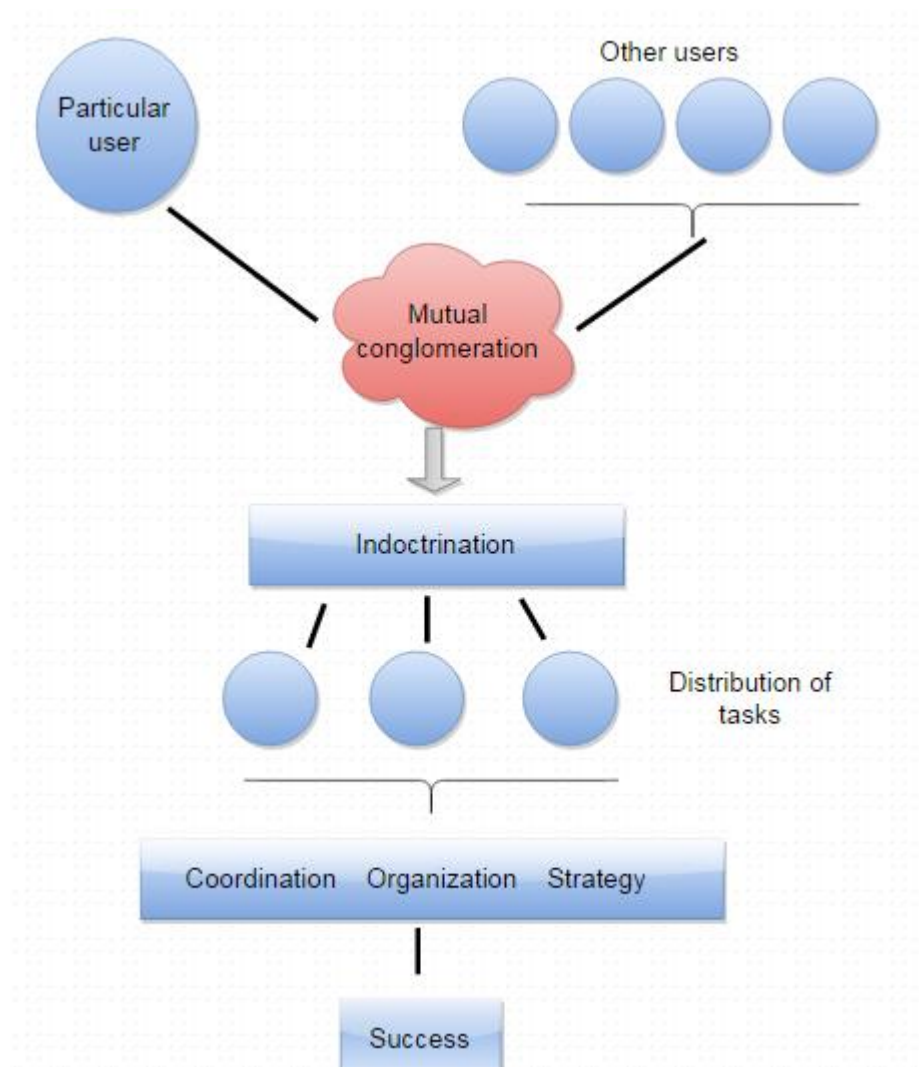


Project 4: Collection and Analysis of Interview Data

When we start an activity, often we take for granted the generalizations we assemble in understanding the task even before starting. We carry with us the models built from previous experience and comparisons at a subconscious level to the point where a specific interpretation becomes second nature to us. This idea of a cultural model built from generalizations integrated into daily cognition through the shared experiences we take in drive our goals, judgments, and philosophies we recruit in order to understand the greater world.

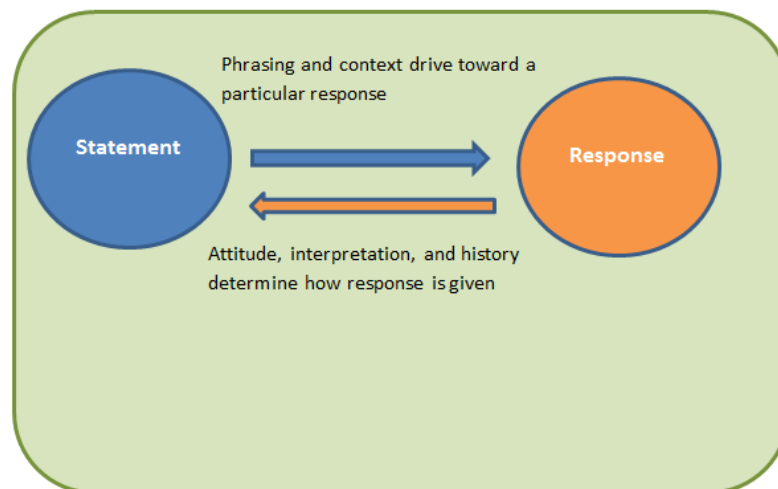
Here, I analyze how external behavior influences JT and how he speaks back in dialogue with the culture he is embedded in when he plays the online game Final Fantasy 14. I will present various cultural models JT connects with in this dialectic relationship between his own knowledge, and what he recruits to make sense of the world he plays in.

Model of Role Assignment:



Throughout my observations of JT playing, often the game calls for a particular type of organization to accomplish his goals alluding to a cultural model of role assignment explaining how players congregate to accomplish a goal. As individuals form together to accomplish a task, each lay out what contributions they can provide. First, we start with this mutual conglomeration, which oftentimes a mutual willingness to unite is a must for a group to even consider tackling a mission leaving those with traits like selfishness or contention ostracized. To this point, JT also references choice saying, “When you first start the game you get to choose [...] let’s say role your character plays, and these roles differ in abilities they offer and this could range from being a class solely for attacking, being a class that leads the party, and being a class that heals your party members.” Choice in role reflects the indoctrination in which an individual embodies particular methodologies affecting in how to act in a given situation requiring that role. Finally, organization is the successful enactment of the role played by each individual. Failure stems from a breakdown from within the group if people take for granted the abilities of another and sometimes even their own. Holland and Skinner’s discussion of terms saying, “ The respondents were clearly not limiting their thinking to a single characteristic[...] in order to convey their sense of social types, they were providing[...] the outlines of a social drama (Holland & Skinner 1987: 87).” In JT’s case of group play, breakdowns of successful coordination result from conflicts of what one ought to do versus what one is currently doing.

Model of Expression:



Belief about meanings and relationship with speaker encapsulates the expression system. This codex of beliefs change based on the world individuals attend.

JT mentions his experience of dialogue as an immersive one, yet the medium of communication resides largely only in written text bringing to attention a cultural model of expression. We question of how JT conceptualizes phrases he reads and what allows him to attach happiness to one as opposed to one filled with contempt in reading dialogue, and what implications context has on his experience within the game. JT describes his conversation with his friends as “...they’re [...] just trying to add expression in their text in the game.” We must ask ourselves how JT interprets the words he reads, and the connotations he imposes onto the dialogue when responding back. Tackling this question, Goodwin, in reference to his studies of recruiting resources external to the actors, states, “In both settings, participants use complementary resources both the specifics of different kinds of sign systems provided by language, and historically shaped structure instantiated in artifacts and the physical environment” (Goodwin 2000: 1517). JT both draws on historical knowledge about the speakers themselves then comparatively weighs likely probabilities of certain meanings against others, and the immediate environment to provide context about the dialogue.

What immerses JT into conversation allowing him derive emotion from words? We can read JT attaching certain tone and context onto phrases in which results in his response as seen at 10:42, “Yes. This guild is full of a bunch of jokesters. Hhheheh.” JT perceives his guild’s speech in a comedic context as he imposes not only onto the speech, but also onto his guild mates. JT’s response is indicative of expression bound by attitude formed by his own personal relationship with the people who speak to him. In a sense, JT carries a codex storing how to respond to individuals, and he applies this history on new conversations and contexts by the likelihood of an attitude arising in that particular moment. JT looks at his friends as “jokesters” because of not only the content he reads, but also the beliefs about his friends influencing the conversation. JT’s actions seem driven by this model of expression constantly shaping how he interprets the motivations of others, and in effect shapes his responses further expanding his beliefs.