University of Pardubice
Faculty of Art and Philosophy

Roles of Video Games in English Language Acquisition

Bachelor Thesis

2025 Roman Hrubý

Univerzita Pardubice
Fakulta filozofická
Akademický rok: 2023/2024

ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

(projektu, uměleckého díla, uměleckého výkonu)

Jméno a příjmení:	**Roman Hrubý**
Osobní číslo:	**H22032**
Studijní program:	**B0231A090018 Anglický jazyk**
Specializace:	**Anglický jazyk pro vzdělávání**
Téma práce:	**Role videoher v rozvoji anglického jazyka**
Téma práce anglicky:	**Roles of video games in English Language Acquisition**
Zadávající katedra:	**Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky**

Zásady pro vypracování

Cílem této práce je zjistit, jaké příležitosti k rozvoji řečových dovedností v aj nabízejí různé typy videoher. V teoretické části práce zasadí student problematiku do širšího kontextu neformálního vzdělávání. V další kapitole vydefinuje jednotlivé řečové dovednosti a možnosti jejich rozvoje. Poté představí a popíše druhy a typy videoher a jejich možný potenciál pro rozvoj řečových dovedností v aj. V praktické části student na základě kritérií vzešlých z teoretických východisek zhodnotí vybrané videohry z pohledu jejich potenciálu k rozvoji řečových dovedností v aj.

Rozsah pracovní zprávy:
Rozsah grafických prací:
Forma zpracování bakalářské práce: **tištěná/elektronická**
Jazyk zpracování: **Angličtina**

Seznam doporučené literatury:

Casañ-Pitarch, Ricardo. 2017. "Storyline-based videogames in the FL classroom." *Digital Education Review* 31: 80–92.
Cornillie, Frederik, Steven L. Thorne, and Piet Desmet. 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.
Dourda, Kyriaki, et al. 2014. "Content and language integrated learning through an online game in primary school: A case study." *Electronic Journal of e-Learning* 12 (3): 243–258.
Fernandez-Costales, Alberto. 2012. "Exploring translation strategies in video game localization." *Monografías de Traducción e Interpretación* 4 (1): 385–408.
Flores, Jorge Francisco Figueroa. 2015. "Using gamification to enhance second language learning." *Digital Education Review* 27: 32–54.
Krashen, Stephen. 1982. *Principles and practice in second language acquisition.* Oxford: Pergamon Press Inc.
Lim, Sung-joo, and Lori L. Holt. 2011. "Learning foreign sounds in an alien world: Videogame training improves non-native speech categorization." *Cognitive science* 35 (7): 1390–1405.
Nunan, David. 1992. *Research methods in language learning*. Cambridge University Press.
Peterson, Mark. 2010. "Massively multiplayer online role-playing games as arenas for second language learning." *Computer Assisted Language Learning* 23 (5): 429–439.
Rudis, Domas, and Svetozar Poštić. 2017. "Influence of video games on the acquisition of the English language." *Verbum* 8: 112–128.
Sykes, Julie M. 2018. "Digital games and language teaching and learning." *Foreign Language Annals* 51 (1): 219–224.
Soler Pardo, Betlem. 2014. "Digital Storytelling: A Case Study of the Creation, and Narration of a Story by EFL Learners." *Digital Education Review* 26: 74–84.
The Learning Network. 2016. "The role of games in digital learning." Last modified April 13, 2016. https://thelearning-network.org/the-role-of-games-in-digital-learning/

Vedoucí bakalářské práce: **Mgr. Helena Zitková, Ph.D.**
Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

Datum zadání bakalářské práce: **22. května 2024**
Termín odevzdání bakalářské práce: **22. května 2025**

doc. Mgr. Jiří Kubeš, Ph.D. v.r.
děkan

Mgr. Olga Roebuck, Ph.D. v.r.
vedoucí katedry

V Pardubicích dne 22. května 2024

Prohlašuji:

Práci s názvem *Roles of Video Games in English Language Acquisition* jsem vypracoval/a samostatně. Veškeré literární prameny a informace, které jsem v práci využil/a, jsou uvedeny v seznamu použité literatury.

Byl/a jsem seznámen s tím, že se na moji práci vztahují práva a povinnosti vyplývající ze zákona č. 121/2000 Sb., o právu autorském, o právech souvisejících s právem autorským a o změně některých zákonů (autorský zákon), ve znění pozdějších předpisů, zejména se skutečností, že Univerzita Pardubice má právo na uzavření licenční smlouvy o užití této práce jako školního díla podle § 60 odst. 1 autorského zákona, a s tím, že pokud dojde k užití této práce mnou nebo bude poskytnuta licence o užití jinému subjektu, je Univerzita Pardubice oprávněna ode mne požadovat přiměřený příspěvek na úhradu nákladů, které na vytvoření díla vynaložila, a to podle okolností až do jejich skutečné výše.

Beru na vědomí, že v souladu s § 47b zákona č. 111/1998 Sb., o vysokých školách a o změně a doplnění dalších zákonů (zákon o vysokých školách), ve znění pozdějších předpisů, a směrnicí Univerzity Pardubice č. 7/2019 Pravidla pro odevzdávání, zveřejňování a formální úpravu závěrečných prací, ve znění pozdějších dodatků, bude práce zveřejněna prostřednictvím Digitální knihovny Univerzity Pardubice.

V Pardubicích dne

Roman Hrubý v. r.

Acknowledgements

I express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Mgr. Helena Zitková, Ph.D., for her guidance and time. Additionally, I wish to extend my appreciation to my family for their patience and, particularly, to my brother for his emotional support.

ANNOTATION

This thesis examines the potential of entertainment-based video games in promoting the acquisition of the English language. The theoretical section begins with the context of informal learning, followed by a definition of video games and a characterisation of their psychological effects on players. Finally, it discusses individual language skills and effective methods for developing them in a traditional setting. The practical part aims to answer the question of the potential of video games in the acquisition of the English language through evaluation criteria derived from the researched literature.

KEYWORDS

Informal learning, video games, motivation, willingness to communicate, language skills, English language acquisition

ANOTACE

Tato práce zkoumá potenciál zábavných videoher při podpoře osvojování anglického jazyka. Teoretická část začíná kontextem informálního učení. Následuje definice videoher a charakteristika jejich psychologických účinků na hráče. Nakonec se zabývá jednotlivými jazykovými dovednostmi a účinnými metodami jejich rozvoje v tradičním prostředí. Praktická část si klade za cíl odpovědět na otázku potenciálu videoher při osvojování anglického jazyka prostřednictvím hodnotících kritérií odvozených ze zkoumané literatury.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

Informální učení, videohry, motivace, ochota komunikovat, řečové dovednosti, osvojování anglického jazyka

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 10
THEORETICAL PART 11
1. Informal learning 11
2. Defining games and gaming 12
2.1 Video games 13
2.2 Classification of video games 14
2.2.1 Entertainment-oriented video games 14
2.2.2 Serious video games 15
2. Psychological effects of video games on learning 17
2.1 Motivation 17
2.1.1 Intrinsic motivation in gaming and language acquisition 18
2.1.2 Extrinsic motivation in gaming and language acquisition 20
2.2 Language anxiety 21
2.2.1 Willingness to communicate through video games 22
4. Language skills 25
4.1 Speaking 25
4.2 Writing 27
4.3 Listening 29
4.4 Reading 31
PRACTICAL PART 34
5. Methodology 34
5.1 Evaluation criteria 35
5.1.1 Speaking skill evaluation criteria 35
5.1.2 Writing skill evaluation criteria 36
5.1.3 Listening skill evaluation criteria 37
5.1.4 Reading skill evaluation criteria 37
6. Content-based analysis 39
6.1 Baldur's Gate 3 39
6.1.1 Speaking skill acquisition 40
6.1.2 Writing skill acquisition 41
6.1.3 Listening skill acquisition 42
6.1.4 Reading skill acquisition 43

6.2 Goose Goose Duck....45
6.2.1 Speaking skill acquisition....46
6.2.2 Writing skill acquisition....47
6.2.3 Listening skill acquisition....49
6.2.4 Reading skill acquisition....50
7. Conclusion....52
Bibliography....58

INTRODUCTION

The topic of this bachelor's thesis is to find out whether, and if so, what potential video games hold in the acquisition and improvement of the English language. Many videogame players come into contact with the English language as the primary language of the games' interface, as well as the universal language option for communication with other players worldwide. This aspect of gaming raises a question about whether it could be used as a form of activity that helps learners acquire the English language outside of a classroom.

The theoretical part of this thesis is divided into four main chapters. The first chapter situates video games in the context of informal language learning. The second chapter introduces the concept of a game and what differentiates games from video games. In addition to the basic definition, games are characterised according to their classification. Entertainment-based and serious games are distinguished to provide readers with the contrasting purposes for which each of these types is developed. This distinction is critical to understanding why this thesis focuses on entertainment-based video games in the practical part. The psychological influence of video games is introduced and discussed in the third chapter. This chapter is dedicated to discussing the psychological effects of video games, as they are the primary reason why video games began to be studied at the beginning of the 21st century. Although there are many other psychological effects of video games to be discussed, this chapter primarily focuses on motivation and language anxiety, as these topics are most relevant to the thesis. The last chapter of the theoretical part is dedicated to introducing language skills. Each of the skills is introduced through its common signs and ways of development in traditional learning institutions. Additionally, the methods for effective acquisition are discussed to inform the derivation of subsequent evaluation criteria used in the practical part of this thesis.

The practical part is composed of three main components. Firstly, it introduces the methodology of the conducted study. This chapter serves the primary purpose of presenting and constructing the evaluation criteria used to assess the potential of selected video games to foster the development of language skills. The following chapter contains the content-based analysis. Here, the chosen games are briefly introduced in terms of their content and relevance to this study. Following the introduction, the content analysis is based on the evaluation criteria, derived from the reviewed literature and adjusted to fit the gaming context. The final chapter of the practical part presents the conclusion, where the assessment of the games is evaluated against the research questions, and the findings of the study is established.

THEORETICAL PART

1. Informal learning

Informal learning is a term which refers to a way of learning outside of formal institutions, such as schools or universities. Livingstone defines informal learning as "any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs without the presence of externally imposed curricular criteria" (2001, 5). Werquin offers a similar definition by characterising informal learning as an activity that is often unintentional, unstructured, and a result of daily activities (2010, 22). This nature of learning is fundamental, as it is the lack of structure and curricular background that distinguishes it from formal and non-formal education. Additionally, the reason why the word "learning" is used rather than "education" is attributed to the absence of any authorised instructor. However, Schugurensky argues that this does not mean that informal learning happens exclusively outside of classrooms. He states that informal learning is defined less by the location or method of delivery and more by the nature of the learning process, as it occurs independently of the curriculum. (2000, 2) Colley, Hodkinson, and Malcolm add that it is typically voluntary, learner-centered, and rooted in the learners' interests. They also emphasise its role in the acquisition of knowledge, particularly the English language. (2003, 9).

In terms of an informal approach to language learning, it is referred to as "Extramural English". This term characterises language acquisition that is learner-initiated and takes place either online or in the real world. The most commonly recognised activities are watching movies, reading books or online forums, listening to music, and playing video games in English (Sundquist 2024, 2). This exposure to language offers opportunities for incidental vocabulary acquisition, social awareness, and receptive fluency (Sylvén and Sundquist 2012, 304–306). This is particularly true for video games, which, according to Gee, situate language within the context of dialogue, thereby making its use situational. (2005, 38) Peterson concludes that video games may provide a suitable environment for second language acquisition for intermediate or higher-level learners. Conversely, he notes that the uncontrolled nature of video game environments, particularly in Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPGs), may prove challenging for beginner-level learners. (Peterson 2010, 346–347)

Based on the reviewed literature. English acquisition through informal learning and gaming goes hand in hand, primarily through exposure to the target language within the game context.

2. Defining games and gaming

For the purposes of this bachelor's thesis, it is essential first to define the difference between the terms' game' and 'video game', as they are not necessarily equivalent, depending on the context. A game, in its broadest sense, is an activity that differs from work or learning and constitutes a fundamental part of human life (Průcha, Walterová, and Mareš 2003, 75). Crowford supports this notion and further describes the concept as a "closed, formal system that subjectively represents a subset of reality." In other words, a game is a self-sufficient and complete world, governed by a set of rules and dependent on integral components that interact with one another, making the game a functioning piece. (1984, 4) Building on this foundation, Juul identifies six features that the superordinate term contains:

1. Rules – Games are rule-based
2. Variable and quantifiable outcome – Games have variable and quantifiable outcomes
3. Valorisation of outcome – The different potential outcomes of the game are assigned to different values, some positive and some negative.
4. Player effort – The player exerts effort in order to influence the outcome.
5. Player attached to outcome – The player is emotionally attached to the outcome of the game in the sense that a player will be a winner and "happy" in case of a positive outcome, but a loser and "unhappy" in case of a negative outcome.
6. Negotiable consequences – The same game can be played with or without real-life consequences. (2005, 36)

Although widely communicated across various sources, Salen and Zimmerman point out that the definition of the term 'game' can be problematic, mainly due to its linguistic interchangeability with the word 'play', as well as its translation into other languages. However, they largely agree to the established dependency on rules and outcomes, while adding that the game is an artificial or quasi-real conflict between players. (2004, 70–80) The general definition serves as a foundation for categorisation, although not all characteristics or features are mutually inclusive in every major category of games. As Crowford (1984, 2–4) outlines, games are grouped into "board, card, athletic, and computer games." Computer games, the subject of the thesis, are the category that will be explored throughout the following chapter, albeit under the more common title of video games.

2.1 Video games

Although recognised under various titles, such as electronic, digital, or computer games, video games is the most common term, encompassing all the characteristics a game of this type contains.

In contrast to the concept of game, which is known to humans for millennia, video game is the youngest category of games, dating its birth to the middle of the previous century. At that time, video games existed primarily in the form of prototypes or by-products of scientific discoveries, not yet a commercially driven form of entertainment as known today. (Ivory 2016) One definition suggested by Crawford is that video games are characteristically played on computers or computer-like machines, such as “coin-ops, or hand-helds.” He adds that the presence of the computer is essential, as it often provides the player with an opponent or a referee. Beyond this, the virtual world and interactive interface functions thanks to the computing power of such a machine. (1984, 3–4) Another definition of a video game is proposed by Esposito, saying that “a videogame is a game which we play thanks to an audiovisual apparatus, and which can be based on a story.” Audiovisual apparatus refers to the same concept thatat Crawford presents in his book. That is any electronic device dependent on computing technology. Additionally, such an apparatus is provided with an input device, any controlling accessory, and an output device, commonly in the form of a screen (2005, 2–3). While generally accepted and understood, these definitions can pose a problem, primarily due to the historical perception of what is considered to be the first video game, as proposed by Ivory. He states that some of the earliest precursors, considered to have worn the mantle of the first video game, had not relied on computing technology, as they were purely mechanical and lacked virtual graphics and interfaces. It is the graphical motion display that Ivory proposes to be the defining feature, which turns a game into a video game. (2016, 3).

In light of the suggested characteristics, it is most precise to characterise a video game as a form of computer-based software, textual or image-based, running on an electronic platform, such as a computer, mobile phone, or console. This type of game involves either multiplayer interaction or interaction between a player and computer, in a virtually generated environment (Frasca 2001, 4).

2.2 Classification of video games

With the gradual growth of the video game industry and its natural breach into leisure time, especially among young people, questions arise as to whether games can provide a space for educational recreation. It is thanks to this interest that gaming is perceived as a potential activity for learning, and some games are assigned other purposes, beyond entertainment. For this thesis, it is apt to differentiate between two categories, serious and entertainment-based games. Video games considered to fall into the category of serious games are those that are not primarily designed for entertainment purposes (Djaouti, Alvarez and Jessel 2011, 3). Entertainment-based games, on the other hand, focus mainly on the leisure experience and commercial profit (Crawford 1984, 181).

Although differing in their core intention and design, it is important to note that even entertainment games can offer a level of learning opportunities.

2.2.1 Entertainment-oriented video games

Entertainment-oriented video games, also called commercial or mainstream, fulfil their intent mainly by occupying players' leisure time and generating a financial profit for developers.

The notion that such games are no more than a time filler is described in Newman. He details how scientific studies avoided video games due to misconceptions this medium was regarded with, until the turn of the 21st century. Newman attributes this lack of interest to two major fallacies. For one, games were considered a low form of art, often compared to the film industry, and were consequently deemed unworthy of study outside of interested parties. Secondly, it was because of its supposed target group among children and the belief that games are something to be outgrown. (2004, 3–6). This trend was slowly abandoned in the middle of the first decade and continues to this day, since games now blend with interests of a wide population. (Marín-Suelves, Esnaola-Horacek and Donato 2020, 3) The underlying perspective is based on Kirby, who claims that “Digimodernism” allowed new technologies to penetrate the culture, in a way that made consumers more dependent on them. This newly established dependency had a significant impact on the ever-growing video game industry. Ingrained in the pastimes of children, thanks to the proliferation of personal computers, games have begun to be studied for their psychological effects. (2009, 124–172) This is believed to have been the basis of learners’ demand for more entertaining and interactive auxiliary content, making “the

submissive and memory-based practices" of traditional school boring (Marín-Suelves, Esnaola-Horacek and Donato 2020, 3).

Djaouti, Alvarez, and Jassel define entertainment games as software that features only a gaming dimension, focusing mainly on amusement and leaving any serious aspects out. Their argument is supported by their differentiation between the use of serious elements only as a background story, as opposed to the real purpose of the game (2011, 4). This definition appears to be derived from Crawford's taxonomy of games. Here, Crawford distinguishes between two major classes of video games: "skill-and-action (S&A) and strategy or cognitive games," both of which contain several genres. According to his classification, S&A games are the variation which is publicly associated with popular computer games. Players are primarily tested on their reactions and hand-eye coordination. Crawford's characterisation of strategy games, on the other hand, leans towards the games that are now known under the title serious games. These games emphasise thinking and require more concentration and time to complete. (1984, 19–38) This taxonomy, although recognised as the basis of genre studies, proves to be problematic to follow in the present-day game industry. The main reason for this is that contemporary developers tend to create blends of genres, not only to make the game more entertaining, but also because modern technologies enable it. For this reason, the organisation of genres into just two classes proves to be problematic. (Waern and Back 2017) Shrader et al. suggest that this blending of genres and experimentation with game design have enabled even purely entertainment-oriented games to facilitate learning, although not as their primary objective. (2017)

Unlike in serious games, educational aspects in mainstream entertainment media are incorporated unintentionally, which makes any potential educational benefits less predictable.

2.2.2 Serious video games

To say what is and what is not a serious game proves to be problematic in a similar manner, as to characterise what is a video game.

The term was first introduced in Abt. According to him, it means any game developed, primarily, for educational purposes, and it is proposed that such games find their application in education, industrial or governmental training. While not played for amusement, in essence, Abt clarifies that this does not mean serious games' design should not also focus on entertainment value. (1970, 9–10) However, the introduction of serious games in their pure digital form was first hinted at in Crafword's suggested taxonomy of computer games. In his

major category of strategy games, he describes a sub-genre of “Educational and children’s games.” Crawford’s definition is, fundamentally, identical to Abt’s, adding only that the purpose is explicitly reflected in the games’ design, mainly in the lower emphasis on audio-visual form (1984, 37). True to the original definition, proposed by Abt, it is suggested that the first forms of serious video games emerged even before the first commercially successful game, Pong. Their serious purpose was to illustrate the progress in physics and to raise general awareness about nuclear science. This suggests that video games had shifted from their serious precursors towards the more entertainment-driven modern variants. (Djaouti, Alvarez, Jessel and Rampnox 2011) Zyda, on the other hand, appears to lean away from the paramount importance of the educational element. He says that “a serious game is a mental contest, played with a computer in accordance with specific rules, that uses entertainment to further government or corporate training, education, health, public policy, and strategic communication objectives.” Unlike Abt or Crawford, however, he adds that the pedagogical intent of such games is not the primary objective. Instead, he suggests that the educational element is built around a story, and therefore, the entertainment side of the game is the superior one. (2005, 26) Chen and Michel take a neutral stance on this difference of opinion. While acknowledging the original notion of educational purpose being the primary goal, they also agree that entertainment is intrinsically linked with the term video game and suggest a compromise. Through the term “edutainment”, or education through entertainment, they assign each element an equal value, stating that serious games use the entertaining and artistic quality to convey the serious motive for which they were created 2006, 23–24).

Considering the various interpretations, the broad definition advocated by Dajouti, Alvazer, and Jassel seems to accommodate all views. They say that a serious game is “any piece of software that merges a non-entertaining purpose (serious) with a video game structure (game)” (2011, 3).

2. Psychological effects of video games on learning

Although relatively recently, video games have made their way into scientific debates about their psychological effects. Questions about whether those effects are positive or negative are at the centre of the debate in various areas of psychology. The aim of this thesis is to find out the potential of video games in language acquisition. For this reason, this chapter will focus only on psychological effects relevant to this goal.

One of the key psychological mechanisms is motivation, which is closely related to enjoyment and autonomy in gameplay. Ryan, Rigby and Przybylski assess that particularly intrinsic motivation is the core type that underlines play and sport, and therefore they attribute its relevance to video games as well (2006, 346). Another important aspect connected to language acquisition is the reduction of language anxiety. According to Reinders and Wattana, video games offer an environment where players can freely experiment with their use of language, which in turn develops their autonomy and proficiency (2014, 40–41). Reduction of anxiety, similarly to motivation, directly influences social interaction between players, which is further reflected in the language used in formal language acquisition environments. Peterson concludes that this is prominently the case for multiplayer games, where players engage in collaborative interactions (2012).

The following subchapters will explore each of these psychological dimensions in more depth. The aim is to provide a clearer understanding of how and why video games can be psychologically beneficial to English language learners.

2.1 Motivation

In the context of video games, motivation plays a central role, and the question of what motivates players to play has become a topic of scientific debate. Motivation is the driving force that keeps gamers engaged and interested in continuing their gaming sessions for multiple hours a day. Considering this, it is therefore logical to apply this concept in connection with language acquisition.

Fundamentally, motivation is a deep psychological process, personal to each learner. According to Průcha, Walterová and Mareš, motivation is a set of intrinsic or extrinsic factors which activate human behaviour and govern how an individual proceeds and achieves their goals. In the context of realising desired performance, they specify that an individual is led by either their

personal needs or outside incentives. (2003, 127–128) Ryan and Deci add to the internal motives. Other than a personal need, they propose a genuine interest in a certain activity or a sense of internal initiative to excel, to fall into the category of inner motivation. They also specify some of the extrinsic incentives, such as external demands, financial inducement or fear of being surveyed (Ryan and Deci 2000, 69). Sheldon, Ryan, Rawsthorne, and Ilardi conclude that inner, authentic motives, in comparison to externally controlled actions, promote individuals' interest, excitement, and confidence. These traits naturally lead to enhanced performance. (1997, 1381–1391). Although any form of external motivation is generally unwanted, Vallerand clarifies that the undesirability depends on the level of autonomy. He refers to self-determined forms of external motivation, where an individual reflects on the value of outside regulation in relation to their personal needs or reasons for performing an activity (1997, 283–285).

This is the case across the spectrum of employment and applies to education as well. Pavelková and Frencl state that pitting intrinsic and extrinsic motivation against each other is a significant simplification. In learning, especially, these two mechanisms form complex interrelationships when external incentives are reformed into inner motives (1997, 329–330), similarly to what Vallerand describes. The importance of motivation is stressed in Lemrová, who states that motivation is one of the most prominent determinants of success in school. She adds that not only should teachers pay attention to the individual needs of their students, but also try and learn what aspects may demotivate them as well. She also points out that demotivation can even arise from exceeding the tolerable limit of motivational elements, which is why it is crucial for teachers to know their students. (2024).

Correspondingly, it is not evident which of the two sources of motivation is more prevalent in gaming. Understanding the nuanced way each influences players will help to take advantage of its use in language acquisition and gaming.

2.1.1 Intrinsic motivation in gaming and language acquisition

Intrinsic motivation in the context of gaming refers to players' internal drive to engage in the virtual world. Identically to other fields, including learning, this kind of motivation is not affected by anything other than the players themselves.

According to Ryan and Deci, intrinsic motivation stems from the innate inclination to seek challenge or extend one's capacities, and to explore and learn (2000, 70). This directly translates into why gamers play video games. In combination with interactivity, exploration of a virtual world is an embedded feature of many video games. It offers a rich experience, satisfying needs that no other medium has the capacity for. In terms of challenge and learning, games are often designed to test players in various ways, which in turn promotes the need to learn and understand the game's mechanisms in order to face the challenges successfully. (Rouse 2005, 2–6) Reid says that intrinsic motivation means that a person engages in an activity due to their enjoyment and satisfaction. In addition to the challenge, he identifies other factors, such as fantasy, curiosity, and control, that further promote internal motivation (2012, 71). In Rouse, the factor of curiosity is linked with the desire to explore. The fantasy factor is believed to be one of the major reasons why players engage with virtual worlds of games. Although connected to a form of escapism, Rouse argues for the perspective where this escapist nature offers a positive feature of enhanced immersion (2005, 7–8). The concept of control is related to the sense of autonomy discussed by Ryan and Deci. In their theory of cognitive evaluation, they specify factors that facilitate or diminish internal motivation. They assess that autonomy, in conjunction with the feeling of competence, enhances internal motivation and a positive interest in the activity. However, it is clarified that competence is not always mutually inclusive with autonomy, meaning that a person must experience both to trigger motivation. (2000, 70–71) This claim is derived from Utman, who concludes that in an educational environment, students who do not experience autonomy are prone to lose initiative for their learning (1997, 176–180). This mirroring of factors which promote intrinsic motivation with the reasons why video games are played is the reason for Delacruz's notion that gamification of educational materials enhances learning (2012, 8–11).

This internal drive can be meaningfully transferred to the context of English language acquisition, which functions as the dominant language of the video game industry. Research has shown that when learners engage in language-related activities that are meaningful, enjoyable, and relevant to their interests, their intrinsic motivation increases. The desire to understand what is said or written in popular media is one of the most prominent driving forces for learning a second language. (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2011, 39–43; 94–95) According to Noels, Clement and Pelletier, learners who are intrinsically motivated to learn a language demonstrate higher levels of persistence, engagement, and achievement (2001, 430–436) Research on social interaction in Massively-Multiplayer Online Role Playing Games (MMORPGs) for English

language acquisition has proven that players who developed an interest in the virtual world of the game have shown increased willingness to engage in English conversation. Additionally, they engaged in reading supplementary texts to enlarge their knowledge of the game world. (Rankin, et al. 2009, 163–167).

2.1.2 Extrinsic motivation in gaming and language acquisition

Extrinsic motivation, unlike intrinsic motivation, is dependent on external factors. In the video game context, it often appears in the form of a reward, a position in the ranking system, or a badge interpreting a gamer's skill relative to other players. This design strategy keeps players engaged by providing frequent positive reinforcement, which can significantly increase time spent with the game.

The danger, however, lies in the potential for these rewards to undermine intrinsic motivation, especially if players begin to rely solely on external outcomes to find the activity worthwhile. Deci, Koestner, and Ryan caution that excessive reliance on extrinsic motivators can reduce internal interest, especially when rewards are perceived as controlling. They say that tangible rewards, specifically, can negatively affect internal motivation, depending on the level of expectancy. (1999, 658–659) Although loosely, such rewards can be translated into game reward taxonomy as rewards of facility, increasing characters' effectiveness relative to other non-playable characters or other players (Phillips, et al. 2015, 88). As research shows, such rewards undermine the responsibility for developing internal motivation and autonomy, as they offer a notional crutch to achieve goals more easily or with significant help (Deci, Koestner and Ryan 1999, 659).

Conforming to this, Deci and Ryan claim that extrinsic motivation is driven mainly by the instrumental value of the activity rather than the inherent interest in the task itself. On the other hand, they argue that it is possible for external incentives to be internalised through the process of identified and integrated regulation. Although varied in the degree of self-determination, both processes rely on individuals' evaluation of the external stimuli and their relevancy to their goals. Incentives then become an essential part of one's intrinsic motivation, although they fulfil a separate outcome. (2000, 71–73) In support of this argument, it is proposed that when appropriately aligned with educational objectives and offering a substantial level of autonomy, external incentives can enhance inner motivation. An example of integrated regulation is the voluntary adoption of an external constraint, such as studying during weekends, which serves

to enhance inner motivation for improvement in a specific area of interest. (Vallerand 1997, 281–282) Reinders and Wattana's research on willingness to communicate in games shows that players were motivated to engage in conversations concerned with quest completion, which rewarded players with the game's currency. They documented that one prominent motivator for the players was to be helpful to others, by listening and responding to what others have to say, or reading descriptions or instructions to deepen their understanding of quests (2014, 112–113). Similar to reading for specific information in quests' descriptions, the introduction of new vocabulary is proposed to fill the role of an external aspect, motivating the search for meaning. Although it could be argued that understanding new vocabulary is more of an innate desire, in decision-based games, if a player wants to make a rational decision, they need to understand what is said in order to make the right dialogue choice. In this sense, even though the primary driver is game progression, the outcome of acquiring new vocabulary contributes to language development. (Bin-Hady 2023, 63–66) Still, the limitations of extrinsic motivation must be acknowledged. When language tasks are stripped of meaningful context, learners disengage or fail to transfer their skills beyond the gaming environment (Hoffman and Nadelson 2009, 266–267).

Regarding studies on both intrinsic and extrinsic effects, it is therefore essential to balance extrinsic incentives with opportunities for autonomy, personal relevance, and competence, all of which facilitate internalisation. While it may not provide the same depth of engagement as intrinsic motivation, it can initiate participation, guide behaviour, and create scaffolds for meaningful learning, particularly when learners are still developing confidence or language skills.

2.2 Language anxiety

Language anxiety, often referred to as foreign language anxiety (FLA), is a psychological phenomenon affecting learners' ability to engage in second language interactions.

Although corresponding, language anxiety is not merely a combination of personal fears regarding the performance of a foreign language. Proposed definition by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope says that it is "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process." According to this definition, anxiety originates from the inability to perform authentic communication due to the limited range of the language, which directly affects one's

competency. (1986, 128) In traditional educational contexts, this type of anxiety has been shown to negatively impact performance in all language skills, commonly resulting in avoidance behaviours or reduced participation (MacIntyre and Gardner 1994, 285). Roots of this are believed to stem from communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety, which consequently create a threatening environment for learners suffering from this anxiety. Fear of negative evaluation is considered to be the most prominent contributor, as negative evaluation can arise from any social situation, not necessarily from an authority figure. (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, 127–128)

In contrast, the informal and interactive nature of video games offers an alternative environment that is believed to reduce the negative effects of language anxiety. One reason for this is that games naturally fall into the affective domain (Reinders and Wattana 2015, 39). Another important aspect that helps in lowering anxiety is the anonymity that video games offer. Peterson suggests that anonymity, in the form of online pseudonyms, combined with the control learners hold over the environment, significantly reduces diffidence in communication (2010, 3–7). This is supported by Reinders and Wattana, who claim that the anonymity provided by virtual avatars made learners feel more comfortable and less afraid to make mistakes, even though other players were firmly aware of each other's avatars (2014, 116).

Although a major stepping stone, the anonymity may also promote hostility or outright aggression from other players regarding in-game performance (Kwak and Blackburn 2014, 1–2). This inevitably results in some individuals experiencing pressure in competitive or socially demanding and uncontrolled online environments. (Giola, Collela and Bousier 2022, 39) Thus, the effectiveness of games in reducing language anxiety depends not only on the game design but also on external factors, such as gaming communities.

2.2.1 Willingness to communicate through video games

Connected to the result of erasing language anxiety is a willingness to communicate (WTC). Initially, it had been conceptualised as a personality trait, rather than a situation-based variable, and focused only on speaking performance. The construct was intended to explain why, under identical circumstances, some individuals choose to communicate while others do not. (McCroskey, Bear and Elaine 1985, 3–6) MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels, however, propose that it is more adequate not to limit it only to personality traits. Instead, they chose to approach it from the perspective of a situational variable, acknowledging all its influences.

Additionally, they proposed expanding the range to encompass all areas of communication. They support this reasoning by assessing that there is little to no correlation between personality traits and L2 learners as opposed to L1 learners. WTC is not only a result of linguistic competence but also psychological variables, such as anxiety, self-confidence, and motivation. (1998, 546–550) Conversely, Reinders and Wattana claim that although related to affect and motivation, it is, in fact, the commitment and encouragement connected to L2 production that is the distinguishing factor of WTC (2014, 41).

Converting willingness to communicate and its relevance to video games, Reinders and Wattana found that the game environment provides an attractive space to communicate in. According to the findings, a conclusion is drawn that the virtual space is also attributed with the deletion of barriers typically present in the traditional space of a classroom (2012, 183). The attractiveness of the environment is based on its informality. Horowitz reports that the lack of constant monitoring contributes to reducing language anxiety and encourages players not to be afraid of making mistakes, which in turn encourages them to use the target language more. He also acknowledges the amount of leisure time gamers spend playing to be an influential factor (2019, 388). This corresponds to Ünlü and Aydin's study, which concludes that learners who play games regularly feel more secure while communicating in classroom circumstances and are more comfortable in confrontation with native speakers. (2023, 11–12). Reinders and Wattana found that learners participating in their study demonstrated higher WTC when engaged in in-game communication compared to regular classroom discussion. They argue that the interactivity and immersion motivate players to communicate in order to complete collaborative tasks, which makes the language use more purposeful and meaningful. (2014, 111–113). This notion is supported by Peterson, White, Mirzei and Wang (2020). Their research shows that learners are compelled to participate in the contexts of meaning negotiation and collaborative interaction, such as problem-solving tasks.

Overall, video games present an effective informal environment for enhancing willingness to communicate in English, especially through collaborative and immersive experiences. They offer communicative opportunities that are meaningful, interactive, and generally less threatening than those found in traditional classroom situations. However, these benefits depend heavily on the learner's context and the game's social framework. Although promising, contemporary studies are limited to the discussed areas, whereas other educational areas remain under-researched. Additionally, as suggested in studies on the motivational pull of video games,

willingness is dependent on personal interest. This further confirms that video games are not a universally appealing medium and should be regarded as such. (Peterson and Jabbari 2020; Reinders and Wattana 2012, 183–184)

4. Language skills

Language proficiency is evaluated through four fundamental language skills: speaking, writing, listening, and reading. These are traditionally categorised into two groups: productive skills, which include speaking and writing, and receptive skills, which comprise listening and reading. While each of these skills represents a distinct mode of language use, they are often developed in parallel. (Harmer 2015, 265–275) However, the acquisition of a second language is not possible only through learning language skills. While language skills represent the practical and observable actions of communication, communicative language competences are the underlying knowledge and abilities that allow skills to be used effectively. According to CEFR, there are three recognised competences and their components. Firstly, linguistic competence refers to knowledge and skills related to language systems. Secondly, sociolinguistic competence involves using language appropriately in various social contexts. Lastly, pragmatic competence involves functional use of language and the way communication is organised and interpreted. (Council of Europe 2020, 129–142).

4.1 Speaking

Speaking ability is an essential part of our everyday life, making it, in essence, the most prominent language skill of all. As one of the core productive language skills, it plays a crucial role in a learner's ability to engage in meaningful communication actively. To perform this meaningful communication, it is important to not only formulate contextually appropriate output but also to comprehend language input. Speaking is therefore heavily dependent both on output and input, unlike other language skills (Thorburn 2005, 38–39). According to Pinter, speaking is a combination of cognitive and motoric activities, and as such, poses a great challenge to master fluency as a second language. She bases this claim on the fact that in order to be fluent, it is necessary to speak and think in real-time, control the output, as well as plan what to say next. (2006. 55) This is supported by Lazaraton, who adds that "speaking is perhaps the most perplexing of the traditional skills", because of all the demands in poses on a speaker in real time.

Generally speaking, speaking serves either a transactional or an interpersonal purpose. Transactional purposes fill the role of a plain exchange of information. Interpersonal purpose, on the other hand, serves the purpose of maintaining social relations (Thornbury 2005, 13). The speaking event takes an interactive or non-interactive form. The interactive form requires the

speaker and the recipient to engage in the conversation simultaneously. Conversely, non-interactive exchange does not contain any interaction between the two speakers, and the communication is one-sided (Harmer 2015, 343). Lastly, speaking activity can be planned and unplanned. If a speech is planned, it means that some previous preparation for the speech was done, often to the point of being completely scripted. Unplanned conversation or speech requires active cognitive activity so that the speaker can make rational decisions based on the context and follow the direction the discourse is to take (Thornbury 2005, 14).

From the perspective of speaking development, it is most important to build students' confidence. Harmer states that while it is sometimes extremely easy to get students to talk, more often this endeavour poses a challenge. Ranging from class or task organisation to overall atmosphere, he attributes this occurrence to the natural reluctance of students (2015, 345). This claim originates from Scrivener, who asserts that building confidence is a very important goal in speaking classes. He attributes this reluctance to speak to the inability to apply accumulated knowledge in a conversation. Since passive knowledge often exceeds active knowledge, students often feel nervous or fearful about applying this knowledge to avoid appearing foolish in front of the class. (2011, 213) It is therefore important to create a safe environment, and in order to promote this confidence, through the absence of risk-taking (Thornbury 2005, 91). This can be achieved through communicative activities that make learners interact in contextualised and meaningful ways. These activities are performed with the focus on incentivising communication, rather than accurate use of learned items (Scrivener 2011, 217–218). Harmer divides speaking activities into five categories. "Acting from a script" activities are a form of role-play activities that are, however, prepared beforehand and based on a script. Students are asked to perform a dialogue based on their prepared scripts. "Communication games" are activities that encourage students to formulate and communicate a message as fluently as possible in a short period. Such activities are built upon an information gap that students fill by transactional communication. "Discussion" activities range in size of groups they are performed in and in the level of formality. Students are asked to discuss a topic, argue for various points of view and reach a consensus. "Prepared talks" are researched and prepared beforehand, speaking acts, during which students present an area of their interest, often in the form of a monologue. This category differs from scripted activities, in a way that students' notes serve as a base of their knowledge, rather than the whole performance. The last category is "Simulation and role-play." Activities in this category have established rules and context, representing either real or fictional situations. Other than introducing outside-the-classroom circumstances and

proposing a level of engagement through the variety of possible acts, simulations and role-plays allow hesitant students to be more open, since there is no need to rely on pre-existing knowledge. (2015, 348–352)

In order to ensure speaking activities, facilitate opportunities for meaningful communication and autonomous use of language, Thornbury developed six criteria for speaking tasks:

> 1. Productivity – a speaking activity needs to be maximally language productive in order to provide the best conditions for autonomous language use.
> 2. Purposefulness – often language productivity can be increased by making sure, that the speaking activity has a clear outcome, especially one which requires learners to work together to achieve a common purpose.
> 3. Interactivity – even formal, monologic speaking tasks such as talks and presentations should be performed in situations where there is at least the possibility of interaction.
> 4. Challenge – the task should stretch the learners so that they are forced to draw on their available communicative resources to achieve the outcome.
> 5. Safety – while learners should be challenged, they also need to feel confident that, when meeting those challenges and attempting autonomous language use, they can do so without too much risk.
> 6. Authenticity – speaking tasks should have some relation to real-life language use. (2005, 90–91)

4.2 Writing

Writing is a second productive skill and represents a combination of cognitive and linguistic processes when performed.

Although similar to speaking in the transfer of a message or information, it differs significantly in the level of register. Unlike speaking, students typically acquire the skill of writing through formal education, and only then do they begin to understand all the different social roles people can assume in different contexts. Additionally, it is often a one-way form of communication. Especially in a formal correspondence, if the message is clear, a response is not required. (Tribble 1997, 9–10). However, this does not mean that the writer is not supposed to consider their recipients. Another difference from speaking is that the communication does not take place

in real-time, and if it does, it is accompanied by a considerable delay in response. Written correspondence allows writer to take their time and plan the most suitable and sufficient way in the given context (Hyland 2019, 1–2). On the other hand, this advantage puts emphasis on the text. Therefore, in the absence of an immediate response from the recipient, the writer must anticipate the reaction and adhere to the cooperative principle. This principle guides writers to write "a clear, relevant and preferably interesting and memorable text" (Olshtain 2014, 208–209). Although still relevant, the differences and principles have become blurred with modern technologies. Scrivener claims that since the beginning of the 21st century, the role of writing has changed significantly in the way it has increased, especially in the informal register. Internet text messaging allows for almost immediate response, which in turn makes it closer to spoken communication and comes with a set of characteristics. Text messages or chats require a quick and concise style of writing, achieved through abbreviations and devoid of punctuation. (2011, 234–235)

In the traditional context of education, where it is first developed, writing is taught through several methods. One dominant method is "writing-for-learning" and "writing-for-writing" (Harmer 2015, 330). Writing for learning is an approach focused on "form and surface features" of the written performance. Writing for writing is a less controlled process, which gives learners freedom to express themselves. Nevertheless, it is demanding in terms of applying correct grammar, coherence, and cohesion at the same time. (Brewster, Ellis and Girard 2004, 117–118) In other words, while the former helps students to learn the language, the latter helps them to develop their writing skills. (Harmer 2015, 330) Another two major methods in teaching writing in second or foreign language education are "the process approach" and "the genre approach." Process writing emphasises the cognitive steps involved in formulating and completing the output. In general terms, such steps involve idea generation and data gathering (Tribble 1997, 37). In the learning context, Harmer specifies "pre-writing phases, editing, re-drafting, and finally producing the finished version." He stresses that the steps are not necessarily sequential but rather recursive. (2015, 326). On the other hand, the genre approach focuses on familiarising learners with specific textual structures and linguistic conventions of different genres. Furthermore, it is more socially oriented, with an emphasis on text-reader interaction, therefore on the written product. (Tribble 1997, 45; Harmer 2015, 325).

When learning to write, the success of the process depends on the previous knowledge and supporting materials. Firstly, Tribble suggests four aspects of knowledge that a writer has to possess to be effective:

> 1. Content knowledge – Knowledge of the concepts involved in the subject area.
> 2. Context knowledge – Knowledge of the social context in which the text will be read, including the reader's expectations, and knowledge of the co-texts alongside which this new text will be read
> 3. Language system knowledge – Knowledge of those aspects of the language system (e.g. lexis, syntax) that are necessary for the completion of the task
> 4. Writing process knowledge – Knowledge of the most appropriate way of preparing for a writing task. (1997, 67–69)

Additionally, Nation specifies five conditions that need to be met when learning a productive skill:

> 1. The learners write and talk about things that are largely familiar to them.
> 2. The learners' main goal is to convey their message to someone else.
> 3. Only a small proportion of the language they need to use is not familiar to them.
> 4. The learners can use communication strategies, dictionaries, or previous input to make up for gaps in their productive knowledge.
> 5. There are plenty of opportunities to produce. (2009, 5)

4.3 Listening

Listening is a process of decoding information embedded in spoken communication. As such, it falls into the category of receptive skills, which makes it, in essence, the counterpart to the speaking skill. Rost states that listening skills can be defined according to four orientations. Receptive orientation describes listening as a process of "receiving what the speaker actually says." Constructive orientation "constructs and represents the meaning". Thirdly, the collaborative orientation is "negotiating meaning with the speaker and responding." Finally, the transformative orientation is the process of "creating meaning through involvement, imagination and empathy." (2011, 2–4)

When discussing listening in education, it is essential to consider the type of input. Listening is developed through exposure to authentic or scripted audio inputs. The authentic delivery of a speech is usually done at a normal speed, is relatively unstructured with a high rate of filler words and natural starts and stops. Speaker overlap and the background is filled with noise. Scripted audio input delivered slowly, with complete sentences and structured and densely packed information (Wilson 2008, 30). Objectively, understanding authentic speech is the target of every language learner. However, the challenge it presents is core to its characteristic features. Therefore, it is advisable to expose learners first to scripted listening, which is authentic in the sense that learners can control their own progress. (Rost 2011, 165)

Listening can be further divided into types and processes. Nation and Newton differ between "One-way and two-way listening." Similarly to speaking, one-way listening serves the transactional purpose, while two-way listening is associated with interpersonal (2009, 40). Goh interprets the former as a task during which there is little to no interaction of the listener and the speaker. The focus is on gathering information that is highlighted in a variety of listening outcomes, such as notes, summaries or responses. The latter engages listeners by alternating their role. The common outcome of such listening is a conversation. (2014, 81). Listening processes are categorised into two main approaches: top-down and bottom-up. Wilson defines each of the approaches as follows:

> Bottom-up – an approach to understanding texts that is based on perception of sounds and words. It is a text-based approach as it focuses on building up the message word by word rather than on the students' background knowledge of the situation, topic or theme.
>
> Top-down – an approach to texts which emphasises the listener's or reader's knowledge of the topic, theme or situation as much as the actual words heard (or read). It is a student-based approach because it relies on the students' schemata and background knowledge. (2008, 184; 189)

When put together, it is evident that the listening process is a combination of multiple sub-skills. Nation and Newton add that while top-down is more important in standard communication, bottom-up is essential for the accuracy of comprehension. (2009, 40–41) However, Scrivener argues that the bottom-up approach is "virtually impossible to do", since the speech quality varies between authentic and scripted input. This makes it more useful for filling gaps in communication than general comprehension (2011, 257).

Common ways of listening practice are defined in Rost. He recognises six types of listening practice:

> Intensive – Learners pay close attention to what is actually said.
> Selective – Learners attempt to extract key information and construct or utilise information in a meaningful way.
> Interactive – Learners interact verbally with others, in collaborative tasks, to discover information or negotiate solutions.
> Extensive – Learners listen to longer extracts and perform meaning-oriented tasks.
> Responsive – Learners seek opportunities to respond and convey their own opinions and ideas.
> Autonomous – Learner selects own extracts and tasks, monitors own progress; decides on own patterns of interaction with others. (2011, 183)

The effectiveness of listening practice is measured differently across various sources. According to Wilson, a listening task involves features, such as "focusing on meaning rather than form, decision-making, or having an outcome" (2008, 58). Additionally, students must be familiar with the content of a task. Learners should be interested in the task and willing to learn about it. Furthermore, they should encounter only a small portion of unfamiliar language and be able to acquire it through the "context clues or background knowledge". Lastly, the practice is extensive in terms of input. (Nation and Newton 2009, 3–4) Rost, on the other hand, discusses listening features, including genre variety, authenticity, genuineness, and difficulty. (2011, 162–172).

4.4 Reading

In the context of L2 learning, reading involves decoding and comprehension processes that interact dynamically with learners' prior linguistic and content knowledge (Grabbe and Stoller 2020, 124–125). It is the second of the receptive skills and is similar to listening in various ways of learning. Unlike listening, however, the speed at which learners read differs according to their personal needs or fluency (Scrivener 2011, 263).

Similar to listening, Anderson recognises bottom-up and top-down reading models. The bottom-up model is a lower-level reading process, which means that the process is concerned with the recognition of single units and their meaning. Higher-level processes in the top-down

approach involve inferring context, or background knowledge. He adds that traditionally, the development of fluent reading skills emphasises the need to foster both lower-level decoding and higher-level comprehension and interpretation. (1999, 3–4) In order to maximise the benefit of those approaches, Harmer suggests the implementation of extensive and intensive reading. While intensive reading is often chosen and designed by a teacher to develop specific reading skills, extensive reading texts are typically selected by students according to their field of interest (2015, 283). Like listening, intensive reading is focused on detail, while extensive reading is focused on meaning. Detail in an intensive reading represents multiple aspects. In addition to comprehending a particular text, learners are tasked with understanding newly introduced vocabulary and grammar, as well as cohesion, information structure, and genre features. Apart from meaning-focused input, extensive reading also serves the purpose of fluency development. (Nation 2009, 25 – 27; 49) It engages learners through exposure to lengthy texts and a substantial amount of target language, which leads to an overall improvement in reading skills (Harmer 2015, 283). In order to approach such tasks, learners are encouraged to adapt reading strategies. Skimming and scanning strategies focus on understanding facts about a text through rapid reading. While the former is aimed at learning the gist or general idea, the latter concentrates on individual items, such as dates, names, or facts hidden in the body of a text. (Scrivener 2011, 265).

Reading practice is further divided into two categories based on the level of engagement. Passive or traditional comprehension reading is a type of reading where learners read a text, following it from start to finish without fully engaging with it. Active reading, on the other hand, involves readers actively engaging with a text, reading between the lines and questioning the content. (Davies 1995. 135–142) Anderson, however, states that reading is, in essence, an active process, although he acknowledges that no personal interest of a reader towards the reading material results in a passive activity (1999, 4). Based on Davies' definition, Tomitch proposes six characteristic features of active reading practice. Firstly, active reading practice utilises authentic texts that are not initially intended for educational purposes. Secondly, the text has a broad social context, separating it from the page. Thirdly, it provides readers with a clear framework of what the text is about, based on the content or structure. Additionally, it enables readers to examine the text in an analytical way, encouraging them to focus on the whole text rather than looking for surface-level details. Connected to this is the fifth characteristic, which allows readers to interact with the text to contribute to building the message. Learners need to interpret and anticipate across separate sentences and paragraphs to

construct the meaning. Finally, the sixth feature is to allow and encourage students to interact with each other in order to communicate, hypothesise, or discuss their interpretation of a text. (2008, 84–85)

PRACTICAL PART

5. Methodology

The aim of this is to explore the potential of selected entertainment-based video games in English language acquisition. This was accomplished by addressing research questions targeted at the acquisition of individual language skills. The research questions are as follows:

1. Can selected video games foster the development of English speaking?

2. Can selected video games foster the development of English writing?

3. Cam selected video games foster the development of English listening?

4. Can selected video games foster the development of English reading?

The study was conducted through qualitative research on the chosen video games, aiming to gather data on the features and content that could potentially contribute to language development. Qualitative data or variables, as named in Ott and Longnecker (2010, 67–68), cannot be measured the same way as quantitative data because they vary in kind but not in degree. Although they can be categorised using numerical labels, these labels represent coding rather than measurable interpretation. Moore (2006, 104) simplifies this definition by saying that qualitative data is information that cannot be understood by counting it. Connecting this to the analysis of video games, Lankoski and Björk describe the formal analysis of gameplay, a process where specific elements of a game are examined and described in detail. It is an underlying method that forms the fundamental understanding of the game system. They introduce so-called primitives, which are the building blocks of game research, in the form of game components, players' actions, and goals. They also suggest that to build a sufficient formal analysis, a game needs to be played thoroughly multiple times to distinguish the mentioned primitives and other desired subjects of the analysis. (2015, 23–27).

To answer the research questions, evaluation criteria for each language skill have been derived from English language acquisition literature and rephrased to fit the gaming context. The criteria assess the effectiveness of fostering language skills within the context of video games. The evaluation criteria were formulated based on the features of effective language

development discussed in sub-chapters of individual language skills. Established criteria serve the purpose of determining whether such features are present in the gameplay structure of the selected video games. In order to properly establish and narrow down the criteria for each language skill, they were evaluated using the FINER technique. “FINER is an acronym for feasible, interesting, novel, ethical and relevant.” (Mohanan and Parameswaran 2022, 1–3). Each criterion was assessed according to its applicability to game analysis, its potential to yield engaging insights, its contribution beyond existing evaluation models, its connection to ethical standards in educational research, and its alignment with the study’s focus. Criteria that strongly fulfilled these aspects were retained, while those with limited practical use or overlap were excluded. Based on this evaluation, the criteria have been narrowed down to the four most relevant. In addition, the selected criteria have been analysed and modified according to communicative language competences defined in CEFR. The resulting criteria are consistent with linguistic, socio-linguistic, and pragmatic competences and their components, promoting their development.

The chosen criteria were then analysed in relation to the content features of the selected games using content-based analysis. It is used for systematic content study in various types of media. Content analysis is further broken down into conceptual and relational analysis. Conceptual analysis is closely related to quantitative research in terms of coding and concepts or themes, as well as drawing conclusions based on emerging patterns. Relational analysis, on the other hand, delves deeper into the relationships of said concepts that arise from the analysed media (Wilson 2011, 177). To determine the potential of video games in fostering language learning, it is necessary to treat them as a learning material. According to Tomlinson, a learning material is a resource used to support language learning. The effectiveness of such material is derived mainly from its connection to the design and promotion of language acquisition. (2008, 3–13) The primary aspect of a learning material's design features is its aim. In other words, what purpose does it hold in terms of acquiring language (Littlejohn 2011).

5.1 Evaluation criteria

5.1.1 Speaking skill evaluation criteria

1. Spoken output – The game encourages sustained oral production through tasks that require expressing ideas, opinions, and descriptions.

2. Communicative purpose – Speaking tasks are tied to clearly defined communicative goals within the game context.
3. Interactive communication – Players engage in spontaneous, real-time dialogue with other players or the game itself
4. Situational authenticity – The language used reflects real-life scenarios with an appropriate tone, register, and sociocultural norms.

> Productivity – a speaking activity needs to be maximally language productive in order to provide the best conditions for autonomous language use.
> Purposefulness – Often language productivity can be increased by making sure, that the speaking activity has a clear outcome, especially one which requires learners to work together to achieve a common purpose.
> Interactivity – even formal, monologic speaking tasks such as talks and presentations should be performed in situations where there is at least the possibility of interaction.
> Authenticity – speaking tasks should have some relation to real-life language use. (Thornbury 2005, 90)

5.1.2 Writing skill evaluation criteria

1. Writing process knowledge – The game supports planning, drafting, and revising text as part of gameplay¨

2. Linguistic scaffolding – Players receive appropriate vocabulary, grammar hints, or models.

> Writing process knowledge – Knowledge of the most appropriate way of preparing for a writing task
> Language system knowledge – Knowledge of those aspects of the language system (e.g. lexis, syntax) that are necessary for the completion of the task. (Tribble 1997, 67)

3. Context knowledge – The game involves writing performance with a clear purpose and intended audience.

4. Sustained written output – Writing tasks occur at multiple points in the game, each with a distinct function (e.g., describing, narrating, requesting, etc.).

> The learners' main goal is to convey their message to someone else.
> There are plenty of opportunities to produce. (Nation 2009, 5)

5.1.3 Listening skill evaluation criteria

1. Task-Oriented Listening – Listening is connected to an in-game activity (e.g., solving a problem, making a decision, etc.)

> To summarise the main features of tasks, we can say that they: are primarily focused on meaning rather than form, and so create opportunities for authentic language use; involve decision-making on the part of students; have an outcome, so students should feel a sense of achievement at the end. (Wilson 2008, 58)

2. Contextual Relevance – Listening materials are embedded in meaningful game contexts that enhance engagement.

3. Authentic Input – Listening features realistic speech styles, accents, and genres.

4. Adaptive Difficulty – Listening tasks can adjust in complexity, according to learner needs.

> Learning materials (topics, inputs, tasks) are relevant if they relate to learner goals and interests, and involve self-selection and evaluation. Language input should aim to be genuine, i.e., involving features of naturally occurring language with and between native speakers: speed, rhythm, intonation, pausing, idea density, etc.
> If we wish to simplify a text (e.g. by shortening it) or a task (e.g. by providing initial vocabulary or other information), we need to first consider the factors of cognition – the listening processes – that make a listening activity difficult. (2011, 161–171)

5.1.4 Reading skill evaluation criteria

1. Authenticity – In-game texts represent functional genres
2. Purpose-Driven Reading – Texts support game progression, requiring comprehension to achieve game outcomes.
3. Engaged Reading – Players interact with texts through prediction, reflection, or decision-making.

> First, they make use of authentic material; that is, the material is selected from naturally occurring texts which were not written for didactic purposes

> Second, active reading tasks contextualize reading. That is, they allow the reader to see the text not as a mere product on the printed page, standing on its own and having meaning in itself, but as part of a broader social context which includes the writer and also the reader him/herself
>
> Fifth, the activities encourage students to interact with the text. That is, readers are not seen as mere receptors of text information, but as active contributors to the construction of meaning. In active tasks readers have to anticipate, predict, and look for information not explicitly stated in the passage, having to compute relationships between and across sentences and paragraphs. (Tomitch 2008, 84–85)

4. Targeted Language Input – Texts are designed to highlight linguistic aspects, such as vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, and genre conventions.

> The teacher should ask "How does today's teaching make tomorrow's text easier?". There are four ways of putting this important principle into practice.
>
> 1. Focus on items that occur with high frequency in the language as a whole (see Table 3.1 for examples). Such items will occur often in many different texts.
> 2. Focus on strategies that can be used with most texts (see Table 3.1 for examples).
> 3. Quickly deal with or ignore infrequent items.
> 4. Make sure that the same items and strategies get attention in several different texts. (Nation 2009, 26–27)

6. Content-based analysis

6.1 Baldur's Gate 3

Baldur's Gate 3 is a role-playing video game developed by Larian Studios. Through its narrative and game mechanics, the game is based on Dungeons & Dragons (D&D) table-top game. The narrative revolves around the urgent quest to find a cure to a parasitic tadpole implanted into the head of player's in-game character. Players roam the game world, and through the progression, encounter other characters, who host the same parasite. Through forged alliance with those characters, players embark onto a quest to expel the parasite from their characters, while making in-game decisions that may alter the progress of this venture.

The game was fully launched on August 3, 2023, and it quickly received critical acclaim. Receiving 96 points from critical reviews and 9,2/10 of user score on Metacritic (Metacritic 2025), it also won BAFTA game awards for "Best game, Music, Narrative and Performance in a Supporting Role, and EE Players' Choice Award" in 2024 (BAFTA 2024). The commercial success of this game is reflected in 10 million globally sold copies, as of early 2025 (Walker 2025). Its replayability is demonstrated by sustained number of active player numbers averaging over 71,000 concurrent users every day. The enduring relevance of this game is derived from the player base for the first half of 2025, when the number reaches 118, 000 players on average from its release date. (SteamDB 2025).

I chose this game for its relevancy and popularity among the contemporary gaming community, as well as, for the abundance of opportunities it creates for English language exposure through its deep and branching narrative, dependant on the players' decisions, voice acting, and optional cooperative multiplayer features, that allow players to play in tandem. Dialogue plays a central role of the gameplay as it can be influenced, not only by players' dialogue decisions, but also by their character attributes, stats, moral decisions, or party dynamics. Multiplayer mode allows cooperative story progression, further enhancing opportunities for spontaneous, meaningful language use through both text and voice chat.

6.1.1 Speaking skill acquisition

1. Spoken output – The game encourages sustained oral production through tasks that require expressing ideas, opinions, and descriptions.

Baldur's Gate 3 gameplay itself does not require a spoken output from players. In single-player mode, the player assumes control over a team of four characters, all of which they control personally during the game. Speech is primarily conducted through text-based dialogue trees, with the player choosing lines that the protagonist then voices. Therefore, players do not actively speak aloud or construct sentences in real time. The game only indirectly supports oral language production in multiplayer playthroughs.

2. Communicative purpose – Speaking tasks are tied to clearly defined communicative goals within the game context.

Since the game does not support direct spoken output from players, there is no communicative purpose. It can only be assumed that players who engage in multiplayer game progression communicate in such a manner in order to plan their campaigns. The game, however, does not support it nor actively encourage it.

3. Interactive communication – Players engage in spontaneous, real-time dialogue with other players or the game itself

Baldur's Gate 3 becomes cooperative experience, only after one chooses to engage in multiplayer progression. Other players assume control over the remaining characters, as well as gain access to in-game inventory, map discoveries or quest journals. Just like the original D&D it encourages players to strategize and plan their approach to in-game quests and duels, for example, choosing the right gear for a campaign. While this is certainly encouraged in a sense that insufficient preparation might result in failed campaign, the game itself does not enforce onto player and the oral communication is therefore wholly rooted in the players' willingness to communicate.

4. Situational authenticity – The language used reflects real-life scenarios with an appropriate tone, register, and sociocultural norms.

The game delivers authentic linguistic content, ranging from the formal etiquette of noble characters to the blunt and indecent speech of barbarians. Situational authenticity is mirrored

in dialogue options, which allow players to select from a variety of options varying in tone or formality. However, it is the in-game character that produces the spoken answer, not the players themselves. Players' spoken language is produced only in the multiplayer mode and directed to fellow players. Given the informal environment of the gameplay, it can be assumed that players often speak in casual manner. In conclusion to this criterion, situational authenticity is strong within each context but lacks coherence between single-player voice acting and player chat.

6.1.2 Writing skill acquisition

1. Writing process knowledge – The game supports planning, drafting, and revising text as part of gameplay¨

Baldur's Gate 3 does not explicitly support writing as a process. The game is primarily dialogue and action-driven, with no in-game mechanics that require players to produce written text within the gameplay environment. Even in multiplayer, communication is usually done verbaly or through quick, informal written messages via external chat. Therefore, this criterion is minimally addressed, if at all.

2. Linguistic scaffolding – Players receive appropriate vocabulary, grammar hints, or models.

While the game offers rich written language through dialogue texts, item descriptions, spellbooks, and quest journals, this input serves more as incidental exposure than deliberate scaffolding. Players may internalise vocabulary and phrasing through reading, but the game does not provide explicit grammar instruction, vocabulary hints, or writing models to support writing performance. Thus, while linguistically rich, the game does not scaffold writing development.

3. Context knowledge – The game involves writing performance with a clear purpose and intended audience.

The game features numerous situations that could involve writing with a clear purpose and audience, such as sending magical messages, recording journal entries, or issuing commands to party members; however, these are not player-produced. While there is a possibility of written production in dedicated communities, in the form of deep role-play, character biographies, or session recaps, these are typically conducted through external channels such as Baldur's Gate Roleplay servers on Discord (Disboard 2025). The game does not promote them directly or intentionally.

4. Sustained written output – Writing tasks occur at multiple points in the game, each with a distinct function (e.g., describing, narrating, requesting, etc.).

There are no gameplay tasks that require sustained or purposeful writing throughout the game. Players do not write narratives, descriptions, or arguments within the interface. As such, the gameplay experience is devoid of sustained written output.

6.1.3 Listening skill acquisition

1. Task-Oriented Listening – Listening is connected to an in-game activity (e.g., solving a problem, making a decision, etc.)

Baldur's Gate 3 strongly supports task-oriented listening. Much of the game's progression depends on interpreting spoken dialogue to make choices, solve problems, or progress quests. A conversation with the goblin priestess Gut serves as an example of following the dialogue in order to make the right decision. During this conversation, the player's character is asked by the priestess to drink a potion that will help them get rid of a parasite in their head. Players must pay close attention to verbal cues to decide whether to accept her offer of "help" or prepare for a betrayal. The player must choose either from: "Drink the potion", which imminently puts the character to their sleep; "I'm not drinking that", resolving in fighting the priestess; or "That'll put me to sleep – are you trying to trick me?", which results in diffusing the situation and allowing the player to come out of the confrontation unharmed. Similarly, choosing dialogue options after listening to companions' opinions affects group dynamics and story outcomes. This creates a direct link between listening comprehension and in-game decision-making.

2. Contextual Relevance – Listening materials are embedded in meaningful game contexts that enhance engagement.

Listening is deeply embedded in the gameplay. Nearly every conversation and cutscene is situated within the game world and serves to develop characters, advance the plot, or resolve conflicts. For instance, during a discussion, players get to hear a part of Astarion's past spent in slavery. This revelation is directly linked to players' decision to let Astarion gain his master's power, or to make Asrarion finally break away from him. This decision is based on players' sympathy towards the character, which this piece of information may influence. Similarly, choosing dialogue options after listening to companions' opinions affects group dynamics and

story outcomes. These interactions are more than exposition, as they are tied to player engagement and emotional investment, especially in roleplaying.

3. Authentic Input – Listening features realistic speech styles, accents, and genres.

Although the game's setting is fictional, Baldur's Gate 3 employs realistic speech patterns and a variety of English accents, including Received Pronunciation, Irish, Scottish, and American accents, depending on the character. RP English is often reserved for the noble speech of elves or human nobles. Irish and Scottish accents, on the other hand, are most commonly associated with dwarves, gnomes, or barbarians. The American accent is standard for most of the human population, or other races, such as daemons and orcs. Dialogue delivery encompasses features of authentic speech, including hesitation, rhetorical questions, sarcasm, and idioms. On the other hand, it is also highly emotionally expressive and exaggerated in terms of accents and line delivery. Aside from the players' character, the speech is fully voice-acted with high production quality, making listening both engaging and linguistically valuable. . Although richly varied in aspects of authentic language use, the listening input is wholly scripted, making a semi-authentic listening experience. In addition, according to Guinness World Records, the script to the game contains over two million words, which are fully voiced and acted out in dialogue scenes (Guinness World Records 2023).

4. Adaptive Difficulty – Listening tasks can adjust in complexity, according to learner needs.

The game does not offer variable levels of spoken complexity based on player proficiency. All dialogue is fully voiced, and while players can re-read text via subtitles or re-engage in conversations, the auditory input remains consistent in terms of speed, complexity, and accent, regardless of skill level.

6.1.4 Reading skill acquisition

1. Authenticity – In-game texts represent functional genres

Baldur's Gate *3* includes a wide range of textual genres that mimic functional, real-world reading materials within its fantasy setting. Players encounter letters, journals, spellbooks, contracts, inventory descriptions, and lore entries. For instance, reading a "Crumpled Note Scrawled in Blood" may uncover a character's hidden motivations, helping with making a decision in the related side quest. The text reads:

> The actors have finally reached Baldur's Gate, so I can commence the next stage of my play. They have learned the Astral Prism's secret, but I will tell them that I have the key: the Orphic Hammer, the only thing that can break the prince's chains. The Hammer will be kept safely in the Archive, protected by a password. What shall it be? Perhaps, 'Give me my heart's desire'! (Larian Studios 2023)

In total, Baldur's Gate 3 features 464 readable texts, including notes, journals, letters, poetry, and excerpts from books, all of which are connected to the virtual world, thereby expanding players' knowledge. These serve practical, in-game functions and reflect genre conventions.

2. Purpose-Driven Reading – Texts support game progression, requiring comprehension to achieve game outcomes.

Reading is often essential to progressing in quests, solving puzzles, or making informed decisions. For example, deciphering the content of a magical tome may reveal a hidden entrance or a crucial weakness of an enemy. Many texts contain vital quest triggers, such as the "Necromancy of Thay," which unlocks dialogue paths and story consequences. Additionally, it awards players with spells that are specific in use. The game encourages players via pop-up messages to read their descriptions in order to use them effectively. This alignment between reading and game progression provides a clear communicative purpose for engaging with texts, encouraging comprehension rather than passive skimming.

3. Engaged Reading – Players interact with texts through prediction, reflection, or decision-making.

The game fosters engaged reading by encouraging players to analyse and infer information from the texts. For example, right at the beginning of play, the player is asked to either create their own character or choose from the so-called origin character. When choosing an origin character, it is advisable to read through the character's description as it holds important information that affects the story progression and cannot be changed at any point during the playthrough. When creating their own character, players choose from various aspects, including race, abilities, and proficiencies. All of these are important in defining players' experience with the gameplay. For example, certain races are treated as outcasts, and it will be harder for players to find adequately rewarded quests or buy in-game items for a reasonable price. Additionally, some texts require players to connect disparate clues or solve puzzles which are provided

through in-game texts (e.g., connecting a written riddle to a place on the map, in order to find an item of interest):

> Harper’s Map
> [This stained, ragged map has passed through countless hands. A little harp marks an area called Moonrise Towers, with a small, inky crescent sketched in the nearby forest. Below the crescent is a more recent scrawl: 'CACHE'.]
> (Larian Studios 2023)

This interaction with texts extends beyond surface-level comprehension and engages higher-order reading processes, including inference, reflection, and narrative integration.

4. Targeted Language Input – Texts are designed to highlight linguistic aspects, such as vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, and genre conventions.

The game does not offer explicit scaffolding for language learners—texts are written at a native-speaker level, with no built-in language support tools, such as vocabulary glossaries, comprehension checks, or grammar annotations. Language learners can certainly benefit from exposure, but without guidance or adaptation, this criterion is met only incidentally and may not support less advanced learners.

6.2 Goose Goose Duck

Goose Goose Duck, developed by Gaggle Studios Inc., is a free-to-play multiplayer social deduction RPG, released on October 3, 2021 (Steam 2025). Players are divided into teams of Geese and Ducks with conflicting roles, and through real-time conversation, deception and strategy, they try to achieve the goal of their role. The objective of Geese is to achieve victory by either successfully completing all their assigned tasks scattered across the map or by correctly identifying and voting out all of the Ducks during emergency meetings. Ducks, on the other hand, are the impostors. Their goal is to eliminate the Geese until the number of Ducks is equal to that of the other team. They can achieve this by killing, sabotaging, or by deceiving other players in discussion and framing innocent Geese.

Commercially, it falls into a different category from Baldur's Gate 3 due to its free-to-play nature. Nonetheless, it shows a remarkable popularity among games of the same genre, reaching 800,000 concurrent players across PC and mobile during peak times in early 2023 (Carter

2023). In the current year, the number of daily players on PC averages around 20, 000. The number of active players and the unpredictable, social nature of in-game players roles contribute to high replay value. The constant player interaction, voice/text chat integration, and ongoing updates ensure it remains both relevant and engaging for ongoing language practice.

6.2.1 Speaking skill acquisition

1. Spoken output – The game encourages sustained oral production through tasks that require expressing ideas, opinions, and descriptions.

Goose Goose Duck strongly promotes sustained spoken interaction through in-game voice-chat. The majority of speaking occurs during emergency meetings, between tasks, which are usually called due to a reported dead player. During these meetings, the goal of the players is either to present their suspicions and accuse potential impostors or, conversely, to defend their actions and avoid being voted out. This results in the production of extended utterances rather than single-word responses, especially for players who take an active social role. However, the obligation to speak is not enforced by the game and it is therefore dependant on the players' willingness to communicate.

2. Communicative purpose – Speaking tasks are tied to clearly defined communicative goals within the game context.

The primary purpose of communication in the game is to collaborate, deceive, or persuade. For instance, if a player sees another acting suspiciously, their goal is to communicate that observation persuasively to others during the discussion. On the other hand, impostors use strategic language that is misleading or manipulative to talk themselves out of being voted out. While tapping into all of the communicative competences, the pragmatic competence is trained significantly, mainly through coherence of thematic development of their retelling of what actually happened. There is limited time to speak, and players must choose relevant language strategies to achieve their objectives. This goal-oriented dialogue makes the speaking tasks not only meaningful but also contextually required, in order to be successful in the game, regardless of the role a player may play.

3. Interactive communication – Players engage in spontaneous, real-time dialogue with other players or the game itself

Fundamentally, the game content is built around spontaneous, real-time voice interaction during discussion phases. These interactions are dynamic and often unpredictable, requiring players to respond quickly to accusations, negotiate alliances, or clarify intentions. Additionally, emergency meetings have limited time to discuss all suspicion. Therefore, players need to manage the limit effectively so that all players have the opportunity to express their opinions, which is directly linked to turn-taking within pragmatic competence. However, communication is limited to player-to-player interaction. There is no form of mediation provided by the game system and the discussion can turn somewhat chaotic and intimidating for less confident players. This is usually addressed through the appointment of a mediator from the participating players, at the beginning of a game session

4. Situational authenticity – The language used reflects real-life scenarios with an appropriate tone, register, and sociocultural norms.

The game's setting is not inherently realistic, but the social interaction it promotes mirrors authentic conversational norms, such as discussing motives, challenging others, defending oneself, or reaching consensus. That said, language register and sociocultural appropriateness are highly variable. Public lobbies often include slang, humour, or inappropriate language, which may expose learners to informal or even toxic discourse. On the other hand, in closed and managed game sessions, the game offers a platform to practice argumentative and persuasive speaking, well aligned to sociolinguistic competence.

6.2.2 Writing skill acquisition

1. Writing process knowledge – The game supports planning, drafting, and revising text as part of gameplay

Goose Goose Duck does not require players to write for any direct in-game purpose and as such provides limited opportunities for written production. Most of the gameplay is orally focused and the only option for written communication is through text-chat. Theoretically, it does not prevent players from using it as a substitute for speaking; however, given the limited time and prevalence of spoken output, it hardly serves as an adequate alternative. As such, the game does not support the development of writing process knowledge in any meaningful way.

2. Linguistic scaffolding – Players receive appropriate vocabulary, grammar hints, or models.

The game does not provide any form of built-in linguistic scaffolding for writing. The chat function lacks tools such as predictive text, grammar correction, and vocabulary suggestions. This makes the game inaccessible to lower-level learners who may struggle with spelling, syntax, or choosing the correct register.

3. Context knowledge – The game involves writing performance with a clear purpose and intended audience.

As stated earlier, the game is equipped with a text chat, which may serve as a substitute for the main communication channel in the form of voice chat. If using this media, players can communicate their justifications, arguments and suspicions using this option during the emergency meetings. However, the time limit appears to be a substantial pressing factor for both the writer to construct their message and the readers to read, interpret and discuss it among themselves. While this may seem like an unnecessary function, the text chat can be used quite effectively to communicate strategy and planning during the task phase, when players fulfil in-game tasks to progress. During this phase, the text chat is only available to individual teams, meaning the Ducks team can't plot without the Geese team knowing about it. Such messages usually need to take the form of short directives in order not to draw attention to oneself. Writing in chat prevents players from controlling their game character, and prolonged inactivity can also be perceived as suspicious behaviour by other players. Thus, although players are technically writing to a real audience with a communicative purpose, the quality and depth of the writing are minimal.

4. Sustained written output – Writing tasks occur at multiple points in the game, each with a distinct function (e.g., describing, narrating, requesting, etc.).

If we take into account the possibility of using text chat as a substitution to voice chat it is possible to say that distinctive writing task occur during different phases of gameplay. The gameplay of Goose Goose Duck is divided into task and discussion phases which recur throughout the whole game sessions until its end. Theoretically, players write with the purpose of defending themselves, accusing others, and retelling what happened during the discussion (emergency meeting) phase, as opposed to the task phase when they write to strategise. Still, it is important to state that this is just a characterisation of what is technically possible, albeit being highly insufficient and not likely to occur.

6.2.3 Listening skill acquisition

1. Task-Oriented Listening – Listening is connected to an in-game activity (e.g., solving a problem, making a decision, etc.)

In this game, players predominantly engage in two-way listening, which means the listener is an active part of the communication and the desired outcome is mutual understanding. Players are involved in this listening during the discussion phase. They listen to other players, decipher their message, and based on their arguments decide whether the speaker speaks the truth. The outcome of such listening is therefore to make a decision, based on which another player might be voted out. Because the game depends on players making choices based on what they hear, listening is essentially an integral part of the gameplay.

2. Contextual Relevance – Listening materials are embedded in meaningful game contexts that enhance engagement.

The evaluation of listening input is very variable in terms of contextual relevance. This is due to the game providing context only to the extent of two teams, each with its own goals. While players certainly communicate within the boundaries set by the game context, such as completing tasks and sabotaging the opposing team, the game itself does not provide any listening input. The contextual relevance is therefore solely dependent on the players and their willingness to maintain the communication within the context of the game. Although unpredictable, the game narrative structure is also in the hands of players, which makes engagement a highly individual variable.

3. Authentic Input – Listening features realistic speech styles, accents, and genres.

Largely, the game offers authentic listening input mainly through the exposure to other players' language use. Public lobbies allow to players to join international plays, where it is possible to encounter a variety of real-world spoken English. The speech is unscripted and uncontrolled, which certainly creates an authentic experience. However, the quality of input can vary greatly depending on the player base. Some speakers may use slang or unclear language, which might overwhelm lower-level learners. Still, from the authenticity standpoint, the game reflects real social interaction, aligning with linguistic and sociolinguistic dimensions.

4. Adaptive Difficulty – Listening tasks can adjust in complexity, according to learner needs.

The game does not offer any built-in features for adapting listening complexity. Players may encounter speakers with very fast speech, regional accents, or colloquial expressions with no option to slow down or clarify input other than asking players themselves. There is no scaffolding such as subtitles, replay functions, or simplified language modes, which makes the game potentially inaccessible to lower-level language learners.

6.2.4 Reading skill acquisition

1. Authenticity – In-game texts represent functional genres

Goose Goose Duck includes minimal in-game reading. Present reading material is limited to menus, role descriptions, task instructions, and UI notifications. While these texts exhibit functional genres, such as instructions or rules, the depth and variety of these genres are limited. Therefore, while the game does contain some authentic reading, the overall volume and variety are insufficient to foster sustained reading development.

2. Purpose-Driven Reading – Texts support game progression, requiring comprehension to achieve game outcomes.

Most reading tasks in the game are instrumental and embedded in gameplay. Players need to understand their role descriptions and special abilities in order to make strategic decisions. The game offers 75 unique roles with distinguished goals and abilities. For example:

> Goose: Do tasks, Stay Alive and vote out the Ducks.
> Sheriff: You can kill anyone but killing a goose has fatal consequences.
> Duck: Kill, Vent, Sabotage and do other duckly things. Your tasks are fake.
> Identity Thief: You shapeshift into your most recent victim until a meeting is called. (Gaggle Studios Inc. 2021)

During the task phase, players on the Geese team must complete tasks in order to win the game. The tasks are written as short directives, and it is up to the players' collaboration to figure them out. The task are varied and can take form, such as: "THROW OUT TRASH," "LIGHT CANGLES," "COLLECT DISHES [1/3]," "REASSSAMBLE PAINTING," etc. (Gaggle Studios Inc. 2021).

As such, the game does not encourage extensive reading practice. On the other hand, these relatively short texts are more accessible to lower-level English users, if they are provided with specific vocabulary.

3. Engaged Reading – Players interact with texts through prediction, reflection, or decision-making.

Due to the abundance of different role, it might be necessary to revisit their descriptions often and reflect on the adequate approach one should assume when playing it. However, the game lacks deeper reading content, such as branching narratives or lore, that would support prediction or inference beyond short-term task outcomes. Thus, while reading leads to a certain decision-making, it is not reflective or interpretive in a sustained way.

4. Targeted Language Input – Texts are designed to highlight linguistic aspects, such as vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, and genre conventions.

Goose Goose Duck does not intentionally structure texts to provide language input with pedagogical value. Most written content is functional and minimal, focusing on conveying game mechanics rather than showcasing grammar, genre, or cohesion. Vocabulary is often repetitive and genre-specific: “sabotage,” “task,” “vote,” “cooldown”, etc. The game does not scaffold language learning through input enhancement or gradual vocabulary expansion, so this criterion is not met in a meaningful way.

7. Conclusion

1. Can selected video game foster the development of English speaking?

When evaluated against the established speaking criteria, Goose Goose Duck demonstrates considerably higher potential for fostering the development of English-speaking skills than Baldur's Gate 3. The oral production in the case of Baldur's Gate 3 is only incidental and wholly player-initiated during multiplayer gameplay. The game system itself neither supports nor requires it in order to perform in-game tasks or complete the game altogether. In Consequence, opportunities to develop speaking skill remain limited.

In contrast, Goose Goose Duck places real-time, goal-oriented spoken interaction at the core of its gameplay. Players are encouraged to engage in spontaneous dialogues, strategize effective communication under time constraints, and adapt their language use depending on their roles and intentions. This promotes the sociolinguistic and pragmatic language competence, mainly through the need to engage in argumentative communication, while employing coherence and turn-taking. Despite the limitations, such as the lack of in-game mediation of conversation and potentially inappropriate language in public lobbies, the game offers an interactive, authentic, and communicatively rich environment for spoken language development.

The findings indicate that while both titles contain communicative elements, only Goose Goose Duck demonstrates strong alignment with the CEFR communicative competences necessary for meaningful speaking practice.

2. Can selected video games foster the development of English writing?

Writing evaluation criteria suggest that neither Baldur's Gate 3 nor Goose Goose Duck provides meaningful ways for the development of English writing skill within their core gameplay structure. The former offers virtually no opportunity to write, nor does it require it to progress through the gameplay. Any potential writing activity occurs in external fan communities, which means the game has little to no connection to this player production.

Similarly, Goose Goose Duck includes only a rudimentary text chat function, which, while technically capable of supporting communicative writing, is constrained by time pressure and lack of linguistic scaffolding. The game's primary and prevalent channel of communication is its voice chat, which renders written production incidental and circumstantially dependent.

Although the text chat can be used for persuasion or strategising, meeting minimal requirements for context knowledge and task variation, these writing acts are brief, unstructured, and lack the complexity necessary to support sustained development.

In conclusion, the selected video games do not demonstrate sufficient integration of writing-focused mechanics to foster the development of English writing skills meaningfully.

3. Are selected video games able to foster the development of English listening?

Both Baldur's Gate 3 and Goose Goose Duck offer meaningful opportunities for developing English listening skills. Baldur's Gate 3 features listening as an integral part of its gameplay, requiring players to comprehend fully voiced dialogues in order to make informed decisions, solve problems, or influence the game's narrative. Additionally, its diverse accents and nuanced dialogue promote exposure to semi-authentic listening input, though it remains fully scripted. Despite this limitation in adjustable difficulty, it fosters strategic listening in a contextually rich environment, contributing to the development of pragmatic and linguistic competence.

In contrast, Goose Goose Duck offers fully authentic listening input through real-time, unscripted player communication during gameplay. The task-oriented nature of listening is especially evident during discussion phases, where players must actively interpret and respond to spoken language to advance the game. This form of two-way listening is dynamic and mirrors real-world conversational demands, enhancing sociolinguistic competence. However, the contextual relevance and linguistic quality of input are highly variable, and the absence of any adaptive support mechanisms makes it less accessible for lower-level learners.

Overall, both games demonstrate the potential to foster English listening skills through extensive exposure to the English language.

4. Can selected video games foster the development of English reading?

Baldur's Gate 3 presents a strong case for fostering English reading skills, particularly in the context of immersive, narrative-driven gameplay. In-game texts are purpose-driven and often integral to solving puzzles, quest progression, or unlocking hidden content. Moreover, the game encourages engaged reading, requiring players to analyse and predict, mainly in terms of dialogue options that branch the narrative. Although it lacks explicit language scaffolding, its high-quality, native-level writing provides incidental exposure to vocabulary, cohesion, and genre conventions, making it a valuable resource for advanced learners.

In contrast, Goose Goose Duck offers functional but minimal reading opportunities. Its texts are short and utilitarian, primarily consisting of role descriptions and task directives. While these texts serve purpose-driven functions, helping players understand game mechanics and strategise, they do not invite sustained or reflective engagement. The game does not feature targeted linguistic input, nor does it support language development through text complexity or genre variation. Therefore, due to its simplicity and repetitiveness of vocabulary, lower-level learners may benefit within the framework of linguistic competence.

In conclusion, Baldur's Gate 3 demonstrates significant potential to foster English reading development through extensive reading, thereby enhancing reading fluency. Goose Goose Duck, contrastingly, provides only limited textual input. Ultimately, the former supports higher-order reading skills, while the latter represents a minimal input to the lower-level reading process.

Based on this assessment overview, it can be concluded that video games show the weakest potential in acquiring writing skills. This corresponds to the claim that writing skill is typically acquired only through formal exposure to the English language. (Tribble 1997, 9–10). Speaking skills can only be developed through interaction with other players, as games do not yet employ human-to-artificial intelligence interaction. Therefore, this skill development remains exclusive to multiplayer games, as suggested in Peterson (2012). Reading and listening show the highest potential for English language acquisition. The amount of contextual listening and reading input in researched games suggests a high probability of acquisition through exposure, which aligns with effective language acquisition suggested by Sylvén and Sundquist (2012, 304–306) or Harmer (2015, 283).

In conclusion, video games appear to possess significant potential for the acquisition of receptive skills. In contrast, the potential for developing productive skills is somewhat limited in speaking and exceedingly low in writing. It is crucial to note, however, that the research was done on selected samples and is inapplicable to the broad spectrum of popular video games

Resumé

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá potenciálem videoher, se zaměřením na zábavu, v osvojování Anglického jazyka. Videohry jsou dlouhodobě spojovány s Anglickým jazykem, a to především v oblasti rozšiřování slovní zásoby. Konkrétním záměrem této práce je tedy potenciál videoher pro rozvoj řečových dovedností. Vzhledem k tomu, že objektem práce jsou populární, volnočasové videohry, je problematika práce zasazena do kontextu informálního učení. Práce je rozdělena na teoretickou a praktickou část.

První kapitola teoretické práce je věnovaná právě informálnímu učení. Tato kapitola uvádí kontext informální učení a jeho propojenost s videohrami a osvojování cílového jazyk.

Druhá kapitola se přesouvá od obecného kontextu k prvnímu objektu této práce. Zde je prezentováno, jak se odborně definuje hra a hraní. Navazující kapitola převádí tuto informaci k definování, co je to videohra. Tento oddíl představuje problematiku definice vycházející z historického kontextu a následně prohlubuje teoretický rámec pozice videoher a učení. Následující pododdíly se zabývají klasifikací dvou typů videoher. Prvně představuje videohry zaměřené na zábavu. Zde je popsána jejich definice a záměr v naplňování volného času hráčů a zároveň finančního zisku vývojářů. Zároveň je zde nastíněna odlišnost od druhého typu, která je rozebírán v následujícím pododdílu. Zde jsou představeny seriózní videohry a jejich primární záměr v osvojení znalostí nebo schopností. Tento kontrast je důležitý, zejména pro praktickou část práce, a důvod proč jsou právě zábavní videohry objektem této práce.

Třetí kapitola je věnována psychologickým efektům videoher na hráče. Tato kapitola je důležitá, především z důvodu, že psychologické efekty jsou hlavním důvodem proč se videohry, na začátku jednadvacátého století, stali objektem zájmu širokého spektra studií a výzkumů. Následující oddíly jsou věnovány efektům relevantním pro účely této práce, přestože videohry mají i jiné než zmíněné vlivy. Nejprve je probírána motivace, která je aplikovatelná na široké spektrum činností mimo videohry. Nicméně, jsou to právě hry, které jsou často studování z hlediska jejich podporování motivace hráče strávit v nich mnoho času. Následné pododdíly se zabývají definování interní a externí motivace, jak se při hraní projevují, jak jsou hrami naplňování, a jejich promítnutí ve spojení hry a učení Anglického jazyka. Motivaci následuje oddíl jazykové úzkosti, který je již přímo spjatý s Anglickým jazykem. Tento oddíl pojednává o problematice jazykové úzkosti, tedy ostychu cílový jazyk používat. Zde je probírána, jak se tato úzkost projevuje a následně je navázána na kontext videoher. Tento kontext nastiňuje téma

následujícího pododdílu věnovanému ochotě komunikovat. Tento pododdíl představuje videohry a jejich přímé uplatnění v osvojení Anglického jazyka. Zde se představují shrnutí zkoumání a vzešlé výsledky některých studií, které komunikují především pozitivní vliv videoher. Toto kladné působení na ochotu komunikovat je především přisuzováno informální podstatě videoher a jejich schopnosti udržet anonymitu a bezpečné prostředí pro studujícího. Naproti tomu, je zde však představena in negativní stránka zkoumání, jako například toxicita komunikace nebo agrese, která má naopak vliv na prohloubení jazykové úzkosti a snížení motivace.

Poslední kapitola teoretické části je věnována individuální řečovým dovednostem. Zde jsou představeny jejich charakteristické rysy a způsoby používání. Mimo to, tato kapitola uvádí tradiční postupy a efektivní způsoby vedoucí k jejich osvojování v prostředí školy, což slouží jako vymezení teoretického základu pro definování hodnotících kritérií pro praktickou část.

Praktická část je rozdělena do dvou kapitol. V první kapitole je popsán záměr výzkumu, a jsou definovány výzkumné otázky. Následně je popsána metodika výzkumu. Zde je vysvětlen postup kvalitativního výzkumu za použití analýzy obsahu a hodnocení vybraných videoher na základě stanovených kritérií. Tato kritéria jsou definována v následujícím oddílu. Hodnotící kritéria byla vytvořena za účelem zjištění potenciálu videoher z hlediska jejich schopnosti rozvíjet jednotlivé řečové dovednosti. Kritéria pro hry byla vytvořena na základě studia literatury zabývající se jak Anglickým jazykem obecně a ve vzdělávání, tak literaturou přímo zaměřenou na rozvoj jednotlivých řečových dovedností. S této literatury byly vyvozeni efektivní přístupy k rozvoji, a s těchto přístupů byla následně vydefinována kritéria pro hodnocení her. Tematicky se překrývající, či výzkumem her nezjistitelná kritéria byla odebrána, a tak se celkový počet kritérií zúžil na čtyři nejvhodnější kritéria na řečovou dovednost.

Druhá kapitola praktické části je zaměřená na samotný výzkum a hodnocení vybraných her. Hry, které byly pro studii vybraný jsou Baldur's Gater 3 z roku 2023, a Goose Goose Duck z roku 2021. Obě hry spadají do jiného videoherního žánru a tento výběr má své opodstatnění zejména ve skutečnosti, že single-player hry (hry pro jednoho hráče) z podstaty věci, nemají možnost rozvíjet mluvení. Proto bylo důležité do výběru zařadit i hru z multi-player (hra pro více hráčů) žánru. Nicméně toto nebyl důvod pro výběr těchto konkrétních her. Baldur's Gate 3 a Goose Goose Duck byly vybrány na základě jejich popularity a tím pádem, přetrvávající relevanci v široké herní komunitě. Mimo to, byl vzat v úvahu i jejich potenciál pro opakované hraní, což bylo měřeno na základě dostupných údajů o aktivní bázi hráčů v probíhajícím roce

2025. Obě hry mají dedikovaný oddíly, kde jsou představeny jejich stručné popisy, a mimo jiné i tyto důvody pro výběr. Následné pododdíly se zabývají, již představenou analýzou obsahu obou videoher.

Poslední kapitola bakalářské práce je věnována závěru analýzy. Ten shrnuje výsledky do souvislých odstavců odpovídajících na stanovené výzkumné otázky, při porovnání výsledků obou her proti sobě. Ze vzešlých výsledků vychází, že Goose Goose Duck má vysoký potenciál pro rozvoj mluvení, jelikož mluvená komunikace je procesem, kterým se hráči dostávají k úspěšnému nebo neúspěšnému dokončení hry. Naopak ani jedna z her nevykazuje příliš dobrý potenciál pro rozvoj psaní. Zatímco Goose Goose Duck nabízí náznak pro rozvoj této dovednosti v podobě textového chatu, Baldur's Gate 3 nenabízí žádný prostor pro psaní a zároveň jej ani ze své podstaty nevyžaduje. Rozvoj receptivních dovedností poslechu a psaní se ukazuje být silnou doménou obou her. Goose Goose Duck, ačkoliv slabší v oblasti čtení, vykazuje pozitivní výsledky pro rozvoj poslechu, v návaznosti na rozvoj mluvení. Hráči totiž musí ústně komunikovat, aby došly konce hry. Zároveň musí aktivně naslouchat, aby pro ně naopak hra neskončila předčasným nezdarem. Baldur's Gate 3, na druhé straně, vykazuje velmi silný potenciál pro rozvoj poslechu i čtení, hlavně díky rozsáhlému vystavení hráčů cílovému jazyku. K tomuto, mimo jiné, přispívá i fakt, že čtení a poslech herních textů přímo ovlivňuje hráčův průchod hrou.

Závěrem je tedy usouzeno že hry prokazují potenciál především v receptivních dovednostech. Zároveň je ale podotknuto, že tento výsledek nelze vztahovat k širšímu spektru populárních videoher.

Bibliography

Abt, Clarck C. 1970. *Serious Games*. New York: Viking Press.

Anderson, Neil J. 1999. *Exploring Second Language Reading: Issues and Strategies.* Heinle & Heinle Publishers.

BAFTA. 2024. "20th BAFTA Games Awards Winners." Posted April 11, 2024. https://www.bafta.org/media-centre/press-releases/20th-bafta-games-awards-winners/

Bin-Hady, and Wagdi Rashad Ali. 2023. "The Role of Games in Enhancing EFL Students' Vocabulary Acquisition Wagdi Rashad Ali Bin-Hady" Journal of the faculty of Education 1 (17): 48–58.

Brewster, Jean, Gail Ellis, and Denis Girard. 2004. *The Primary English Teacher's Guide.* Pearson Education Limited.

Carter, Justin. 2023. "*Goose Goose Duck* reaches 800,000 concurrent players" Posted January 13, 2023. https://www.gamedeveloper.com/business/-i-goose-goose-duck-i-reaches-800-000-concurrent-players?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Chen, Sande, and David Michael. 2006. *Serious Games: Games That Educate, Train, and Inform*. Thomson Course Technology.

Colley, Helen, Phil Hodkinson, and Janice Malcom. 2003. *Informality and formality in learning: a report for the Learning and Skills Research Centre*. Learning and Skills Research Centre.

Council of Europe. 2020. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Crowford, Chris. 1984. The Art of Computer Game Design. Osborne/McGraw-Hill.

Davies, Florence. 1995. *Introducing Reading*. Penguin English.

Deci, Edward L., Richard Koestner, and Richard M. Ryan. 1999. "A Meta-Analytic Review of Experiments Examining the Effect of Extrinsic Rewards on Intrinsic Motivation." *Psychological Bulletin* 125 (6): 625–700.

Delacruz, Girlie C. 2012. “CRESST Report 813: Impact of Incentives on the Use of Feedback in Educational Videogames.” *National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST)* 813: 1–18.

Disboard. 2025. “Discord servery označené baldurs-gate.” Accessed June 1, 2025. https://disboard.org/cs/servers/tag/baldurs-gate?

Djaouti, Damien, Julian Alvarez, and Jean-Pierre Jassel. 2011. Classifying serious games: the G/P/S model. Handbook of Research on Improving Learning and Motivation through Educational Games. IGI Global Scientific Publishing.

Dörnyei, Zoltán, and Ema Ushioda. 2011. *Teaching and Researching Motivation.* PEARSON EDUCATION LIMITED.

Esposito, Nicholas. 2005. A Short and Simple Definition of What a Videogame Is. University of Technology of Compiègne.

Frasca, Gonzalo. 2001. *Videogames of the Oppressed: Videogames as a Means for Critical Thinking and Debate*. Georgia Institute of Technology.

Gaggle Studios Inc. 2021. *Goose Goose Duck*.

Gee, James Paul. 2005. *Situated Language and Learning: A critique of traditional schooling.* New York: Routledge.

Giola, Francesca, Gianluca Colell, and Valentina Bouriser. 2022. “Evidence on Problematic Online Gaming and Social Anxiety over the Past Ten Years: a Systematic Literature Review” *Current Addiction Reports* 9 (2): 32–47.

Goh, Christine C. M. 2014. “Second Language Listening Comprehension: Process and Pedagogy.” In *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*. 4th ed., edited by Marianne Celce-Murcia, Donna M. Brinton, and Marguerite Ann Snow, 208–221. National Geographic Learning.

Grabe, William, and Fredricka L. Stoller. 2020. *Teaching and Researching Reading*. 3rd ed. New York: Routledge.

Guinness World Records. 2023. “Longest script for a videogame”. Posted August 3, 2023. https://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/world-records/764696-longest-script-for-a-videogame

Harmer, Jeremy. 2015. *The Practice of English Language Teaching.* 4th ed. Pearson Longman.

Hoffman, Bobby, and Louis Nadelson. 2009. “Motivational engagement and video gaming: a mixed methods study” *Education Tech Research Dev* 58 (2010): 245–270.

Horowitz, Elaine K., Michael B. Horowitz, and Joann Cope. 1986. “Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety.” *The Modern Language Journal* 70 (2): 125–132.

Horowitz, Kenneth S. 2019. “Video Games and English as a Second Language: The Effect of Massive Multiplayer Online Video Games on The Willingness to Communicate and Communicative Anxiety of College Students in Puerto Rico” *American Journal of Play* 11 (3): 379–410.

Hyland, Ken. 2019. *Second Language Writing*. 2nd ed. Cambridge University Press.

Ivory, James D. 2016. „A Brief History of Video Games.“ In *The Video Game Debate: Unravelling the Physical, Social, and Psychological Effects of Digital Games*, Edited by Rachel Kowert, and Thorsten Quandt, 1–22. New York: Routledge.

Juul, Jesper. 2005. Half-Real: Video Games between Real Rules and Fictional Worlds: Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Kirby, Alan. 2009. Digimodernism: How New Technologies Dismantle the Postmodern and Reconfigure Our Culture. Continuum.

Kwak, Haewoon, and Jeremy Blackburn. 2014. Linguistic Analysis of Toxic Behavior in an Online Video Game. In *International conference on social informatics*, edited by Luca Maroa Aiello, and Daniel McFarland, 209–217. Springer International Publishing.

Lankoski, Patri, and Staffan Björk. 2015. *Game research methods: An overview*. ETC Press.

Larian Studio. 2023. *Baldur’s Gate 3.*

Lemrová, Soňa. 2024. „Motivace.“ In *Pedagogická psychologie*, edited by Soňa Lemrová, Veronika Kavková, Michaela Pugnerová, Simona Dobešová Cakirpaloglu. 42–62. Praha: Grada.

Littlejohn, Andrew. 2011. “The analysis of language teaching materials: inside the Trojan Horse.” In *Materials Development in Language Teaching*, 2nd ed., edited by Brian Tomlinson, 190–216. Cambridge University Press.

Livingstone, D.W. 2001. “Adults' Informal Learning: Definitions, Findings, Gaps and Future Research.“ *NALL Working Papers* 21: 1–41.

MacIntyre, Peter D., and R. C. Gardner. 1994. “The Subtle Effects of Language Anxiety on Cognitive Processing in the Second Language.” *Language learning* 44 (2), 283—305.

MacIntyre, Peter, Richard Clément, Zoltán Dörnyei, and Kimberly A. Noels. 1998. “Conceptualizing Willingness to Communicate in a L2: A Situational Model of L2 Confidence and Affiliation” *Modern Language Journal* 82 (4): 545–562.

Marín-Suelves, Diana, Graciela Esnaola-Horacek, and Donatella Donato. 2020. “Videogames and Education: Analysing of Research Trends.” *Revisita Colombiana de Educación* 1 (84): 1–17.

McCroskey, James C., and J. Elaine Baer. 1985. “Willingness to communicate: The construct and its measurement.” *Paper Presented at the Annual Convention of the Speech Communication Association* 71: 1–11.

Metacrictic. 2025. “Baldur's Gate 3.” Accessed June 1, 2025. https://www.metacritic.com/game/baldurs-gate-3/

Moore, Nick. 2006. *How to do research: A practical guide to designing and managing research projects*. London: Facet

Nation, Ian S. P. 2009. *Teaching ESL/EFL Reading and Listening*. New York: Routledge.

Nation, Ian S. P., and Jonathan Newton. 2009. *Teaching ESL/EFL Listening and Speaking*. New York: Routledge.

Newman, James. 2004. Videogames. New York: Routledge.

Noels, Kimberly A., Richard Clément, and Luc Pelletier. 2001. “Intrinsic, Extrinsic, and Integrative Orientations of French Canadian Learners of English.” *Canadian Modern Language Review* 57 (3): 424–442.

Olshtain, Elite. 2014. “Practical Tasks for Mastering the Mechanics of Writing and Going Just Beyond” In *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*. 4th ed., edited by Marianne Celce-Murcia, Donna M. Brinton, and Marguerite Ann Snow, 208–221. National Geographic Learning.

Ott, R. Lyman, and Michael Longnecker. 2010. *An introduction to statistical methods and data analysis*. Cengage Learning Inc.

Pavelková, Isabella, and Miroslav Frencl. 1997. „Motivace žáků k učení.“ *Pedagogika* 49 (4): 329–345.

Peterson, Mark. 2010. “Massively Multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPGs) as arenas for language learning.” *Computer Assisted Language Learning* 23 (5):429–439.

Peterson, Mark. 2012. „Language Learner Interaction in Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game.“ In *Digital Games in Language Learning and Teaching*, edited by Hayo Reinders, 70–92. Palgrave Macmillan.

Peterson, Mark, Jeremy White, Maryam Sadat Miruaei, and Qiao Wang. 2020. “A Review of Research on the Application of Digital Games in Foreign Language Education” *New Technological Applications for Foreign and Second Language Learning and Teaching*, edited by Mariusz Kruk and Mark Peterson, 69–92. IGI Global.

Peterson, Mark, and Nasser Jebbari. 2022. “Digital games and foreign language learning” In *Digital Games in Language Learning*, edited by Mark Peterson002C and Nasser Jabbari, 1–13. New York: Routledge.

Phillips, Cody, Daniel Johnson, Peta Wyeth, Leanne Hides and Madison Klarkowski. 2015. “Redefining Videogame Reward Types” In *OzCHI '15: Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Australian Special Interest Group for Computer Human Interaction,* edited by Bernard Polderer, Marcus Carter and Martin Gibbs, 83–91. New York: Association for Computing Machinery.

Pinter, Annamaria. 2006. *Teaching Young Language Learners*. Oxford University Press.

Průcha, Jan, Eliška Walterová, and Jiří Mareš. 2003. Pedagogický slovník. Praha: Portál.

Rankin, Yolanda A., Deidra Morrison, McKenzie McNeal, Bruce Gooch, and Marcus W. Shute. 2009. "Time will tell: In-game social interactions that facilitate second language acquisition." In *Proceedings of the 4th international conference on foundations of digital games.* edited by Jim Whitehead, 161–168. New York: Association for Computing Machinery.

Reid, Gavin. 2012. "Motivation in video games: a literature review." *The Computer Games Journal* 1 (2): 70–81.

Reinders, Hayo, and Sorada Wattana. 2012. "Talk to Me! Games and Students' Willingness to Communicate." In *Digital Games in Language Learning and Teaching,* edited by Hayo Reinders, 156–189. Palgrave Macmillan**.**

Reinders, Hayo, and Sorada Wattana. 2014. „Affect and willingness to communicate in digital-based learning." *ReCALL* 27 (1): 38–57.

Reinders, Hayo, and Sorada Wattana. 2014. "Can I say something? The effects of digital game play on willingness to communicate" *Language Learning & Technology* 18 (2): 101–123.

Rost, Michael. 2011. *Teaching and Researching Listening.* 2nd ed. Pearson Education Limited.

Rouse, Richard III. 2005. *Game Design: Theory & Practice.* 2nd ed. Wordware Publishing, Inc.

Ryan, Richard M., and Edward L. Deci. 2000. "Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-Being." *American Psychologist* 55 (1): 68–78.

Ryan, Richard M., C. Scott Rigby, and Andrew Przybylski. 2006. "The Motivational Pull of Video Games: A Self-Determination Theory Approach." *Motivation and emotion*, 30: 344–360.

Salen, Katie, and Eric Zimmerman. 2004. Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Sandquist, Pia. 2024. "Extramural English as an individual difference variable in L2 research: Methodology matters." *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*: 1–13.

Schrader, Claudia, Julia Brich, Julian Frommel, Valentin Riemer, and Katja Rogers. 2017. "Rising to the Challenge: An Emotion-Driven Approach Toward Adaptive Serious Games." In *Serious Games and Edutainment Applications*, edited by Minhua Ma, and Andreas Oikonomou 2nd ed. 3–29. Springer.

Schugurensky, Daniel. 2000. "THE FORMS OF INFORMAL LEARNING: TOWARDS A CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE FIELD" *NALL Working Papers* 19: 1–8.

Scrivener, Jim. 2011. *Learning Teaching: The Essential Guide to English Language Teaching.* 3rd ed. Macmillan.

Sheldon. Kennon, Richard M. Ryan, Laird J. Rawsthorne, and Barbara C. Ilardi. 1997. „Trait Self: Cross-Role Variation in the Big-Five Personality Traits and Its Relation With Psychological Authenticity and Subjective Well-Being." *Journal of Personal and Social Psychology* 73 (6): 1380–1393.

Steam. 2025. "Goose Goose Duck ve službě Steam." Accessed June1, 2025. https://store.steampowered.com/app/1568590/Goose_Goose_Duck/

SteamDB. 2025. "Baldur's Gate 3." Accessed June 1, 2025. https://steamdb.info/app/1086940/charts/#6m

Sylvén, Kerstin Liss, and Pia Sandquist. 2012. "Gaming as extramural English L2 learning and L2 proficiency among young learners." *ReCALL* 24 (3): 302–321.

Thornbury, Scott. 2005. *How to Teach Speaking.* Pearson Education Limited.

Tomlinson, Brian. 2008. "Language Acquisition and Language Learning Materials." In *English Language Learning Materials,* edited by Brian Tomlinson, 1–13. Cambridge University Press.

Tribble, Christopher. 1997. *Language Teaching Series Writing.* Oxford University Press.

Utman, Christopher H. 1997. "Performance Effects of Motivational State: A Meta-Analysis." *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 1 (2): 170–182.

Ünlü Şulenur, and Selami Aydin. 2023. "Speaking anxiety and playing online games among adolescent EFL learners." *Futuristic Implementations of Research in Education (FIRE*) 4 (1): 2–15.

Vallerand, Robert J. 1997. “Toward A Hierarchical Model of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation.” In *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology Volume 29*, edited by Mark P. Zenna, 271-360. Academic Press.

Waern, Annika, and Jon Back. 2017. „Experimental game design.“ In Game Design Research: An Introduction to Theory & Practice, edited by Petri Lankoski and Jussi Holopainen, 157–171. Pittsburgh: ETC Press.

Walker, Ian. 2025. “Hasbro exec says to expect what’s next for Baldur’s Gate ‘in really short order.” Posted March 19, 2025. https://www.polygon.com/news/542697/baldurs-gate-4-news-hasbro-exec-soon-larian-studios?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Werquin, Patrick. 2010. *Recognising Non-Formal and Informal Learning.* OECD.

Wilson, J. J. 2008. *How to Teach Listening.* Pearson Education Limited.

Zyda, Michael. 2005. „From Visual Simulation to Virtual Reality to Games.“ *Computer* 38 (9): 25–32.

During the preparation of this thesis, the author used ChatGPT 4o and Google Gemini 2.5 Pro in order to gather relevant base sources for the theoretical part of the thesis. After using this tool/service, the author reviewed and edited the content as needed and takes full responsibility for the content of the thesis.