



**Symposium title: Digital Game-Based Language Learning: Design Choices and Classroom Integration**

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**Symposium format:**

- **Symposium Multimodal**

**Symposium mode:**

- **Hybrid**

**Sub-themes:**

- **LANGUAGE & TECHNOLOGY:** media, tools, digitals humanities, Natural Language Processing (NLP)
- **LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING:** teacher education, curricula and education, classrooms, instruction, task-based learning, EAP, study abroad, (virtual) exchanges, materials and methods

**Short Abstract :**

Digital game-based language learning is a field that has attracted a lot of interest over several decades. Digital games are considered promising tools for helping with language learning because they can provide plentiful language input, present material and scaffolding which is individually tailored to the learner's level, and can be highly engaging. In this symposium, we are looking to focus less on the effectiveness of one individual game or another and instead shine a light on what it is that makes these types of games more (or less) effective.

Among the topics this symposium will address are: Game design choices and their effects on language learning outcomes; Methods of successful integration of digital language learning games within the analogue classroom, including post-game debriefing; Understanding the value of games as assessment tools for language material covered in the classroom; and the informal settings in which self-motivated learners use games for language learning.

This symposium hopes to answer not the question 'Is this game effective?' but 'How can we as researchers and educators **make**, **adapt**, and **use** language learning games effectively?'

**Argument:**

Digital game-based language learning (also known as serious games for language learning or gameful L2 teaching and learning) is a field that has attracted a lot of interest over several



decades (see e.g. Prensky, 2001, Cornillie et al., 2012, Poole & Clarke-Midura, 2020). Digital games are considered promising tools for helping with language learning because they can provide plentiful language input, present material and scaffolding which is individually tailored to the learner's level, and can be highly engaging. However, even now, after years of research on the topic, many studies in this area are 'one-off studies' looking at the effectiveness of a particular game, and failing to deliver any generalisable results. In this symposium, we are looking to focus less on the effectiveness of one individual game or another and instead shine a light on what it is that makes these types of games more (or less) effective.

- Design choices constitute an aspect of interest in the development of a game with the purpose of addressing language skills and evaluating their effect on learning outcome. Game design choices may include, for example, narrowly or broadly focused learning goals, the selection of feedback for players, or the choice of cognitive load levels during gameplay integrated with content acquisition.
- Classroom integration plays a major role in productively integrating games into the regular learning experience. The teachers' intent and their communication and embedding of digital language learning games within the analogue classroom affects learning outcomes.
- Understanding the value of games as assessment tools for language material covered in the classroom, or best practices for post-game debriefing to improve language uptake is as important as the associated teacher training.
- Informal settings represent a significant learning space - where self-motivated learners use games - and has been vastly understudied.

The symposium invites papers both on games that have been specifically designed for language learning and 'commercial off-the-shelf games' that have been integrated into language learning programmes (whether in or out of the classroom). Additionally, we encourage the submission of papers focusing not only on English language learning, but also on less explored languages in the field.

This symposium hopes to answer not the question 'Is this game effective?' but 'How can we as researchers and educators **make, adapt, and use** language learning games effectively?'

Cornillie, F., Thorne, S. L., & Desmet, P. (2012). ReCALL special issue: Digital games for language learning: challenges and opportunities: Editorial Digital games for language learning: From hype to insight?. *ReCALL*, 24(3), 243-256.

Poole, F. J., & Clarke-Midura, J. (2020). A systematic review of digital games in second language learning studies. *International Journal of Game-Based Learning (IJGBL)*, 10(3), 1-15.

Prensky, M. (2001). *Digital game-based learning*, McGraw Hill.