wang (2019) featuring the video game “*The Sims*,” could only be emulated by teachers who are aiming for the same didactic goal, that is, improvement of specific vocabulary knowledge. Teachers who have different curriculums and would like to use *The Sims*, will not find, in those studies, hints on how to *make it happen* in their own context. The same could be argued for reports of classes taught with serious games (Magnussen, 2007; Hanghøj and Brund, 2010). Serious games, by definition, are predesigned with a didactic goal, which is difficult for teachers to alter. Hence, serious games can be used only when the classroom goal matches one of the goals that are already embedded in the game. York’s *Kotoba Rollers* (2019) and deHaan’s *Game Terakoya* (2019, 2020a) projects offer instances that seem to be more easily exportable thanks to the abundant examples and thick explanation of teacher’s pre-, during-, and post-game mediation via worksheets,

questions, discussions, and activities. However, teachers still might find it difficult to export these models for their own context, especially when new to *ludic approaches* to teaching.

In this paper, we move the focus from the *game* to the *pedagogy* by showing how the same game could fit into different approaches and be adapted to different curricular goals. Our objective is to give examples of how teachers can 'play' with a game by changing its goals, deciding its pace, adding relevant materials, and adapting its rules in order to make the game itself serve teacher's proficiencies, time, and goals. Doing so could be seen as giving the teacher more power over the game (Molin, 2017).

Our objective is to give examples of how teachers can 'play' with a game by changing its goals, deciding its pace, adding relevant materials, and adapting its rules in order to make the game itself serve teacher's proficiencies, time, and goals.

Power to the teachers

The process of fitting a game into a pedagogical approach implies that just having the students playing the game might not be enough. The game has to go through a process of adaptation, which could be achieved by implementing extra material or aimed mediation (PPP, TBLT, Pedagogy of Multiliteracies), changing the structure or rules of the game (Game Design, TBLT), or giving the game an extra purpose outside the game world (Connected learning, PedML). Every kind of adaptation takes different degrees of time and effort to be carried out, and we argue that teachers, more than game designers or developers, are the most suitable figure for this job.

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The relevance of teachers agency recently received the support of researchers from various fields related to teaching (Priestley, 2015; Erss, 2018). Earlier on it was Hattie (2003; 2012) who suggested that researchers should focus on the teachers, since they are the variant that, accounting for (according to his synthesis of over 500,000 studies) as much as 30% of the influence in students' achievements, can make the difference. Hattie also identifies 5 different dimensions that excellent teachers, or expert teachers, display:

- Identify essential representations of their subjects
- Guide learning through the use of classroom interactions
- Monitor learning and provide feedback
- Attend to affective attributes
- Influence student outcomes

When defining the first of these abilities, Hattie states that expert teachers can "*make lessons uniquely their own by changing, combining, and adding to them according to their students' needs and their own goals*" (2003, p.5), and we believe that teachers, in order to have successful ludic interventions in their classrooms, need to do exactly the same with games: change them, combine the various gaming and game-related sessions, and add material or mediation to them based on what students require.

This need is also expressed by Molin who, building on Hattie's 5 points and connecting them to game-based education, states that: "*the role of the teacher in game-based learning needs to be crucial as well, which also means*

that game-based learning could be an opportunity to empower teaching and to create new meanings of the role of the teacher” (2017, pg. 3).

Hattie’s definition of expert teachers and Molin’s reflections on empowered teachers, as well as most of the few ludic pedagogy frameworks now available, suggest a time and effort demanding role for the teacher. In this paper, we further support this concept since we truly believe that games should not be seen as a shortcut in learning. There are no shortcuts. The more effort you (the teacher) put in, the more power you will gain over the game, and the easier it will be to hit your or your school’s goals.

We truly believe that games should not be seen as a shortcut in learning. There are no shortcuts. The more effort you put in, the more power you will gain over the game, and the easier it will be to hit your or your school’s goals.

The teachers’ power we are talking about could be defined as the capacity, knowledge and role (intended as position inside the educational structure) necessary to adapt media in ways that would make it match the curriculum, students’ needs and level, and preferred methodology. To give a concrete example of it, in the following section, one game is sometimes adapted, sometimes just utilized in order to fit six approaches (Table 1): just play, PPP, TBLT, pedagogy of multiliteracies (PedML), content learning (or EEE), and Game Design or remixing. The columns of Table 1 represent the key information a teacher should be aware of when choosing an approach. Each approach is explored in-depth in its dedicated sections. Every section features a lesson plan. Every lesson plan comes complete with materials and worksheets that can be used and/or adapted.

After reading this paper, we hope that teachers will become able to:

- 💡 See the light that can connect games, curriculums, and pedagogical approaches.
- 💡 Break, with their mediation, the darkness that isolates games in a place far from “good” education.
- 💡 Understand that, even when it comes to games, from great effort comes great pedagogy.
- 💡 Feel the power to do all of the above at their fingertips.

Even after reading this paper, we understand that teachers might feel that:

- 😞 Not every game can fit in multiple approaches or curriculums.
- 😞 Choosing the right game can be as hard as adapting one to an educational context.
- 😞 Ultimately, due to the scarcity of empirical studies, it is hard to foresee the outcomes of a game class.

Thus, we invite you to join our community¹, where you will find all of the authors and more, waiting to help you in your teaching quest.

¹ Our community meets on Discord here: <https://discord.gg/je9QZsnntf>

The game: Monopoly

The 'chosen one' ended up being Monopoly.

Learning the game they would like to use, playing it and understanding it is probably the first effort a teacher should make in order to be able to implement it into a pedagogical approach. By choosing the board game *Monopoly* we are trying to bypass this first step by giving a wide range of examples with a game that most teachers are familiar with. Moreover, board games may be used in a wider number of contexts, since digital games exclude learning environments where PCs, tablets, or other electronic devices are unavailable.

Over the years, and thanks to its high popularity worldwide, Monopoly has received various adaptations into new contexts, in order to match the needs of players from different age ranges and with different interests. Part of the very large monopoly family's variants are as follows:

- *Monopoly Junior*: Reduced number of rules, skateparks and ice cream stores instead of houses and hotels, and adorable characters' tokens like a little T-rex or a rubber ducky.
- *Countries and towns edition*: in these versions properties and characters are tailored for a certain area or with other geographical features. This variant is also rich in sub-variants, among them the *Australia edition* and the *National parks edition*.
- *Star Wars edition*: Properties are planets, characters are Wookies, Sith lords, rebels, and more. The objective is still to bankrupt the other players but the cards' content is adapted to appeal more to sci-fi fans.

Other versions: *Monopoly Pokemon*, *Stranger Things edition*, *Monopoly Socialism*, *London Underground Monopoly*.

These variants are all good examples of Game Design interventions done to appeal to players or match contexts. In this paper we will go this far (changing the game content) only once in the last methodology section called game design/remixing; the other lesson plans make the best out of Monopoly's actual content.

How to use monopoly in ALL the contexts

Table 1 *All the methodologies!*

| Approach | Method | Additional materials | Mediation/teacher roles | Didactic GOAL 1- Pedagogy focus. 2- Why do it? |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| "Just play" | Play | None | Facilitated explanation of rules and vocabulary before and during gameplay. | 1- Exposure to contextualized language. 2- Enjoy a fun activity in the target language. |
| PPP | Present Practice Produce | vocabulary worksheet | Explain grammar points. Drill vocabulary and grammar. Play, using the drilled language. | 1 - Push production, learn and practice vocabulary or chunks of language. 2- Easy for the teacher. Good for test prep. Textbook-friendly |
| TBLT | - Pre task - Task - Post task OPTIONAL: - Repeat - Evaluation | Transcription, simplified rule book and cards, vocabulary worksheets | Adaptation of rules and rule book; worksheets for rule confirmation, language practice, and accuracy, language practice activities to prepare for the task | 1- Focused on speaking. Move from fluency to accuracy through noticing. 2- Matches CEFR action-based structure and descriptors. Language functions in context. A combination of incidental or implicit and explicit learning. Meaningful use of language, boost cognitive language skills |
| Pedagogy of Multiliteracies | Play game Discuss game Research connections between game and society Create something | Could be completely "material-less" (done just with verbal discussions) Or use lots of materials (worksheets, textual analysis, research report templates, etc) to help guide students. | Ask questions to get students to give reasons and examples. Model how to complete worksheets. Help students connect the different stages. Focus students on participatory work. | 1- Focused on literacy (understanding and creating) connecting personal and academic and social themes. 2- Extend what is learned in-game to outside the classroom. Make a difference in students' lives. Liberate students. Improve school and society. Broad language and literacy development (genres, texts, meanings). Academic skills and curiosity and critical thinking skills. Participatory experience. |
| Connected Learning | Students observe and collect texts from self-chosen communities. Analyze texts with teacher guidance. | Worksheets Online communities Videos Internet texts (movies, tweets, forum posts, etc.) | Model how to find texts. Ask questions about the meaning of chosen texts. Engage in discussion using the L1 and L2. Admit that you know less than the students about the subject matter. | 1- Connect learner interests with academic and civic opportunities. 2- Introduce learners to the target language culture. Create meaningful interactions within and outside of the classroom. Participate in a global conversation. |

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| | Participate in chosen communities. | | Debrief activities and outcomes at the end of each class. | |
| Game design/remixing games | Choose a learning goal Choose a game Adapt rules and content Craft the game Playtest | Paper, dice, cards, etc. Playtest feedback worksheets. | Introduce a game and get students to think of the potential for language learning. Ask questions about how students will adapt the game. Provide advice about game mechanics. Help playtest and provide feedback. | 1. STEM skills, systems thinking, game literacy, student-centered. 2. Improve learners' game literacy and creativity. Reinforce and revise previously learned content in another medium. |

Please note: Even if we mentioned how the reader could just pick the methodology he prefers and jump to the related page, we did put some thoughts in the order the methodologies appear in Table 1 and in the paper. The various lesson plans are organized from what we consider the least to the most teacher-effort demanding. Going through the plans in order might, in some cases, help the understanding of the differences between the methodologies applied to a game, and in seeing more clearly their strengths and weaknesses in relation to the reader's experience and knowledge.

Just play

Intro

This approach, which we will be calling “**just play**,” cannot be considered a pedagogical intervention. Something could indeed be learnt by just playing a game in the target language and it could serve as a motivational boost, but “just playing”, compared to other approaches, lacks any explicit pedagogical underpinning. It is being included in this paper for completion, and in order to give an example of the least teachers could do with games.

Teachers who would like to implement games in their curriculum might not have the freedom to do so. In those cases, just playing a game as an extracurricular activity might be the only thing teachers could resort to in order to have game-based interactions with their students. Although we promote the pedagogically sound implementation of games to be integrated into a curriculum, we understand that informally playing a game could have positive effects on the students’ language development in terms of game literacy, fluency, production quantity, and general engagement with a language.

This first approach will not be paired with a lesson plan since it is not a lesson.

Gee (2011) comments on the language learning processes that young players engage in while (just) playing various games outside the classroom. He explains how games affect and influence young children’s language learning, literacy, and language development through situated learning. Likewise, Sundqvist (2019) studied how students that regularly played games displayed a better level of English compared to students who did not. Students mentioned in these papers are engaged in informal, extracurricular gameplay without any formal educational structure or goal. However, they play on their own, in their free time, with no connection to any educational environment, motivated mostly by their will to play. Some players might also choose to play a game in a foreign language in order to improve their language skills, and there are online communities devoted to informally learning languages through games (Reinhardt, 2019), but in most cases, the learning is a secondary goal to the primary goal of having fun. This passive learning, even if triggered by just playing a game, is hardly emulatable in a just playing situation where the language learning is actually kept in high consideration and, probably, as the main motivator or goal.

Imagine the setting

A teacher invites volunteer students to join them in playing a game outside regular classes, as an extracurricular activity. Six students respond positively to this invitation and meet with the teacher in a designated place, at the designated time. On a table lies a Monopoly board.

The teacher now starts the explanation of the rules for those who don't know them. Rules are read out loud to the students directly from the rulebook. The teacher then repeats the rules in a simplified way to make sure students understand the gist of the game, also throwing in, from time to time, a word in the students’ native language. Students ask questions and, when the teacher feels they are ready, the game starts.

The teacher leads by saying, in a loud and clear voice, key phrases where appropriate. For example:

- “It’s my turn now”
- “Who has park Victoria?”
- “I win 5000 dollars”

Students try to mimic the teacher and say the same key phrases at the right time. The teacher corrects the students when mistakes are made. Students and teachers laugh together. Somebody wins and the intervention is over.

In this imaginary setting, we can find comprehension practice, L2 output (repetition and fluency), error correction, fun, and engagement. Having this kind of interaction with the students, if a more consistent approach is not possible, is definitely something positive. But that is it, once the game is over, so is the learning.

PPP (Present, Practice, Produce)

Intro

PPP is a three-stage model in which the language to be learned is **presented, practised, and produced**. It derives from the situational approach (Anderson, 2016; Thornbury, 2017) which Thornbury lists as one of the communicative methods. However, it is still based on the premise that the target language must be situational, contextualized and presented to students before they are actually able to produce it in a communicative situation, thus it focuses on accuracy first instead of fluency. Ur states that “our students can only learn something new (a text, a word, the performance of a task) if they can first perceive and understand it in context” (2000, p. 11). Thus, in the presentation phase, the teacher presents a new language item through controlled modelling and making the input comprehensible through the use of spoken language and written texts, vocabulary activities, examples, grammar explanations, instructions, and discussions about language at the appropriate level. Once students understand the meaning and context of use, they can then practise the new language through controlled practice followed by free production opportunities with a focus on developing learners' fluency.

This approach prompts students into learning correctly and developing accuracy from the beginning, mostly in the first two stages (presentation and production). Therefore, it is a structural-based approach (Lightbown and Spada, 2021). The teacher ensures that lexis and grammatical points are presented and practised in controlled situations, always aiming at getting students to give the correct answer. The more mistakes students make, the more they need to practice the correct form before they can actually produce freely. There are two main goals that justify this view: have the students move to the production phase only when they can produce the target language without making mistakes, and prevent students from internalizing the language incorrectly.

Although PPP relies heavily on teachers leading the first two phases and monitoring students progress throughout all phases to ensure that they are learning the target language correctly, it still employs strategies so learners can practise in pairs and groups in order to maximize the opportunities to develop their communicative competence.

Framework

In PPP, oral or written texts are used to teach language in context. Since Monopoly is a game, we can begin our lesson by presenting the language utilizing a "How to Play the Game" resource. For this example lesson, a text-based and a video-based input were selected. In order to prepare students to read/listen and understand the rules, the teacher needs to ensure that the written or spoken text is at the right level for the students. Therefore, the teacher needs to identify what language the learners are likely to already know and what they still need to learn, and prepare the presentation phase to help them understand the new language presented in context. The input chosen for this example could be implemented with a class of teenagers or young adults at the CEFR B1+ level groups. In mixed-ability classes, lower level learners would struggle to understand the text, so strategies to prepare lower level learners to understand the text would be necessary, especially if the learners have never played this game before.

In this example, the presentation phase gives learners the opportunity to learn the new language through vocabulary activities, examples from the text, explanations of the grammatical item and questions to check their understanding of the meaning and usage of new language items. In PPP, the presentation phase prepares learners for the second phase. Therefore, in the practice phase, learners read and watch the video first, then they practice the target language through controlled practice activities. Afterwards, in the production phase, they play the game. In the production phase, they have the opportunity to communicate freely. It is also in the production phase that the teacher has the opportunity to assess whether learners can communicate using the new language they were expected to learn during the presentation and practice phases.

| Stage | Activity | Tips, resources and example teacher commentary ² |
|---------|---|--|
| PRESENT | <p>Learn key vocabulary and grammar structures</p> <p>Contextualize</p> <p>Read the text and watch the video to learn how to play the game.</p> | <p>Teachers select the resource material (text-based or video-based) to serve as a source of input and prepare activities to present new vocabulary and grammar structures before reading/watching the video. In order to identify the language needed to be taught and the level of difficulty of a certain text, teachers can use the Language Triptych for Gaming (Chien, 2019), Text Inspector and English Profile from Cambridge. To learn more about how the list of vocabulary was produced click here.</p> <p>Start the class with a Lead-in activity (5 minutes). Prepare slips of paper for students to interview each other and a picture of Monopoly to show the whole class. Show a picture of a Monopoly Game and ask the lead-in question to the whole class. Then, present and model the activity (if necessary).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“Have you ever played Monopoly? Today, you are going to interview each other to find out who has/hasn’t ever played monopoly”</p> <p>Pair up students. Hand out the slips of paper.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“You will write your partner’s name and ask if he or she has ever played it. Make sure you mark their answer on the slip of paper. Then, ask each other the suggested question according to their first answer. You will have 5 minutes to interview each other.”</p> <p>Collect the slips of paper. If it is a small group, it is possible to ask students to report what their partner said to the whole group. If it is a large group, the slips of paper collected will help teachers know how to group students later.</p> <hr/> <p>Presentation activity 1</p> <p>After the lead-in activity, one suggestion is the Presentation activity 1 which is a bingo activity. That could be substituted for any activity where teachers help learners learn the meaning of some of the vocabulary first like crosswords, matching activity, complete the sentences with the words missing, etc.</p> <p>The teacher reads out the meaning cards and students look at their bingo cards with the words/phrases to check if they have them on their cards. While playing with the group, the teacher/other students can help clarify the meaning.</p> <p>Check out the Worksheets doc for vocabulary that could be focused on with intermediate students. Teachers may have to select their own key vocabulary to pre-teach according to the version of the game they implement (A sample vocabulary list has been</p> |

² This lesson plan is also available in a more printer-friendly version [here](#).

| | | |
|----------|---|---|
| | | <p>drawn up here).</p> <p>Presentation activity 2 Presentation activity 2 is about reading about the game. In this activity, the class will be divided into three groups and the text extracted from the blog post into 3 parts. Each group will receive one part of the text. Each group is responsible for reading and learning more about the game, then teaching others later. Therefore, when groups are reading the text, they can help each other understand the text.</p> |
| PRACTICE | <p>Reinforce target language through controlled practice activities.</p> <p>Prepare students for the production stage</p> | <p>Practice activity 1 In this activity, learners will practice with the structure What happens if/when.....? Groups need to have at least one student from each of the previous groups set up.</p> <p>Prepare and hand in the worksheet with situations that may happen during the gameplay. This is a good opportunity to teach/review the structure on the board with the examples from the worksheet before they start with the group activity. Ask the whole class:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">What happens if/when..... a player lands on the chance space?</p> <p>One of the students will answer the question to the whole group. Go over the worksheet with the students. Check if everyone understands the questions.</p> <p>Everyone in the group gets a copy of the worksheet and works together to answer the questions by referring back to the part of the blogpost they had received in the previous activity. This will prepare them to play the game.</p> <hr/> <p>Practice activity 2 Learners watch the video produced by the same blogger and answer some questions to check whether they understood the blog post and how to play the game. Check out the Worksheets document for suggestions.</p> <hr/> <p>Practice activity 3 Learners play the game with a focus on accuracy and reinforcing the rules of the game by playing and reminding each other how to play, as during gameplay, students who haven't played the game before will easily forget the rules.</p> |

| | | |
|---------|---------------|---|
| | | <p>Remind students to use the question “What happens if/when?” to ask about the rules if they are not sure about it.</p> <p>Students who remember the rules will answer. They will also remind each other what they can/can't do.</p> <p>The teacher monitors and supports students during the gameplay.</p> |
| PRODUCE | Play the game | <p>This is the production stage in which students play the game freely and the focus is on developing their fluency.</p> <p>Teacher notes down students' mistakes/errors.</p> <p>After the play session, the teacher writes on the board the mistakes/errors and invites students to correct them out, discussing grammar usage/vocab/etc.</p> |

Pros and cons

| Pros | Cons |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitates learning of new words and structures for students• Provides enough practice to develop learners awareness of form• Decreases study time for students trying to figure out meaning, usage, etc.• Teachers predict what students need to learn and prepare the material• The iteration aspect of the game provides a natural opportunity to practice the language over and over | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher-centered (teacher makes a decision of what, when and how to learn)• It could be time-consuming for teachers• Emphasizes accuracy and aims for perfection• A lot of the class time is spent on Presentation and Practice stages, less time is available for freer Practice.• Students are more passive towards the learning process.• Every student moves at the same pace. |

Further reading

- Mawer, K. & Stanley, G. (2011). *Digital play: Computer games and language aims*. Delta Publishing
- Ur, P. (2000). *A course in language teaching: Practice and theory*. Ernst Klett Sprachen.
- Thornbury, S. (2017). *30 Language Teaching Methods*. Cambridge University Press.

TBLT (Task-based Language Teaching)

Intro

Based on the interactionist approach (Bygate, Skehan & Swain, 2001; Kim, 2017), **TBLT** is one of the most well-known and used approaches in language teaching contexts, with a rich history of research outlining the cognitive and affective benefits of using the method in comparison to other approaches (see Ellis, 2017; Long, 2015). Adopting a TBLT approach means that a teacher aims *“to develop learners’ communicative competence by engaging them in meaning-focused communication through the performance of tasks”* (Ellis & Shintani 2013, p. 135). A task can be generally referred to as a communicative activity that has the following characteristics (Ellis, 2003; Loewen, 2015):

1. It resembles (or it is) a real-world activity.
2. It focuses on meaning.
3. It expects learners to use their own language knowledge.
4. It has a non-linguistic outcome.

Thus, the learning goal of TBLT is not to have the students learn a specific set of words or grammar constructs, but to enable them to achieve a task by using their L2 knowledge.

As with any teaching model, there are a number of criticisms of TBLT such as how to exactly define a “task” (Samuda & Bygate, 2008), whether TBLT is actually “better” than more structural approaches like the PPP approach (Bruton, 2005; Swan, 2011), and what the role of teachers are in TBLT classrooms (van den Branden, 2016). However, literature that validates TBLT from a cognitive or psycholinguistic perspective continues to be written (Long, 2016; Ellis, 2017; Loewen & Sato, 2018).

As mentioned, due to its roots in an interactionist approach, TBLT is based around the notions of: Comprehensible Input, pushed output (Swain, 1995, 2005), negotiation for meaning (Pica, 1994), attention (from fluency to accuracy), and noticing errors (Swain, 1993).

Teachers should think about using Task-Based Language Teaching with games if they...

- Would like or need to abide by action-oriented curriculums, such as the CEFR or CEFR-J where students’ levels are defined by a list of activities they can do.
- Want to have activities focused on communication and interaction.
- Want to work on both implicit and explicit learning and knowledge.
- Are trying to boost students’ cognitive skills as well as the linguistic ones.

Framework

Willis’s 1996 model is widely cited as a simple, implementable way of “doing” TBLT (see also Willis & Willis, 2007) that follows three main stages: pre-task, task cycle, and language focus. In this paper, we will propose a TBLT framework called *Kotoba Rollers* (KR), an expansion of Willis’ framework created by York (2019).

In KR York used games and their in-game goals as tasks, hence, the communicative activity that matches the four characteristics listed above was playing a particular board or card game. The idea behind York’s intuition regarding the similarities of tasks in TBLT and games is summarized in the following Table 2 (adapted from York 2019) where TBLT principles listed by Sykes (2014) are compared to games characteristics.

Table 2: similarities of TBLT principles and games

| TBLT principles | Games' characteristics |
|---|--|
| Goal-oriented | Every game has a main goal |
| Tasks are interrelated | Games' challenges have increasing difficulty |
| Providing feedback | Rewards for completion and retrying for failure |
| Negotiation and collaboration | Multiplayer games have interaction (cooperative or competitive) as requirement for success |
| Authenticated by learners, not by task creators | Games are authentic experiences |

Kotoba Rollers (see Figure 2) presents the pre-task (learn), task (play and replay), post-task (analyze, reanalyze, and report) structure and follows the five notions on which TBLT is based mentioned above. Its lessons cycle appears as follows:

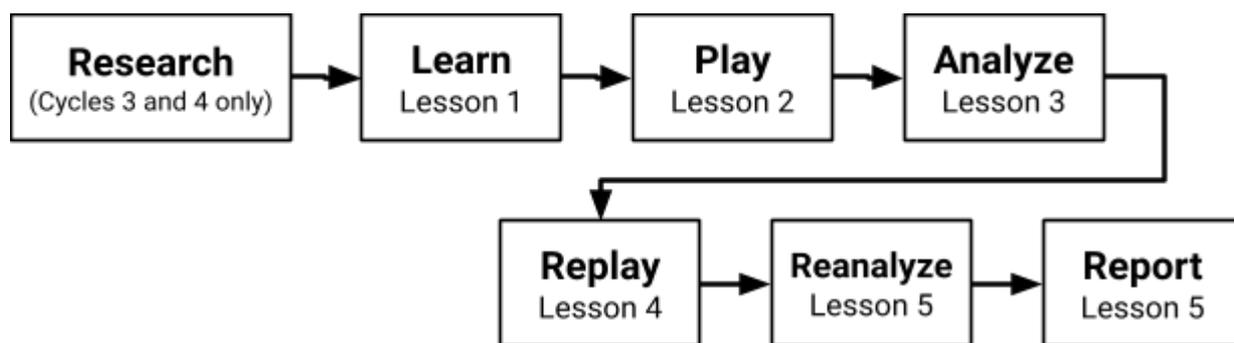


Figure 2 The *Kotoba Rollers* TBLT framework

TBLT / Kotoba Rollers framework³

In order to give more indicative and clear examples, in the framework we reported the action more in general, and under it, in **PURPLE**, are specific examples created for a JHS 8th-9th grade EFL class.

| Stage | Activity | Tips, resources and example teacher commentary | | | | |
|---|--|--|--------------------|-----------------|---|--|
| 1. PREPARE / LEARN | Learn about ABOUT the game with some monopoly facts: | https://mashable.com/2015/01/21/monopoly-facts/ | | | | |
| | Learn the game by studying the rules together. | <p>Rules can and should go through simplification in order to be easily understood by the JHS learners. For example:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="721 587 2128 794"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="721 587 1424 603">Rule from rulebook</th> <th data-bbox="1424 587 2128 603">Simplified rule</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="721 603 1424 794">"Each time a player's token lands on or passes over GO, whether by throw of the dice or by drawing a card, the Banker pays that player a \$200 salary."</td> <td data-bbox="1424 603 2128 794">"If you step on GO, you get \$200 from the bank"</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Students could read the rules from the simplified rulebook in pairs or groups, then report the meaning in L1 to the class</p> <p>Language adaptation should extend to the cards in the <i>Chance</i> and <i>Community chest</i> pile.</p> | Rule from rulebook | Simplified rule | "Each time a player's token lands on or passes over GO, whether by throw of the dice or by drawing a card, the Banker pays that player a \$200 salary." | "If you step on GO, you get \$200 from the bank" |
| Rule from rulebook | Simplified rule | | | | | |
| "Each time a player's token lands on or passes over GO, whether by throw of the dice or by drawing a card, the Banker pays that player a \$200 salary." | "If you step on GO, you get \$200 from the bank" | | | | | |
| | Consider vocabulary and phrases that are necessary to play the game in the L2. | <p>Knowledge of some words, phrases or expressions is mandatory to play Monopoly in an L2. Some of the useful words and phrases, if already studied, could be reviewed in the new game context::</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● "How much is the rent?" ● "Whose turn is it?" ● "I need to roll a 7" ● Jail; chance; title deed; mortgage; roll. | | | | |

³ This framework can be found applied to the online game *Among Us* at this link: <https://llpjournal.org/2020/10/25/j-york-how-to-teach-languages-with-among-us.html>.

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Watch a video about how to play monopoly</p> | <p>With the videos, new language can be introduced. If the content is of an appropriate level, videos of gameplay could also be used to have students notice words and expressions they already studied.</p> <p>Videos in the L2 might be too hard to follow for many students, In order to guide them in noticing and understand known and new language, teachers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pause the video often and ask students if they can identify, contextualize some of the language content. - By writing on the blackboard, adding subtitles or with a PowerPoint (videos from youtube can be downloaded and added to a PP) find ways to highlight the relevant language. - Rewind the video and go through the relevant part multiple times. <p>Example videos: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AuWvMgYv03g https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EI45xxLiOc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● "Are you ready to play now?" ● "Do you have any additional questions?" <p>After watching the videos, a worksheet or a checklist could help students confirm the amount of relevant language they managed to notice. Then watch the video again.</p> |
| <p>Play the game once in your native language to get familiar with how the game works.</p> | <p>Students, while playing in their native language, will confirm the rules' meaning and teach each other.</p> <p>While playing, many questions will arise, teachers should have a Q&A on the rules after the play-test.</p> |
| <p>Reflection on the vocabulary and phrases used, can the students say them in English?</p> | <p>Students write necessary expressions on a practice 「WORKSHEET」 . The teacher could prepare drilling activities for the following classes based on the worksheets.</p> |

| | | |
|---------|--|--|
| 2. PLAY | Review relevant vocabulary | <p>Before playing in L2, practice once again the necessary words or expressions based on the practice 「WORKSHEET」 written after playing in L1.</p> <p>With a presentation, the teacher could show a Monopoly's common situation and have the students think about the appropriate phrases or vocabulary:</p>  <p>For example, after seeing this picture⁴, students could say things like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>"I pay 50 dollars"</i> <i>"I must pay 50 dollars"</i> <i>"Give me 50 dollars"</i> <i>"Pay the bank"</i> <i>"Give me money!"</i> <i>"If I pay 50 dollars, I will"</i> etc.. |
| | What do <u>target language native speakers</u> say when they play? | <p>Watch people playing in the target language and make notes. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ds-8i3o1qUM</p> <p>Teachers could pause the video and ask students if they recognize the known language or if they can guess what game-play situation is taking place.</p> |
| Play! | | <p>Have the students use the target language (L2) as much as possible BUT... DO NOT PENALISE the use of the mother tongue. If students have smartphones, have them record the audio of the gaming session</p> <p>After playing, students continue filling the practice 「WORKSHEET」 .</p> |

⁴ Picture from <https://www.thesprucecrafts.com/monopoly-jail-411909>, picture [url](#).

| | | |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| 3. ANALYSE / REFLECT | Moving from fluency to accuracy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (If a recording was possible) Transcribe and compare the language between the first and the second game-play. “What mistakes did you hear?” “Can you think about the correct way to say it?” - (If a recording was not possible) After playing, have students write down on a reflection sheet what they couldn’t say in the target language. |
| | Watch another video of <u>target language native speakers</u> | <p>Watch a different video of people playing in the target language and make notes.</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hy3Y4ZE4DA4</p> <p>If students are ready and learned the functional language needed to play, by watching another video of native speakers playing they could expand with expressions around the gameplay: cheering, complaining, expressing surprise.</p> |
| 4. REPLAY | Repeat step 2 (PLAY) | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Create and carry on more language practice activities based on the new phrases and words students added to their practice 「WORKSHEET」 after playing.</p> </div> |
| | | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Play one more time and record.</p> </div> |
| 5. REANALYSE | <p>Moving from fluency to accuracy</p> <p>What else could you do post-task?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (If a recording was possible) Transcribe and compare the language between the first and the second game-play. <p>EX: Watch a funny video on Monopoly https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2qtO2_z1LgM: types of monopoly players “Did you or your friends behave in a similar way?”</p> <p>Check deHaan (2020a) and York’s book (2019a) for some more options.</p> |
| 5. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES | Why not: | <p>S L O W d o w n and reflect before becoming engaged in gameplay again (York, 2020a).</p> <p>In groups, students could write a simple review of the game in the form of a poster, specifying what they would have changed, improved, what was fun etc..</p> |

Pros and cons

| Pros | Cons |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some of the expressions drilled could be adapted to match textbook contents• The goal-oriented nature of TBLT matches the CEFR structure and helps to hit its descriptors• Free target language production is very welcome since the goal is completing the task by using the L2, not the production of a specific, pre-set, L2.• Drills are based on students needs and requests• Post-task activities focus on language accuracy making them test-friendly• Thanks to the second playing phase, students have a chance to notice the fluency improvement and truly enjoy the game. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lots of work: Adaptation of the rules and cards to match the students' level, creation of a simplified rulebook (highly suggested), selection and drilling of key phrases, correcting and analyzing accuracy worksheet, continuous updating of drilling activities based on the results of the worksheet.• In a large class, students will split into groups and need to be semi-independent. This could lead to confusion in big classes with young learners.• Could be necessary to stretch playing time depending on students' needs. |

Further reading

- York, J. (2019). "Kotoba Rollers" walkthrough: Board games, TBLT, and player progression in a university EFL classroom. *Ludic Language Pedagogy* (1), 58-114.
- York, J. (2019). *English at Play*. Tokyo Denki University Press, Tokyo, Japan.
- Spano, F. (2021). How I taught with a game in junior high school EFL classes. *Ludic Language Pedagogy*, 3, 93-133.

Pedagogy of Multiliteracies

Intro

The “pedagogy of multiliteracies” (“PedML”) was designed by the New London Group (1996) and was reframed as “learning by design” by Cope and Kalantzis (2000). Both frameworks address the “multiple multis” in the what, how and why of language and literacy education. “Learning language” in this framework is intrinsic to “learning about yourself,” “learning about society” and “learning to learn.” Language learning **could** be as focused as reading and remixing (writing) game rules, or as broad as connecting gameplay to participating in domains such as politics, technology, business, psychology or mathematics. “The what” and “the why” below **are** *shudders* “learning objectives.”

The what:

- Language, society and technologies are always shifting, so students should understand how meaning is created and received in different forms and contexts. Teaching and learning needs to take social and cultural aspects into account.
- Language isn't only in/about printed texts, but audio, video, interactive media
- Students should develop their first and second language(s).
- Language isn't only standard academic language, but also everyday, hobbyist and professional/specialist language. Students use and should explore various genres.

The how

- Teaching and learning takes place in various “worlds”: students' personal lives, school life, and also public and professional society
- Teaching and learning in this model combines both traditional and progressive activities:
 - **Stage 1:** Experiencing: doing something (e.g., reading a text, playing a game, taking a walk)
 - **Stage 2:** Conceptualizing: discussing what the group has done; language helps to make particular aspects of the experience understandable/important
 - **Stage 3:** Analyzing: connecting their experiences and understandings to society (who has power/who benefits is a central question)
 - **Stage 4:** Applying: students use their experiences, concepts and analysis to create something (a new text, game, experience, etc) for themselves or others
- Teachers are very important in the model: they ask questions, model work, and guide and connect different stages and activities

The why:

- To make a difference in the lives of students, and to improve society (transformation)
- To give teachers and students choices and to learn new ways of teaching and learning (agency/liberation)

A teacher should think about using the Pedagogy of Multiliteracies with games if they...

- Want to connect school and society; wants to base teaching and learning in students' interests and who they are and who they want to become.
- Want their students to think critically about language and life; want their students to be more curious about things.
- Want their students to do something authentic with language; to do a meaningful project(s).
- Want to connect language and content (ala CLIL).
- Are totally sick of Teaching English for No Obvious Reason (West, 1994).
- Totally dig pedagogy and geeking out on trying new teaching stuff.

A note about the lesson plan/materials on the next pages:

- Individual worksheets are provided at each stage.
- If you would like to have all the worksheets in one document, these two documents put everything together and add additional tasks and reflective spaces
 - [Game Terakoya class Journey](#) (15 weeks): 71 pages
 - [Game Terakoya seminar Journey and thesis work](#) (2 years): 116 pages

Pedagogy of Multiliteracies / Game Terakoya-flavor⁵

| Stage | Lesson | Activities and information | Teacher's instructions to the students in purple Tips for teachers in orange |
|--------------|-----------|--|---|
| Intro | 1 | <p>Approach the game purposefully. Ground in students' lives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss experiences with Monopoly. | <p>"What do you know about it?" "Who has played it?" "How was it?"</p> <p>"What does the word Monopoly mean to you?"</p> <p>"Looking at the board (the property values), the box, the components (the money, houses, pieces, etc), what do you notice?"</p> |
| | HW | <p>Students reflect about themselves -- "Who are you?" "Who do you want to be?" WORKSHEET</p> | <p>"I want you to understand that I want to help you develop in this class. The best way to develop is to think about who you are now and who you want to become, and tell me and others, so I and others can help you."</p> |
| Intro | 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students present reflections. Teacher asks Qs, generates dialog, links to past/future work - Explain the use of Monopoly to help you (students) take a step towards your future goals <p>Decide appropriate preparation work based on your students and their goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If linguistic goals: assign rules, or YouTube videos, online texts → have students take notes (for HW). Students can use this textual analysis sheet. | <p>"We'll use this game to think about society, class, money, cities and culture."</p> <p>"We'll use this game to think about our actions in society and what they mean for us and others." "We'll talk about who plays this game."</p> <p>"We'll play the game, and then discuss it. The things that we get curious about we will talk about more and do some reading and research about."</p> <p>"You'll take all of this work to do something, big or small, for your own future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You might redesign the game. You might review the game. You might make a video. You might teach the game and discuss it with some friends or other students. You'll do something that helps you become the person you want to be |
| Experiencing | 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students present work. Teacher asks Qs, generates dialog, links to past/future work. | <p>"Who do you think the author is?" "Why do you think so?"</p> <p>"Who is this text for?"</p> <p>"How do you describe the style of the text?" "Give me an example of what you mean."</p> |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Based on students' WHO WORKSHEET, brainstorm/prepare to take data (e.g. photo, video, scores ..) | <p>"We'll video record your game." "One person in the group, every 30 minutes, please write down how many properties and how much money each person in your group has."</p> |

⁵ Each of the lessons is presumed to be 60-minute classes. This lesson is intended (and important!) for anyone, though of course for lower level learners, more translation and simplification is necessary. But I think the challenge of unpacking these ideas is necessary, and a teacher needs to take that challenge on. (Thank you, Fred Poole!)

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|--|--|
| Conceptualizing | | <p>Play the game</p> <p>- Just play naturally (in small groups / or as a class) and collect data. If students want, play it again.</p> <p>Take time to discuss the game and connect to future work</p> | <p>“There are a lot of questions on this worksheet. Each question will help you think about the game in different ways. Some questions deal with your feelings about the game. Others are about how you played. Other questions ask you to describe and interpret the language, learning, game elements and social connections in the game. Other questions will ask you to critique the game, fix the game, or use the game in other ways. This work will take time, but the more effort you put into it, the better your projects in the class will be.”</p> |
| | HW | - Students complete the discussion WORKSHEET and highlight what they thought was important. | |
| Conceptualizing Analyzing | 4 | - Students present work. Teacher asks Qs, generates dialog, links to past/future work | <p>“Highlight the most important ideas on your worksheet. Maybe the top 3 to 5 ideas.” “Let’s go around the class ... what did you write?”</p> <p>“Why did you write that?” “What made you think of that?” “What happened in your game to make you think of that?”</p> <p>Teacher note: Your game literacy and knowledge and experience about society and education is crucial at this point. Many ideas will come up. It’s ok to just respond to the ideas positively and to ask for details and examples. Try to find similarities or differences between the responses of different groups.</p> <p>It’s good to be familiar with some history and critique of Monopoly at this point: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monopoly_(game)</p> <p>Some things that you might want to reference or use terms for (just write the words or ideas on the board and see what students become interested in):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Randomness, luck, economics, strategy (property > money), rich get richer, poor get poorer, socioeconomic classes, trading, house rules (games and culture), greed, boredom, randomness, emotional reactions, game length, monopolies in the real world (e.g., Apple / Microsoft), the history of the game (female designer, original anti-rent educational message), commercial success of the game, slapping brands onto the core gameplay, capitalism, socialism |
| | | <p>Open students’ eyes</p> <p>- Based on students’ ideas, show provocative videos about capitalism, monopolies, or modern society</p> | <p>Here’s why capitalism sucks: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8aHvA0KHxqM</p> <p>As the Rich Get Richer, the Poor Get Richer https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_Bzw8W1rS8</p> <p>Social reproduction Social Inequality https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ShJqEBcyiBg</p> <p>Why Monopoly doesn’t suck https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Urcs-GuAODY</p> |

| | | | |
|-----------|-----------|--|---|
| | | | <p>A New Way of Thinking (Beyond Capitalism and Socialism) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4fTkPv5EzB0 The Monopoly of Microsoft https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gyRPPbYKuPA</p> |
| | HW | - Students complete the "What are you curious about" WORKSHEET | <p>"What was the most interesting idea or concept that you wrote about on your worksheet, or we discussed in class, or watched in the videos?" "What do you still want to know?" "Why do you care?" "What's important to you?"</p> |
| Analyzing | 5 | - Students present reflections. Teacher asks Qs, generates dialog, links to past/future work Satisfy your curiosity / connect Monopoly to some aspect of society - Mini Research Project | <p>- Show some examples of student work that connected games to society "Here are some other students' curiosity projects." "Some studied the game's history. Others looked at strategies. Others looked at the game's players. Others thought about how the game made players feel and why." "They asked a big, specific question, then worked to discover the answer." https://lljournal.org/2020/04/17/dehaan-gt-class1-walkthrough.html https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Zr6V_Wa5a881HzeiTpkmUbvepHKIZX-2qDMRja5Lx80/edit#</p> |
| | | - Brainstorm some possible projects related to the language, ideas, society, gameplay of Monopoly (connect to students' discussion WORKSHEET and their ideas in subsequent work) | <p>These research projects always vary (and they should) but students might</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compare and contrast capitalism and socialism - Understand the political or economic system of their country and what people are saying about it. - Try a certain strategy in Monopoly and see if it is effective (you might suggest they try an app version of the game to speed up play) - To explore why people get bored (in the game / in life / in school). - To research other female game designers - To catalog branded versions of board games |
| | HW | - Students complete the first part (the planning) of the RESEARCH PROJECT | |
| Analyzing | 6 | - Students present their work and get feedback - Then work on their project in class and for HW - Students present their findings and reflections to the class when completed | |

| | | | |
|---------------|-----------|---|--|
| Participating | 7 | <p>Use what you've learned from Monopoly to participate in personal/public/professional ways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show some examples of students' participatory projects using games (remixes, events, blogs, social media posts, etc). Remind students of what they wrote on their "Who are you?" WORKSHEET - Brainstorm some possible projects, group students if they wish. - Students work on a project proposal (WORKSHEET) and present for feedback - Students conduct their project (in class or HW, taking notes on what they do and what happens | <p>"There are some really nice examples of participatory projects in the paper I showed you before. Students made the game "better" and made review videos https://ilpjjournal.org/2020/04/17/dehaan-gt-class1-walkthrough.html https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Zr6V_Wa5a881HzeiTpmUbvepHKIZX-2qDMRja5Lx80/edit# Here is an example of a teacher exploring different economic/political systems in different versions of Monopoly. https://www.heylistengames.org/post/i-taught-with-monopoly Do you want to try to make a different game system? "What are you passionate about?" "Games? Language? Teaching and learning? Society? Helping people?" You can make or do or share or change something to not only help yourself but help others." "Start thinking about your ideas on this worksheet and present them for feedback in the next class. You can work with other people who have the same goals or interests or skills. "</p> |
| Outro | HW | <p>Reflect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students reflect on their participatory work (using a WORKSHEET) and on the entire sequence of work with/around Monopoly and who they are now (using a WORKSHEET) | <p>"What happened over the course of these lessons?" "Do you feel different than before?" "What do you want to do next?" This worksheet takes time, but it will help you decide what step(s) you want to take next."</p> |
| Outro | 8 | <p>Submit and discuss</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students could discuss their learning in a class presentation (e.g., a poster presentation) - Students could submit their work to the teacher for continued discussion and iteration | |

Grading: Use this [GRADING RUBRIC](#) for the research project and the participatory project.

Optional: After giving feedback on a task/worksheet, encourage students to revise and resubmit for more feedback.

A personal reflection on the lesson plan

- [Vaporwave](#) this (York, 2020). Slow down. Don't make this a sprint.
- The lesson plan is purposefully vague in some places, e.g., "do a research project" or "participate!" - that's meant to be that way: show some examples, ask good questions, give time to think, help students along. They will do something interesting if you've done the discussion and each step thoroughly.
- It might seem that there is a lot of reflective and experiential learning in PedML, but not a lot of language work (ala https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1207/s15326985ep4102_1). PedML does start and end with "minimal teacher guidance" in the experiencing (1st) and applying (4th) steps, but the 2nd and 3rd steps are very heavily teacher mediated. Cope and Kalantzis start to explain this in this chapter https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9781137539724_1 and I (Jonathan deHaan) have several examples of the type of teacher mediation I do (and expect) in PedML.
 - <https://llpjournal.org/2019/09/18/dehaan-what-how-why.html>
 - <https://llpjournal.org/2021/03/15/furusawa-yoshida-comparison-journey.html>
 - <https://llpjournal.org/2020/08/26/the-who-and-transformative-actions-of-teaching-with-games.html>
- Many of the activities will be new to teachers and students (e.g., analyze a text, do a short research project, participate in society). It may be that your students will not know how to do one of these activities. The discussion between you and the students about how to do the assignment is really important: you can alter the parameters of the assignment and make sure that they are doing something that is important for them to be doing. Just "participating" for the sake of participating isn't the goal, but rather to help students do and be something that they want to do and be. That negotiation and understanding-making takes time. Take time. Let them ask questions. Let them get a bit lost. Help them to create their own meanings.

Pros and cons

| Pros | Cons |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Students get curious; they have to think more. "Real questions" are awesome for everyone● Students deal with language on a very broad and advanced level (discourse, political levels, etc)● Games aren't just motivational tricks; they are the start to discussions, knowledge development and participatory projects in society● The pedagogy bridges a lot of different aspects of society and school and life, different skills and learning at a fundamental and potentially life-changing level● Students actually use language to participate outside of school (net, community, family, etc)● Super motivating for the teacher, and for learners. You get to know students and see them transform right before your eyes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Lots of work (before, during, after)● Lots of time (need to go slower to ask and discuss questions and guide more)● Students can go off in all kinds of unpredictable directions, can be good, and awesome, but hard to manage or control sometimes. Lots of prep work and having to stay on top of things.● Need to learn how to mediate differently: ask questions, listen for students' wrestling with ideas, encourage students to take risks in ideas.● Hard to fit in a curriculum (can be a short lesson, but the longer the better)● Need to show examples (and teachers need to be super familiar with those examples, it's not just about the product, but about the process that the author took to make the product) |

Further reading

- deHaan, J. (2020). Language and literacy teaching with games: the "who" and transformative actions. *Ludic Language Pedagogy* (2), p.162-186.
- deHaan, J. (2020). "Game Terakoya class 1" walkthrough: Directing students' post-game discussions, academic work and participatory work through goals, curriculum, materials and interactions. *Ludic Language Pedagogy* (2), 41-69.
- deHaan, J. (2020). Jidoukan Jenga: Teaching English through remixing games and game rules. *Ludic Language Pedagogy* (2), 37-40.
- deHaan, J. (2019). Teaching language and literacy with games: What? How? Why? *Ludic Language Pedagogy* (1), 1-57.

Connected Learning

Intro

Connected learning is a *situated learning* (Gee, 2004) approach that starts with learners considering their identity, interests, hobbies and connections in various communities in society. Upon understanding what their **interests** are, either individually or in small groups, learners connect with peers in **communities of practices**⁶ (Lave & Wenger, 1991) to explore interest-driven projects (Ito, et al. 2013). These projects connect to academic, civic, or career **opportunities**. Communities in which learners participate are typically internet-mediated and use various tools for communication such as the following:

- fan sites (fanfiction.net, archiveofourown.org, wattpad.com),
- wikis (fandom.com),
- BBS forums,
- Social network sites (Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, etc.),
- SNS groups (Google groups, Facebook groups, etc.),
- IRC channels,
- Discord servers,
- Private messaging systems (Slack, Gitter, Messenger, etc.)
- In-game chat systems (MMORPGs, Minecraft servers, etc.)

As learners become familiar with the language and culture of their chosen community they move from *peripheral* participant towards becoming an *occasional, regular* or even *core* member over time (Lave & Wenger, 1991). This shift in participation level may be driven by the learner's investment in the community through personal interest, and as part of mentorship (formally or informally) received from other community members, or from peers and the teacher in the classroom. The concept of "learner" is therefore reconsidered as "speaker" or "social actor" (Kern & Liddicoat, 2011) as they engage in social and literacy practices both inside and outside of the classroom.

A teacher should think about using this approach if they:

- Are not bound by a textbook.
- Value their learners' individual interests.
- Want to help her students connect private interests with academic work and other opportunities.

Framework

There is a hypothetical hurdle we have to jump in designing this lesson plan, which the reader may have already noticed. As a connected learning approach is concerned with utilizing student interests, we have to presume that a student has chosen to participate in a group *related* to Monopoly. Of course, a student could be interested in something where Monopoly appears as an item of focus, such as board games, game design, capitalism, western culture/tradition, or something else. Alternatively, it could be the instructor or other community peers that act as the catalyst for the student(s) to research this game. Regardless, one must realise that a Connected Learning approach does not start out with the instructor explicitly planning a curriculum around Monopoly, it would arise naturally through introspection, investigation and communication with peers/the instructor.

The framework outlined below **was implemented in a university EFL context in the spring term of 2020** (York, 2021)⁷. In this project, the concept of community was limited to those found on Reddit (i.e., subreddits). This was done in order to provide all students with the same "tutorial" and accompanying quiz on how to navigate and use the platform. Although the results of the project have not been published yet, preliminary data analysis reveals that the majority of groups in this context participated in video game-related communities, (32 of 58 projects, 55%).

⁶ See also Gee (2005) for discussion of "affinity spaces," an alternative notion to the term "communities of practice" which focuses on the space for discussion rather than membership in a community.

⁷ Slides are available here: [JALTCALL2020 Engaging with the world Reddit in the university classroom](#). I am currently writing two papers on this project for publication in 2021.

The pedagogical approach was based around the core concepts of Connected Learning but also borrows from Thorne and Reinhardt's (2008) *Bridging Activities* model which sees learners join a community and *collect* self-relevant texts for analysis, *analyze* those texts in the classroom with the help of the instructor and finally *participate* in their chosen community by producing an original or remixed/transformed version of their analyzed texts. The bridging activities framework is thus an implementable "remix" of the pedagogy of multiliteracies designed for L2 teaching contexts.

| Wk | Goal | Classroom activities | Hypothetical interactions and instructions |
|----|--------------------------------|--|--|
| 1 | Introduction and identity work | - Students consider their identities including; private and public interests as well as connections in society. [WORKSHEET] | Teacher: What are your interests? Please complete the worksheet considering as many interests and connections to society as you can. |
| | | - Students decide which Reddit community they would like to participate in and form small groups. | Teacher: Let's make groups based on your interests. Walk around the class and make groups no larger than four. Student 1: I like to play games. Especially board games. Student 2: Me, too. Do you play Catan? Student 1: Yes, I like Catan. I'm quite interested in board game history. Student 1: OK. That sounds interesting. Let's make a group. Teacher: I'm not so familiar with board games, but I know Monopoly is quite old. Do you know Monopoly? Students: Yes. |
| 2 | Observe and collect media | - Teacher-led introduction to Reddit (including a quiz to check understanding). [EXAMPLE QUIZ] | Teacher: You can log in here and search for subreddits to join using the search functionality here. You can give <i>karma</i> by pressing this button. It's called an upvote or downvote on Reddit. |
| | | - Students find subreddits connected to their interests. - Collect posts for further analysis on a group document. ⁸ | Student 2: I found this post in r/monopoly about the history of the game. It looks interesting. Let's add it to the doc. ⁹ Student 1: OK. I also found this post. It is someone's monopoly collection. I can't believe there are so many varieties of Monopoly! ¹⁰ Teacher: There are more varieties of Monopoly than I thought, too! I heard a news story recently about a controversial version called "Ms. Monopoly." I wonder if you can find some information regarding this version. I also wonder what the reaction was from the Reddit community. ¹¹ |

⁸ Typically, a shared Google Doc.

⁹ https://www.reddit.com/r/monopoly/comments/d028bl/the_dark_history_behind_monopoly/

¹⁰ https://www.reddit.com/r/monopoly/comments/l20zv0/i_wanted_to_share_my_collection_15_years_in_making/

¹¹ https://www.reddit.com/r/monopoly/search?q=ms%20monopoly&restrict_sr=1

| | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------|---|---|
| 3-4 | Guided exploration and analysis | - The teacher helps students to analyze collected posts. [WORKSHEET] | Teacher: So, you've found an interesting post to analyse. ¹² Is there anything you need help with? Do you know what this word means: <i>scam</i> . What is a "scam" in Japanese? Do you think this is a scam? Is the community's reaction to Ms Monopoly positive or negative? Why do you think so? |
| | | - Students create a presentation to tell other classmates what they learnt/discovered/analyzed. [TEMPLATE] | Teacher: Which comments are you going to include in your presentation? What kind of posts are common in this Subreddit? Is this game popular in Japan, too? What are the similarities and differences to Japanese communities? Would the reaction to this post be the same in Japan? |
| 5 | Analysis presentation | - Groups present in A-B pairs rather than to the whole class. - Groups assess each other using a pre-made assessment criteria (See Appendix 1) | Teacher: What was the most interesting thing you learned about your community? How do you plan to participate? Please think of ways that you would like to participate in your communities before next week's class. |
| | | - The teacher provides assessment and feedback. | Teacher: Why did you choose that community? What surprised you? What didn't surprise you? What did you learn about Monopoly, or the culture around the game that you were not aware of before? How can you link what you learned in this project towards other academic work; for instance in your math or physics classes? |
| 6-8 | Participation project | - Groups decide how they would like to participate and work together to create a post | |
| | | - Groups check each other's posts before posting. - The teacher checks the group's posts and offers suggestions. | Teacher: Please show me a draft of your post. I will help you correct any errors. [To the monopoly group, who are planning on asking the community if they know about the Japan editions ¹³] If you want people to answer your question, you should put the main question in the title. You can add text and images to the content of the message. |
| | | - Groups post online and collect any replies. - Replies are analyzed and then replied to. [WORKSHEET] | Teacher: How many comments did you get? Are they as you expected? What was the most surprising thing you saw? Do you have any questions about the comments you got? Do you understand this comment? I think you should focus on these comments as they are very different and contain some interesting English expressions that other students may not know. |
| | | - Groups prepare to present their work to the rest of the class. [TEMPLATE] | Teacher: Which comments are you going to include? Are you going to show the breakdown of commenters' knowledge? Why not create a chart to show your data? Do you know how to use bullet points? |

¹² https://www.reddit.com/r/monopoly/comments/dtrg4d/ms_monopoly_feminist_monopoly_look_at_the_small/

¹³ http://worldofmonopoly.com/albert/japan_uk.htm

| | | | |
|----|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| 9 | Participation reflection presentation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Similar to the analysis presentation, groups present in A-B pairs. - Groups complete a peer assessment (See Appendix 1) - The teacher assesses each group and provides relevant feedback. | <p>Teacher: Does anyone have any questions for the presenters? Was anything unclear? What is your opinion?</p> |
| 10 | Reflection and conclusion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For the first cycle, students reflect on their work individually and start to think about the next cycle (i.e., do they continue participating in the same community or consider a different community, closer to their interests?) participation project. - For the second cycle, students complete the post-experiment survey. | <p>Teacher: As you know, we will complete this whole cycle one more time. We will not complete the interests survey again, so please think about your interests in your free time. You can choose to investigate a different community or continue with the same one. We will make new groups next week.</p> <p>[To the Monopoly group] If you continue to discover more about Monopoly, what would you like to do next time? Why not create a version of the game for a country or region that does not exist; your hometown perhaps? I wonder what the Reddit community would think of that. Could you perhaps make a version based on Japanese history? That may be very interesting to the community.</p> |

Pros and cons

Pros

- Student-centred so instils a sense of responsibility in students for their work. For example, once the framework has been explained, and worksheets created, students take on the role of completing activities as a group.
- From my experience, engagement in activities is generally high, as students are invested in learning more about the L2 version of their chosen community.
- As an instructor, our job shifts from teaching an “on-the-rails” syllabus, to one that helps learners become better learners. (Search skills, tech skills, language, culture, and history topics, etc.), thus, it can be very rewarding to see students go above and beyond your expectations with the ambitiousness of their projects.
- It is an opportunity for you to learn about and connect with your students.
- It can forge lasting relationships between students and their peers both within the class and those that they meet through participatory work.

Cons

- (As with all PBL or classrooms where students split into small groups) There is limited teacher-student interaction time. In other words, if all groups are working on different content, the depth of analysis for *each* group will not be as thorough in comparison to a teacher bringing in a single text and providing analysis for the whole class.
 - If students join a group or community without existing expertise, the cognitive load of trying to understand both the L2 culture AND content can be too extraneous, leading to the student becoming demotivated, and creating unsatisfactory work.
 - [Based on informal observations of my classroom] It requires the teacher to give up control of classroom instruction for long periods of time, which can lead to students becoming unmotivated if there is not a strong group dynamic.
 - If a group contains too many students, there is a tendency for some students to be less engaged than others. I recommend 2 to 4 students per group.
-

Further reading

- Connected Learning
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Game design / Game remixing

Intro

Teachers often remix games to meet curricular goals. Browsing social media sites like Twitter, Facebook or YouTube for “games language teaching” will result in many. For instance, using the hashtag #MFLTwitterati (a tag used by modern foreign language teachers) on Twitter reveals many simple game remixes for young learners. Not only that, but in line with this paper, teachers often remix Monopoly for language learners¹⁴. As a concrete example, Parrott (2019) remixed Monopoly to help her students learn about French culture (Figure 3).

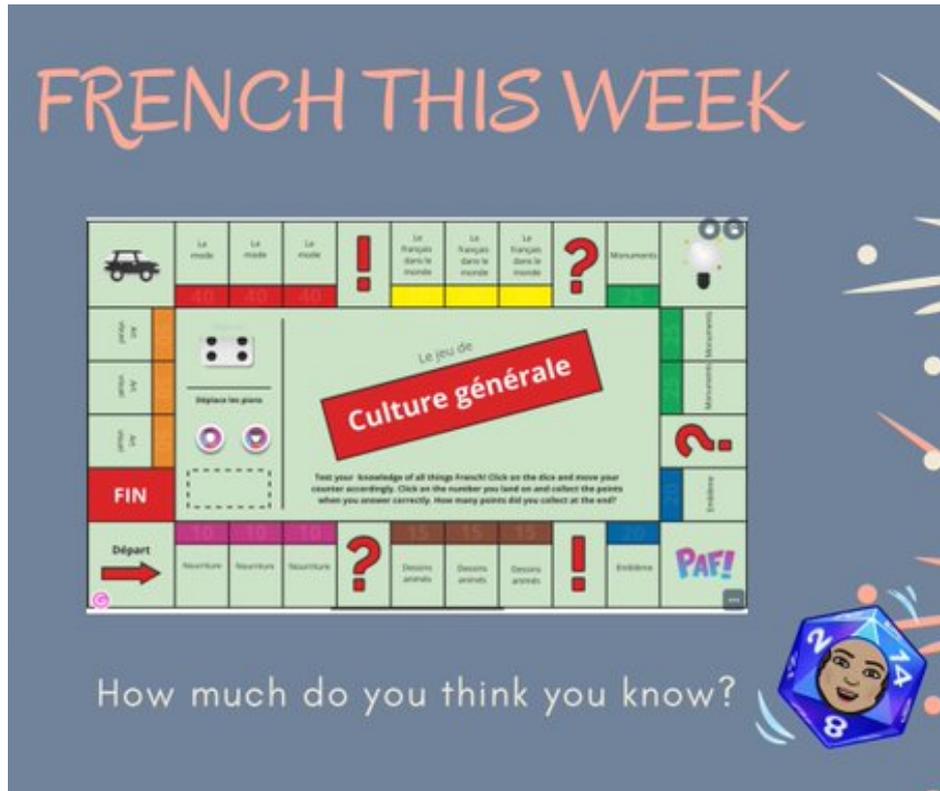


Figure 3 An example of a teacher-remixed version of Monopoly.

There is also a rich history of publishing volumes of “language games” for both L1 and L2 learning. Dorry (1966)¹⁵ is an early example of a book that features a selection of such games for language including “Word Bingo” and “Alphabetical Adverbs” where students have to sequentially add an adverb to a sentence from A to Y (Z is removed) such as He ran atrociously → He ran brilliantly → He ran cunningly, etc.

However, this section of the paper focuses on *students* remixing and making games as part of the class. The benefits of students creating their own games have been explored in a number of papers. Slussareff and Boháčková (2016) explored the difference in knowledge acquisition between designers and players of a location-based game. The game was designed to introduce the story of their local town during World War 2. Results suggested that the game designers scored higher on a content quiz, however, the authors recognize that the study sample size was small. Additionally, the experimental group (designers) had 12 weeks to work on the game design, whereas the control group (players) only played one time. There is thus a large disparity in terms of instructional support and time on task between the groups.

Subsequently, Savvani and Liapis (2019) introduced a framework for learning a second language by playing and remixing commercial board games. The notion of remixing existing games instead of trying to design new, original

¹⁴ <https://twitter.com/search?q=%23MFLTwitterati%20monopoly>

¹⁵ For similar volumes to Dorry, see Rinvoluceri (1984), Lee, (1979) Mawer & Stanley (2011)

games was due to the realisation that “designing games for educational purposes can be a challenging venture as the golden ratio between fun, learning and pedagogy is difficult to achieve” (p. 13). Additionally, the authors chose commercial board games over existing educational games due to educational games’ focus on behaviourist teaching practices (Duolingo being a platform critiqued in the paper), thus failing to address or promote higher-order thinking skills in learners. In other words, compared to educational games, and, indeed, the typical games designed by teachers (such as Gitti’s above), commercial board games feature rich and complex game mechanics that promote higher-order thinking skills both when playing, and possibly even more when designing, thus the rationale for remixing such games as part of a (language) class. Why the parentheses around language? The authors state that “the redesign process of popular tabletop games can be applied to any subject and learning goal.” (p.14)

Framework

Savvani and Liapis also introduced a six-step framework for conducting the game remix project. The framework was inspired by the literature on participatory design, a democratic process of design that involves all stakeholders. In the case of education then, this translates to a student-centred approach similar to project-based or inquiry-based learning. The framework also references a common approach to game design, namely: rapid prototyping and iterative design¹⁶. The framework is outlined below.

1. Set the learning goals

- The teacher may suggest a theme from the existing curriculum, but students should also be involved in deciding what their game is about.

2. Choose a commercial game

- Savvani and Liapis write that “the teacher chooses a popular game that could be adjusted to meet the specific learning goals set” (p. 15), meaning that **a high degree of game literacy is needed**.
- A dialog with students may also be utilized where students’ knowledge of games is referenced, meaning that the teacher does **not** need to rely on their own game literacy, but leverage students’ knowledge instead.
- Finally, in this paper, we are only concerned with the game Monopoly, so a teacher could **predefine** the game to be used, meaning that they only need knowledge of the predefined game.

3. Adapt the rules

- The game must be played a number of times and discussed as a group/class to understand what the underlying **system** is, and how it can be appropriated/remixed towards class goals.
- Teachers may want to start by asking the whole class for ideas regarding rule remixes, demonstrating the process before allowing groups to discuss their own ideas.
- Adapting can mean “simplifying” here. In keeping with the theme of this paper then, Monopoly could be reduced in terms of the number of locations and the number of different sets of locations.

4. Adapt the content

- Although given a separate step in Savvani and Liapis’s framework, this step coincides with the previous. **Content should match the learning goals of the game.**

5. Craft the game

- Card and board games are simple to craft. Pens or coloured pencils, paper and dice suffice in designing these kinds of games.
- **Care should be put into the underlying system of the game, not the art style.** This is a core tenant of rapid prototyping. It is not rapid if too much time is spent on aesthetics.

6. Playtest the game

- The final step, which feeds back into Step 3: “Adapt the rules” **based on the responses and feedback of the playtesters.**

Each of these stages may take more or less than a single lesson. In the following table, we introduce a hypothetical lesson based on this framework which utilizes Monopoly as the source game.

¹⁶ More details on rapid prototyping:

<https://gamedesignconcepts.wordpress.com/2009/07/02/level-2-game-design-iteration-and-rapid-prototyping/>

| Goal | Classroom activities | Hypothetical interactions and instructions |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Set the learning goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The teacher engages in dialog with students regarding a suitable learning goal. In this case, a student suggests that the game should be used to practice the present perfect tense. | <p>Teacher: Can you remember what we have been studying recently? What did you think you had trouble with the most? What theme would you like to work into a game?</p> <p>Student: I'm having difficulty with the "present perfect" form of verbs. Could we use that as a theme?</p> <p>Teacher: Yes, that is a good theme. We have covered it, but you haven't mastered it yet.</p> |
| Choose a commercial game | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The teacher introduces the board game, Monopoly, preparing students to play with a verbal explanation. | <p>Teacher: This game is called Monopoly. It is a "roll-and-move" game. Does anyone know what that might mean?</p> <p>Have you played it before?</p> <p>Johnny: I have played it before. You roll a dice and move that many spaces?</p> <p>Teacher: That's right. Johnny has played it before.</p> <p>Francisco: I have only saw people play it on Twitch*.</p> <p>Teacher: Only seen. Seen. Good try Francisco.</p> <p>Teacher: Let's watch a YouTube video to see how to play. Now that you have watched the video. Please let me know if you have any questions.</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small groups of students play Monopoly. The teacher checks comprehension of rules, and asks students to consider what they are doing as they are playing, seeding ideas for the remix at this stage. | <p>To the <u>present perfect</u> group:</p> <p>Teacher: Have you finished playing? What did you say when you played?</p> <p>Student: We finished. We have finished! We did not use the present perfect much in this game.</p> <p>Teacher: OK, let's think about how we can make players use this grammar in a moment.</p> <p>Additional teacher questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was it difficult to speak the target language while playing? Why? • What vocabulary or grammar do you think you can learn from this game? • What theme was the game? • Was the story a strong point or a weak point? |
| Adapt the rules and content | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The teacher fields ideas from students regarding how Monopoly could be simplified, modified, or remixed to reach a language learning goal. - Students work in small groups to adapt their Monopoly remix to | <p>Teacher: Could you change the "buy property" rule to "use the present perfect" instead?</p> <p>Students: Yes, we thought of that, but it is too much like learning. We want it to be more fun.</p> <p>Teacher: I see. Then, perhaps we change the "Chance" and "Income Tax" squares and cards instead?</p> <p>Students: Yes, maybe we use those cards to ask questions to the players.</p> <p>Teacher: I see. Hmmmm, how about you make a barrier in the middle of the board, so players can only see half. Then, when they move to the side which they cannot see, the other players have to tell them where they landed. For example: "You <u>have landed</u> on a banana card. What do you want to do?"</p> |

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| | <p>meet their learning goals</p> | <p>Student: That's a good idea. We could also draw an item on each space. Then make the player put the item into a sentence. "I have(n't) eaten a banana" "I have(n't) played basketball" "I have(n't) been to Italy."</p> <p>Teacher: That's a good idea. Please playtest it.</p> <p>To another group: Teacher: What did you say when you played, can you remember? Student: I said "You owe me 500 dollars" and "I want to buy that space." Teacher: OK, so you used large numbers and the <u>infinitive form of verbs</u>. I think you could focus on that as a topic for students to practice. How else can we get students to use the infinitive form of verbs in this game? Student: I could put a different verb on each space and people have to make a sentence with the verb before they can collect rent: I want to go, I want to play, I want to eat a hotdog, etc. Teacher: That sounds great. I want to play your game now!</p> <p>Additional teacher questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What have you added/taken away? ● What are you having troubles with? ● How does this card work? ● Can you show me how to play? |
| <p>Craft the game</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The teacher hands out components for students to create their prototypes | <p>(This could also be done at the "Adapt the rules" stage so students can start prototyping straight away.) Teacher: OK, please take any of the components that you need out of the box. Each group will need a board, and so I have this thick craft paper that you can use. This is the "prototyping phase" so do not be too concerned about how perfect your game looks. Just make sure it is playable. We will create a better version later.</p> <p>Additional teacher directions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Don't take too much time creating art for your game, as you will probably need to change things after playtesting. If you spend 30 minutes drawing a card and then throw it away, that is a waste of time, right? A stick figure and a shape will suffice! |
| <p>Playtest the game</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student groups may be paired and rotated so that each group playtests the other groups. - Consider making a feedback sheet for students to fill in by putting their feedback into writing [WORKSHEET]. | <p>After completing this stage, and if time allows, go back to the "Adapt the rules" stage and allow groups to polish their designs for another round of playtesting. To Game designers: As the playtesters are playing, please make notes on their actions. Are they playing as you expected or not? What are they having difficulties with? What is not working as you planned? Are they using the past perfect (infinitive form of verbs) as you expected? How can you check that they are correct? How can you penalize them if they are wrong? How can you reward them if they are correct? To playtesters: If you do not understand something, please ask questions to the game designers as you play.</p> |

Pros and cons

| Pros | Cons |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can foster not only language skills, but systems thinking, game design, and STEM skills.• Student-centred, inquiry-based learning allows students to choose their own direction in class, thus, may improve motivation and engagement in the topic.• Students review, transfer and demonstrate their understanding of material covered in class through the creation of a multimodal artefact. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers need a significantly high level of game literacy.• Students may need a high level of L2 proficiency if the language used to design games is expected to be in the L2.• Alternatively, if game design is done in the L1, this could be considered a “waste” of valuable L2 speaking time. |

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Conclusion

In this paper we showed how a single game can be used in different ways, even adapted, to fit different language teaching contexts. Hopefully, after reading through the lesson plans, interested teachers now feel the freedom to choose a methodology that best matches their experience and goals, and pick a game which language could match their curriculum as the same lesson plans we used with Monopoly can be used with a wide range of different games just by changing the teacher interactions and the external links in the right columns with content from the game they would like to use in their classes. If you decide to try out our lesson plans or if you would like to try them but feel that more support or advice is needed before starting, we would be more than happy to help. You can send an email to me (my email address is on the front page) or find us on Discord (our preferred communication app): <https://discord.gg/je9OZsnntf>.

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Appendix 1: Peer-review assessment criteria for the Connected learning “participation presentation”

Each item was graded on a 1 to 4 scale (4 being worth more points)

| Content | English language use |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The design• Connections in society• Chosen Community• Analysis 1: What I learnt about language and culture• Comparison to Japanese media | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of English (vs Japanese use)• Knowledge of subject• Interaction with audience• Volume• Ability to answer questions |
| === Participation Project ONLY from this point === | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your participation plan• Communication (Your message)• Reply and analysis• Reflection (Future plans) | |
