



Ludic Language Pedagogy Playground

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Methods, materials and mediation for student-centered transformation and social participation around games

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Key points

- **What is this?** This is a clear example of how to connect a teaching method, simple materials, and careful teacher mediation to help students move from playing a game to participating in society. In addition to the hi-definition example, there are simple worksheets for teachers to use to plan their own links between games, methods, materials, mediation and goals.
- **Why did you make it?** I thought that the example from my class would spark some ludic language pedagogy joy in others. I certainly enjoy these teaching moments. These moments didn't happen for me before I started thinking more about how to help students participate in society with/around a game and "good teaching."
- **Who is it for?** It's for teachers who can't imagine the nitty gritty of a ludic language classroom focused on social participation with and around games.

Tweet synopsis

Can games "do it all?" 💪

Well, if by "all" you mean "transform students and classrooms and society" and "help students participate in different areas of life" then ... 🤔 no.

To "do it all," students need **teachers**: ▲ **methods**, ▲ **materials** and ▲ **mediation**.

#freematerials #photos

View at the LLP Playground:

<https://llpjournal.org/2023/04/04/dehaan-methods-materials-mediation-transformation.html>

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What game did we play?	Spyfall		
What were the goals?	Students participating in society as they wished (See Section 1)		
Did we reach that goal?	Yes! Students participated in ways like <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ creating subtitled YouTube videos ○ taking Spyfall to Korea to use as an ice breaker at a workshop ○ researching an environmental smartphone app and gamification ○ simplifying the game's rules for other players and language learners 		
How did we reach the goal?			
Through a goal-oriented Method 	organized by simple Materials 	scaffolded by teacher Mediation (Section 2.3)	
S T E P	Method	Materials	Mediation
1	Students think about who they are now and who they want to be and dream projects for the class	A name plate with drawn pictures of who students are	Reiterating goals and activities Allowing revision of work
2	Students choose a game	All stages in the Method (1-7) are included on a worksheet zine	Giving examples Connecting students Showing enthusiasm; valuing what students share Giving examples of participatory projects
3	Students play the game		Introducing games Connecting games to their goals
4	Students discuss the game		Giving feedback on students' understanding of the game
5	Students conduct a short research project to connect the game and society		Pushing students' discussions; "So what?" "Who cares?" Modelling thinking for students Connecting the game to society Giving examples
6	Students brainstorm projects, then plan and conduct a participatory project		Listing questions Sharing research methods
7	Students reflect on their learning journeys		Explaining participation Talking about roles Encouraging simple projects
			Showing examples Encouraging simple reflections

 **What's in this paper for other teachers?** (See Section 3 for worksheets)

-  Use whatever you like from my class in your own teaching, of course!
-  Reflect on your teaching goals.
-  Plan a Method-Materials-Mediation driven class to get your students participating in society.

1. Participatory goals and game-based education

Games are amazing things. Games create opportunities for learners to interact with each other and with new ideas. Games are connected to the sciences and to the arts, and to business and to culture. Games let us play with language. Games let us play with identities. Games should be a (bigger) part of education and of teaching.

But, I don't think games can "do it all." However wonderful games are, what's even more wonderful is combining great games with great teaching in order to reach some great goals.

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Educational goals are reached with good games and good teaching. There are more methods to Ludic Language Pedagogy than "just playing games" (Spano et al., 2021). This paper is going to explore

- the educational goal of "participation"
- teaching in terms of a **method**, various **materials**, and teacher **mediation** to reach that goal.

Why do teachers use games? What's their goal? I've looked at the research landscape, and reasons such as "games are popular," "games motivate students to use their second language," "games have certain features that promote language learning," and "games help students learn and practice vocabulary" are common answers (deHaan, 2019).

For some contexts (e.g., conversation schools, test preparation), those motivational and linguistic goals might be appropriate. But is that all that school and teachers can offer students? I don't think so.

Teachers can use games to:

- **liberate** students by helping them read and write through words and actions in society (Freire, 1985)
- **transform** students, not only their knowledge but their abilities and actions (Slavich & Zimbardo, 2012)
- **connect** school and society for students (Dewey, 2007)
- provide students new opportunities to **develop agency and participate** as they wish (Ito et al., 2013; Jenkins et al., 2009)
- **develop students' identities** and social capital and place in society (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Blume, 2019)
- **develop students' basic educational rights** and interests and identities (Squire, 2008; 2011)
- **rehumanize** schools, students and teachers (Human Restoration Project¹)
- **support** students' cognitive, critical, reflective and participatory learning (Gee, 2003; Filsecker and Bündgens-Kosten, 2012; Thomas, 2012)

Those are big ideas that are not talked about enough in education, language education, or language education with games. These ideas are bigger than "communicative language teaching - CLT," "content and language integrated learning - CLIL," "English for specific purposes - ESP" or "English for academic purposes - EAP." CLT, CLIL, ESP or EAP could be (should be) the home for projects that liberate and transform students into being able to fully participate in society, but until CLT, CLIL, ESP and EAP focus on linking language education with participatory projects and liberating methods, materials and mediation, typical language education will always fail to transform students and society.

CLT, CLIL, ESP and EAP ... typical language education will always fail to transform students and society.

I think that we should be thinking about the "big picture" when we teach language, and the "big picture" when we teach with games. I think that

"if the purpose of education is to develop students' interests and abilities to participate, as they wish, in various private, public and professional areas of life, then games, if used at all, should directly facilitate students' reaching this goal" (deHaan, 2019, p.4).

¹ <https://www.humanrestorationproject.org/>

“Just playing games” without teaching before, during or after playing games or adding other activities or projects isn’t going to result in learning outcomes other than the vocabulary, functional language, or speaking practice I just mentioned.

What do you think? Do you agree with this? Do you disagree?

Do you think that you can’t do it in your context?

Are you already connecting games with “the big picture?”

Jot down your answers here, or share it with me/us in the LLP Discord².



I do know that the more human goals I listed above are “easier said than done.” And hypothetical goals and dictums don’t help teachers if teachers can’t actually connect theory and practice.³

So how can teachers reach their goals? Delicious⁴ Ludic Language Pedagogy to the rescue!

Ludic Language **Pedagogy** is centered around (York and deHaan, 2020) ... **MMM!**:

- **Methods** (to sequence pedagogical choices)
- **Materials** (to organize learning)
- **Mediation** (to support students before, during and after games and other activities)

Methods, materials and mediation help teachers and students reach goals.

Methods, materials and mediation help teachers and students reach goals.

My goals are students’ social participation and personal and social transformation.

² <https://discord.gg/je9QZsntf>

³ I spoke about this at the JALTCALL 2022 conference: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mnVVJ6P45yw>

⁴ James York and I conceptualized teaching with games as being explicit about the Methods, the Materials and the Mediation. M, M, M... MMM ... “delicious.”

<https://llpjurnal.org/2021/02/28/j-york-j-de-haan-llp-mmm-delicious.html>

2. Here's how I do it (using a Fall 2022 class as an example)

This next section (Sections 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3) overviews the whole course: its **method**, **materials** and **mediation**. It's a hi-definition example of how I am linking method, materials and mediation to goals.

The course that I will describe in detail is an elective university-level course for second and third year students. The course is offered in an International Relations Department. The name of the course is 英語リテラシースキル ("English Literacy Skills"). While designing the course, I carefully negotiated the purpose and goals and contents of the course with the Academic Affairs supervisor of the Department. Together, we agreed on broader, more general literacy-focused goals, tasks and outcomes for the course that would cover both typical English language learning skills in a Japanese university department (i.e., listening, reading, speaking and writing) and also new literacies that we wanted students to engage with (e.g., media literacy, civic literacy) and also other skills that we wanted students to practice (e.g., collaboration, critical thinking, creativity and problem solving). In retrospect, I realize that I used the syllabus design and negotiation with the department to create the freedom to play and to orient that play towards participatory goals.

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The following information is from the course syllabus. The purpose of this class is for students to (1) develop English language and literacy skills, (2) apply these skills to other subjects and skills (3) understand more about important global communication concepts.

Students will improve their English language skills. By the end of the course, they will be able to:

1. Listen to various topics in various genres in English, and be able to understand information and ideas, for specific purposes,
2. Read about various topics in various genres in English, and be able to understand information and ideas, for specific purposes,
3. Speak about various topics and in various genres in English, and be able to communicate effectively according to purpose and circumstance and function,
4. Write about various topics and in various genres in English, and be able to communicate effectively according to purpose and circumstance and function,
5. Integrate multiple skills and topic areas in purposeful and effective ways, and discuss/present opinions.

Students will:

- improve their ability to connect and apply their English skills to other literacies (such as media literacy, data literacy, and civic literacy) and to other skills (such as collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and problem solving).
- improve their understanding of global communication concepts such as: community, culture, development, diversity, economics, equity, globalization, ideologies, innovation, justice, meaning making, multimodality, politics, power, private and public spheres, society, systems, technology.
- learn practical knowledge and effective skills for understanding and communicating in English in various private, public and professional contexts.

Course activities include:

1. exercises and proper application of English language skills: listening, reading, speaking, writing (and integrations of all of these), with particular emphasis on vocabulary, grammar, pragmatics, genre, form, meaning and use
2. tasks such as discussions, presentations, roleplays, information gathering, data analysis, media creation, reports
3. media participation with formats such as games and simulations, websites, YouTube, Twitter, Internet forums, print media

2.1 Method: The Pedagogy of Multiliteracies

The method⁵ I use (The Pedagogy of Multiliteracies) sequences seven experiential, didactic, and inquiry-based teaching and learning activities to get students to the final goal of participation.

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1. **Asking students to think about who they are now and who they want to be⁶ ⁷** as well as dream projects they have for my class; they share these in the class so that I and others can see.

In the first class of the semester, I ask students to write their name on a sheet of paper which they 3-fold into a name plate. They then draw 3 simple pictures on it to answer the questions: "Who are you now? What games do you like? Who do you want to be?" Students then transfer their information from their name plate ("Who I am") to a group concept map on the board to link their answers to other students' answers to create a group artefact of "Who we are." See Figures 1-4. I wrote "now," "dream project" and "future" on the board, and wrote some key terms branching off of each topic (e.g., "feeling," "study," "job," "life," "family," "teaching," and "art") based on types of answers that students have given in past uses of this exercise.



Figure 1: Students writing "who am I?" "who do I want to be?" and "what dream projects do I have" for all in class to see.

⁵ You can read more about this method in deHaan (2022), if you like. There's a 1-page poster in Appendix 1, too.

⁶ **Comment from Ta Shi Haoting:** "After discussing with classmates, the students were invited to write ("who am I?" "Who do I want to be?" and "What dream projects do I have") about their classmates instead of themselves. I think it's a good way to break the ice and let each student participate in the activity, especially for the students who are too shy to write something on the blackboard." (November 22, 2022, 10:57)

⁷ **Comment from Marc Jones:** "It seems like you've joined Dornyei's (2005) L2 selves with Pedagogy of Multiliteracies. It feels like you should have something about that somewhere in here to help broach the rationale for students' self-realization and the effect that could have on society." (December 6, 2022, 10:24 AM). **Reply from Jonathan:** I don't know this literature – I'll definitely read and include it in future work – thank you!



Figure 2: Who they are

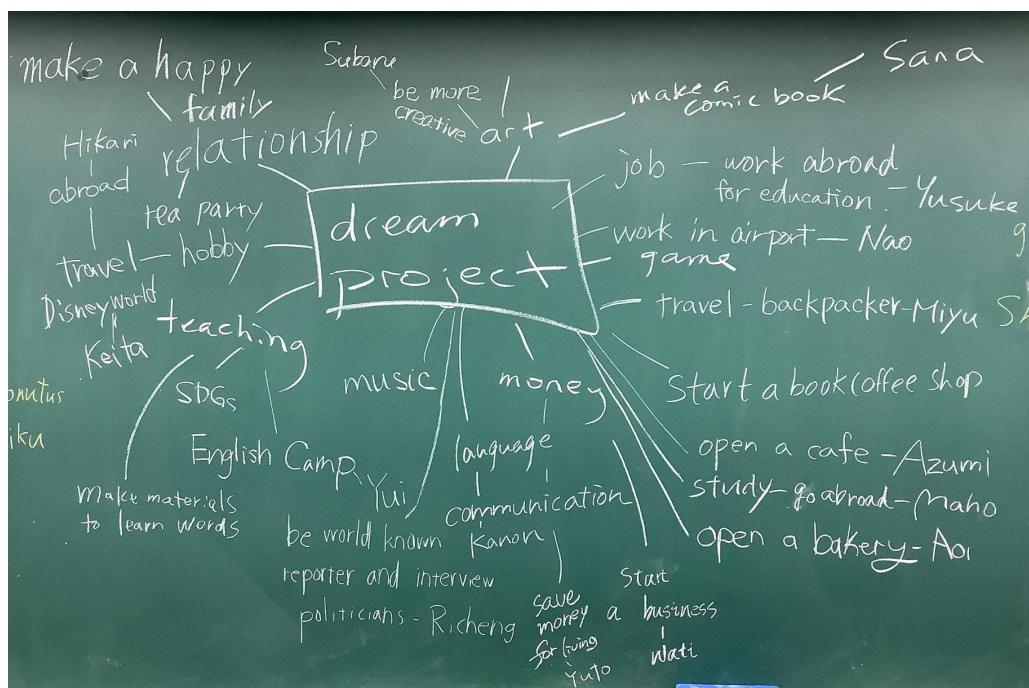


Figure 3: Their ideas for dream projects to do in the class or in life

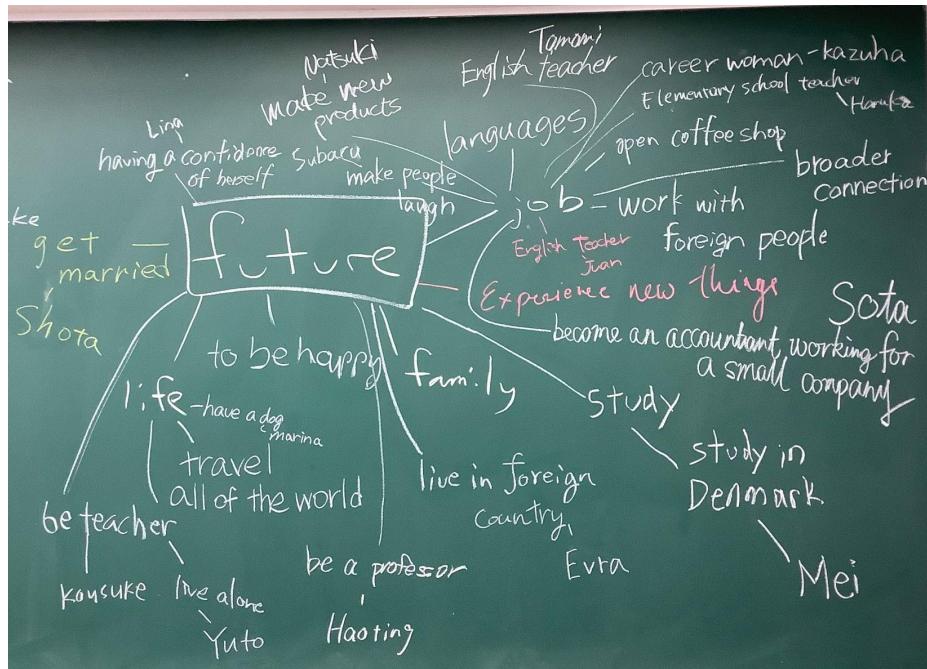


Figure 4: Who they want to be in the future

2. Students **choose a game** to play from a list of recommendations that I make based on their group concept maps of "who we are" and "who we want to be."

I have been using games in language/literacy teaching for more than 20 years, and I keep a simple slideshow of roughly 50 game recommendations (grouped into different categories) "at the ready" for students and fellow teachers. Here are the [slides](#). After the students in this Fall 2022 class shared who they are, their dream projects, and who they want to be, I quickly pulled 10-15 games into individual slides to share with the class. I put the individual recommendations at the end of my categorized recommendations, starting with [this slide](#). Based on the class' language, learning and life goals, I recommended the following games:

20 questions, Spyfall, Apples to Apples, ESL Spaceteam, 2 rooms and a boom, strategic interaction roleplays, Free rice, Geocaching, Geoguessr, Collectible moon game, Fairies, Don't get fired, Choose beautiful dove commercial, In it together.

There were 55 students in the class, and I wanted them all to play the same game (in order to have a shared experience to debrief and use for subsequent participation projects). So, I quickly made a Google form with the list of games and asked students to vote for the game that they wanted to play.

Spyfall got the most votes (24.5% of the votes). I realized that the majority of students voted for a game other than Spyfall; I told the students that they could play another game later in the semester.

3. Students **play** these games. Before the students play the game, I ask groups of students to talk about the rules of the game to make sure that they know how to play the game in the right way. I ask each group to write a detail about how the game is played on the board (Figure 5). I wrote different headings (setup, roles, taking a turn, end of the game, winning) for them to write their understandings under.

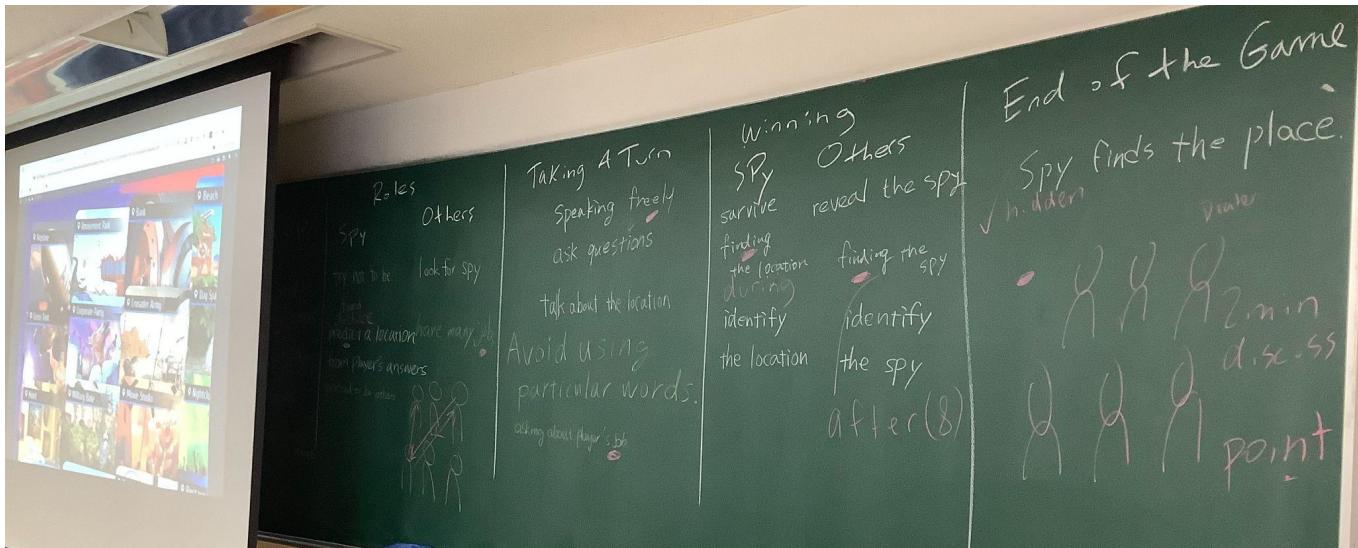


Figure 5: Students' shared understanding of the game rules

4. Students **discuss** the game and explain things about the game.

In the Fall 2022 class, some concepts that students explained were "fun," "shy," "difficult," "the game's use of Western locations on cards," "being vague," "good questions," "good spy," "get better," "good questions," and "use my brain."

5. Students **conduct a short research project** to explore connections between games and society.

In the Fall 2022 class, students' projects were short in terms of scope (just one week) and also written work; students "just" asked a question and then answered it in their workbook in the space of 4cm x 5cm; see Figure 6 sections (11) and (12).⁸

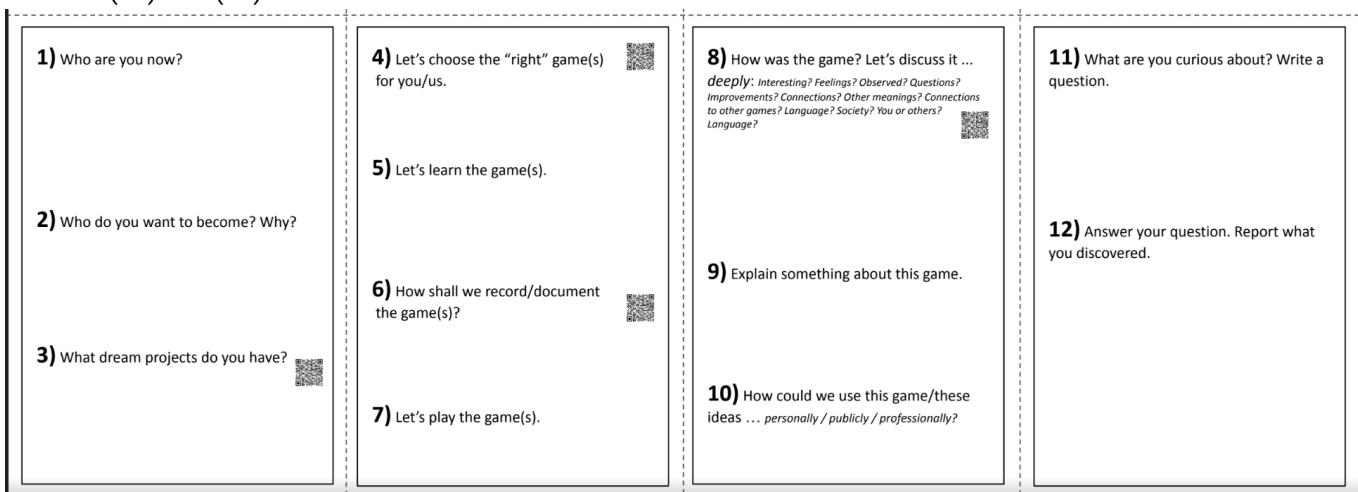


Figure 6: Half of the class workbook zine

Students brainstormed things they were curious about and created a shared "what are we curious about?" concept map on the black board prior to conducting their research project. See Figure 7.

⁸ In other Pedagogy of Multiliteracies courses that I teach, I ask students to plan, conduct and report their research projects in more detail. For example, see the walkthrough details about students' longer research projects in deHaan (2020). Research project examples and a planning and report template are available in [this document](#).

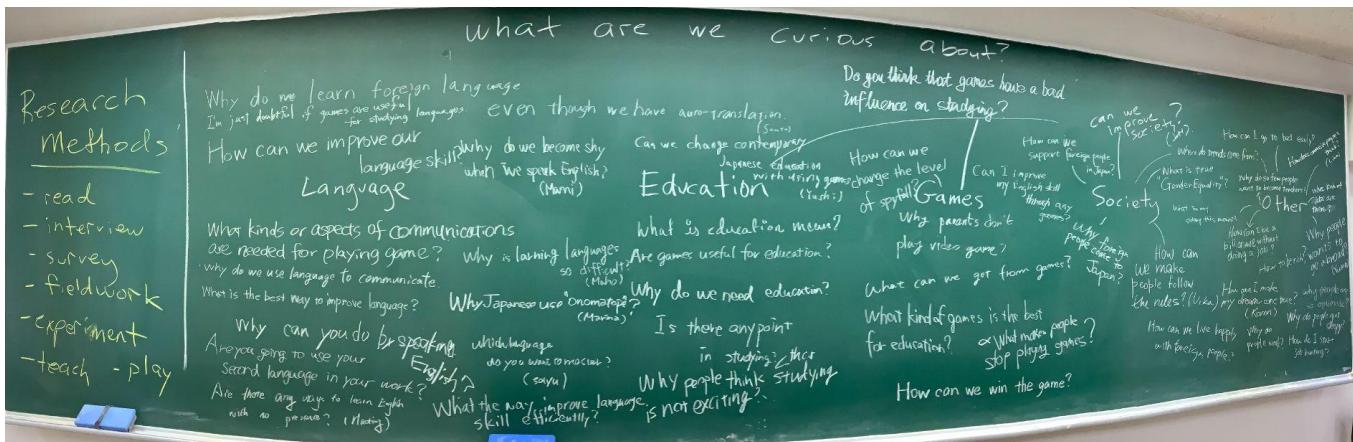


Figure 7: *What students were curious about*

6. Students brainstorm participatory projects, make groups, and **plan and conduct a project in society**.

Students brainstormed participatory projects under various aspects of society (i.e., personal, school, public, civic, professional) and different roles in society (i.e., friend, family, fan, researcher, journalist, teacher, designer) as a shared concept map on the black board prior to conducting their participatory project. See Figure 8.

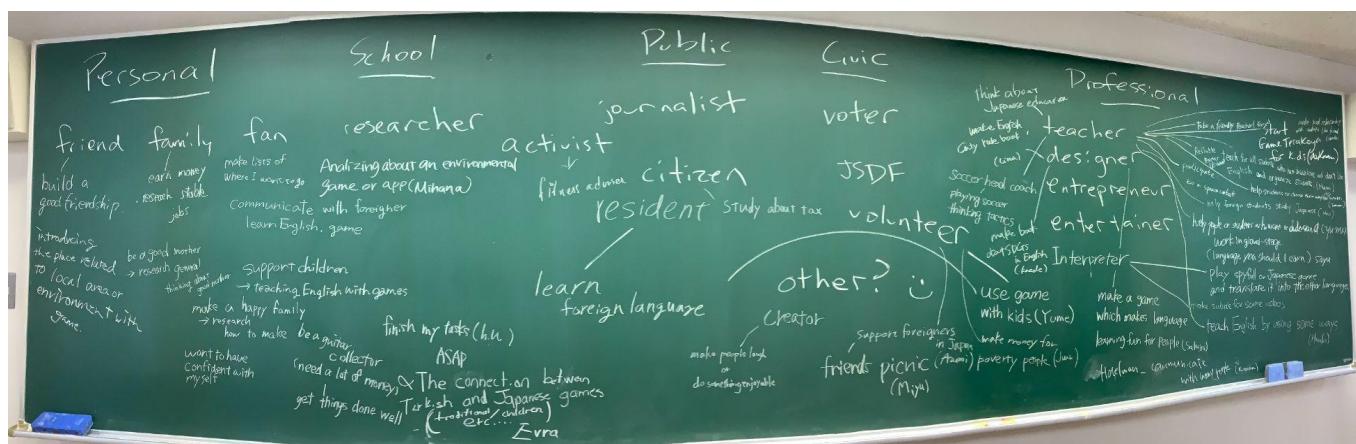


Figure 8: Students' various participatory project ideas

7. Students **reflect** on their learning journeys – if and how they have become (a little or a lot more) who they said they wanted to be in (1).

Students reflect on their own. They use the class workbook (shown in the Materials section next) to draw and write and diagram their development, as they like.

Examples of the Fall 2022 class' student reflections are shown in Figures 9, 10 and 11.

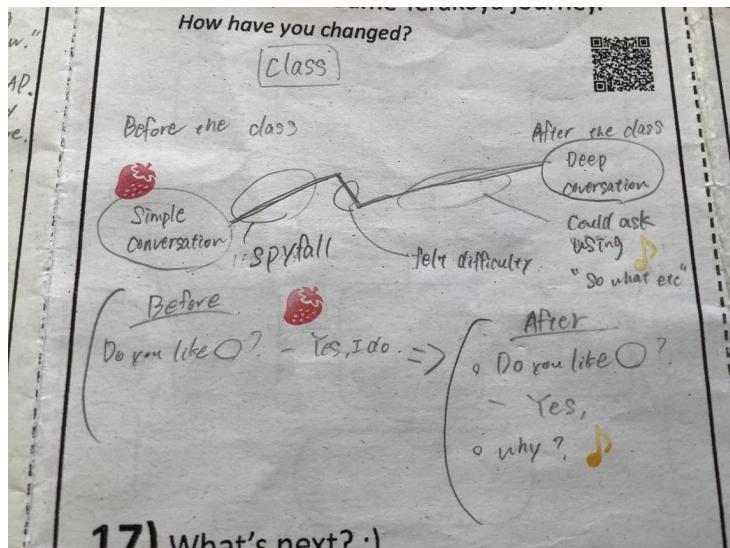


Figure 9: Student reflection on their own change over the course of the semester

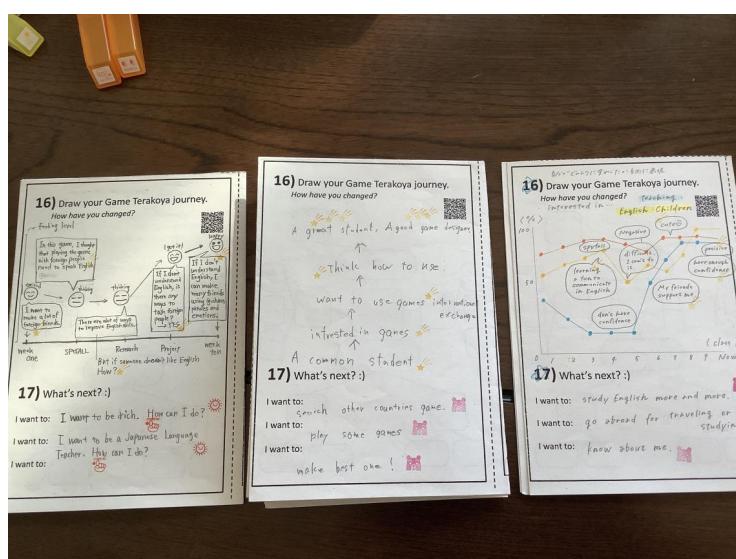


Figure 10: Student reflections on their own changes over the course of the semester

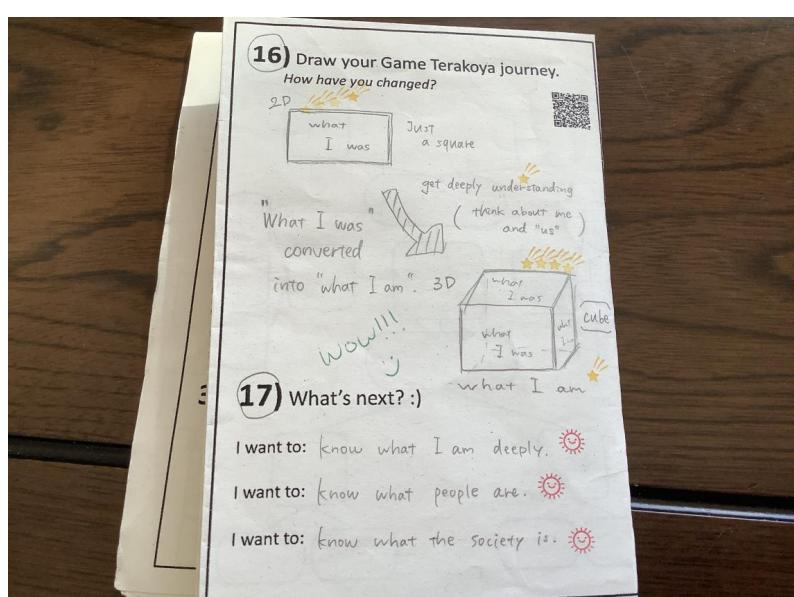


Figure 11: Student reflection on their own change over the course of the semester

2.2 Materials

Section 2.1 showed the step by step Method of my class. The method is not enacted merely orally (i.e., I and the students talking) but is realized by student work on various paper materials. The paper materials organize and support the overall method of the class.

The paper materials organize and support the overall method of the class.

This section will mirror Steps 1 to 7 from the Method Section and add details regarding the Materials.

1. Who students are

In the first class of the semester, I ask students to write their name on a sheet of paper which they 3-fold into a name plate (see Figure 12). They then draw 3 simple pictures on it to answer the questions: "Who are you now? What games do you like? Who do you want to be?" They then put these name plates on their desk in every class. This name plate:⁹

- Reminds them of their life goals.
- Helps me remember names and students' current and future identities (I had 55 students in my class in 2022).
- Is an easy way for other students to get to know each other (they use them to introduce themselves in small groups and mixed activities).



Figure 12: Name plates (in yellow) game (in orange), class workbook zines (in green)

⁹ **Comment from DM Jones:** "This is a strange question, but how do you oversee the status and use of the nameplate? Do you collect them all after class? Do you ask the students to keep them and bring them? What happens if it gets lost or if someone wants to change theirs? Do you take photos of the name plates? What language(s) do students use on the nameplates and do you discuss choices with students?" (December 11, 2022, 2:47). **Reply from Jonathan:** I've gone back and forth on "nameplate management" over the years. Yes, students have lost them but most students will just make a new version in the next class, including drawings and notes. I now just ask students to keep the papers and bring them out at the beginnings of the first couple of classes to build a habit. I don't usually take a photo of name plates unless something really catches my eye. I do ask students to write in Roman letters for their names. I have students from many Asian, European and Middle Eastern countries, and I would like them to be able to read their classmates' names. I will sometimes encourage students to write in their native script and include phonetic readings as well. Some students continue to add details to their name plate over the semester (new emojis) and some students will draw on their friend's nameplate, which the friend always seems to like.

1-7. Worksheet zine for all of the 7 stages in the method

For students to organize all their work in all of the seven stages in the Method in 2.1, I made a simple “zine”¹⁰ (an A3 piece of paper that is cut and folded into an A5-sized workbook).

I made a simple “zine.”

See Table 1 that explains how the Method is realized in the Material sections.

Each part has a simple question, space to answer it, and a QR code that links to a webpage with lots of materials and lots of student projects if students need examples or more help answering the question.

The zine, as ready to be cut and folded, is shown in Figure 13. There is room on the back of the zine (“a super secret idea place”) for students to take various notes.

I wanted to make my Game Terakoya / Pedagogy of Multiliteracies sequence of activities more playful (“here students: this is our textbook: just cut and fold and keep this in your pocket”) and more manageable at a glance (to see how all the work connects) than earlier teaching iterations (e.g., deHaan, 2020). I am also interested in how limited space encourages playful work, perhaps reducing anxiety, though I did not analyze this in the Fall 2022 class work.

Table 1: Connections between Method and Material sections

	Method (Section 2.1)	Zine workbook questions (Materials)
1	Students think about who they are now and who they want to be	1) Who are you now? 2) Who do you want to become? Why? 3) What dream projects do you have?
2	Students choose a game	4) Let's choose the “right” game for you/us to play?
3	Students play the game	5) Let's learn the game(s). 6) How shall we record/document the game(s)? 7) Let's play the game(s).
4	Student debrief the game	8) How was the game? 9) Explain something about this game 10) How could we use this game/these ideas ... personally / publicly / professionally?
5	Students conduct a short research project to connect the game and society	11) What are you curious about? 12) Answer your question. Report what you discovered.
6	Students brainstorm projects, then plan and conduct a participatory project	13) Plan a project. 14) Do the project. Keep notes. 15) How was the project?
7	Students reflect on their learning journey	16) Draw your Game Terakoya journey. 17) What's next?

¹⁰ The Student and Teacher Zine workbooks can be downloaded here:

<https://sites.google.com/site/gamelabshizuoka/gameterakoya/gameterakoya-zines>.

There are additional materials and references on that page, too.

<p>11) What are you curious about? Write a question.</p> <p>12) Answer your question. Report what you discovered.</p>	<p>9) Explain something about this game.</p> <p>10) How could we use this game/these ideas ... personally / publicly / professionally?</p>	<p>5) Let's learn the game(s).</p> <p>6) How shall we record/document the game(s)?</p> <p>7) Let's play the game(s).</p>	<p>2) Who do you want to become? Why?</p> <p>3) What dream projects do you have?</p>										
<p>13) Plan a project that connects to your future. Your project can be personal, academic, public or professional.</p> <p>Your idea:</p> <p>+ Details</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Who(with/for)?</td> <td>What?</td> </tr> <tr> <td>When?</td> <td>Where?</td> </tr> <tr> <td>How?</td> <td>Why?</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Materials? Money?</td> <td>Need to learn ... Need help with...</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SNS? Sharing?</td> <td>Questions?</td> </tr> </table>	Who(with/for)?	What?	When?	Where?	How?	Why?	Materials? Money?	Need to learn ... Need help with...	SNS? Sharing?	Questions?	<p>14) Do the project. Keep notes.</p> <p>15) How was the project?</p> <p>What went well:</p> <p>What could have been better:</p> <p>Questions and thoughts:</p>	<p>16) Draw your Game Terakoya journey. How have you changed?</p> <p>17) What's next? :)</p> <p>I want to: I want to: I want to:</p>	<p>The Game Terakoya a tiny workbook for students by Jonathan deHaan</p> <p>Are you ready to go on a JOURNEY ... into your ... FUTURE? :)</p> <p>13) Plan a project</p> <p>14) Do the project</p> <p>15) Draw your Game Terakoya journey</p> <p>16) What's next? :)</p> <p>17) What's next? :)</p> <p>18) What's next? :)</p> <p>19) What's next? :)</p> <p>20) What's next? :)</p> <p>21) What's next? :)</p> <p>22) What's next? :)</p> <p>23) What's next? :)</p> <p>24) What's next? :)</p> <p>25) What's next? :)</p> <p>26) What's next? :)</p> <p>27) What's next? :)</p> <p>28) What's next? :)</p> <p>29) What's next? :)</p> <p>30) What's next? :)</p> <p>31) What's next? :)</p> <p>32) What's next? :)</p> <p>33) What's next? :)</p> <p>34) What's next? :)</p> <p>35) What's next? :)</p> <p>36) What's next? :)</p> <p>37) What's next? :)</p> <p>38) What's next? :)</p> <p>39) What's next? :)</p> <p>40) What's next? :)</p> <p>41) What's next? :)</p> <p>42) What's next? :)</p> <p>43) What's next? :)</p> <p>44) What's next? :)</p> <p>45) What's next? :)</p> <p>46) What's next? :)</p> <p>47) What's next? :)</p> <p>48) What's next? :)</p> <p>49) What's next? 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Who(with/for)?	What?												
When?	Where?												
How?	Why?												
Materials? Money?	Need to learn ... Need help with...												
SNS? Sharing?	Questions?												

2.3 Mediation

Section 2.1 showed the step by step Method of my class. Section 2.2 showed how Materials support the overall Method. I fully understand that students will not complete each activity of the Method using the Materials by themselves. I, the teacher, am crucial to students' development and transformation from who they were at the beginning of the course to who they become at the end of the course. I mediate by reminding students of the overall goals of the class, and by introducing activities, showing examples of work that students are to complete, observing students, giving feedback, and providing additional "just in time" instruction at critical times during the course. Teacher mediation ensures that students continue making progress, via method and materials, towards the participatory goals of the course.

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This section will mirror Steps 1 to 7 from the Method and Materials Sections and add details regarding the Mediation.

I regularly start classes by reiterating what the goal of the class is and what activities students will do to reach the goal. Figure 14 is a photo of one of these quick reminders at the beginning of class.



Figure 14: Overview of the class drawn on the blackboard at the beginning of class.

1. Who you are and want to be

Before students added their personal information to the blackboard concept map, I gave one example of how the concept map can be developed (see the top right of Figure 15) by writing

"Art → Make a Comic Book → Sana"

and explained that other students could write different types of art, or add their names to wanting to make a comic book. I wanted to encourage students to connect their ideas and connect as people.

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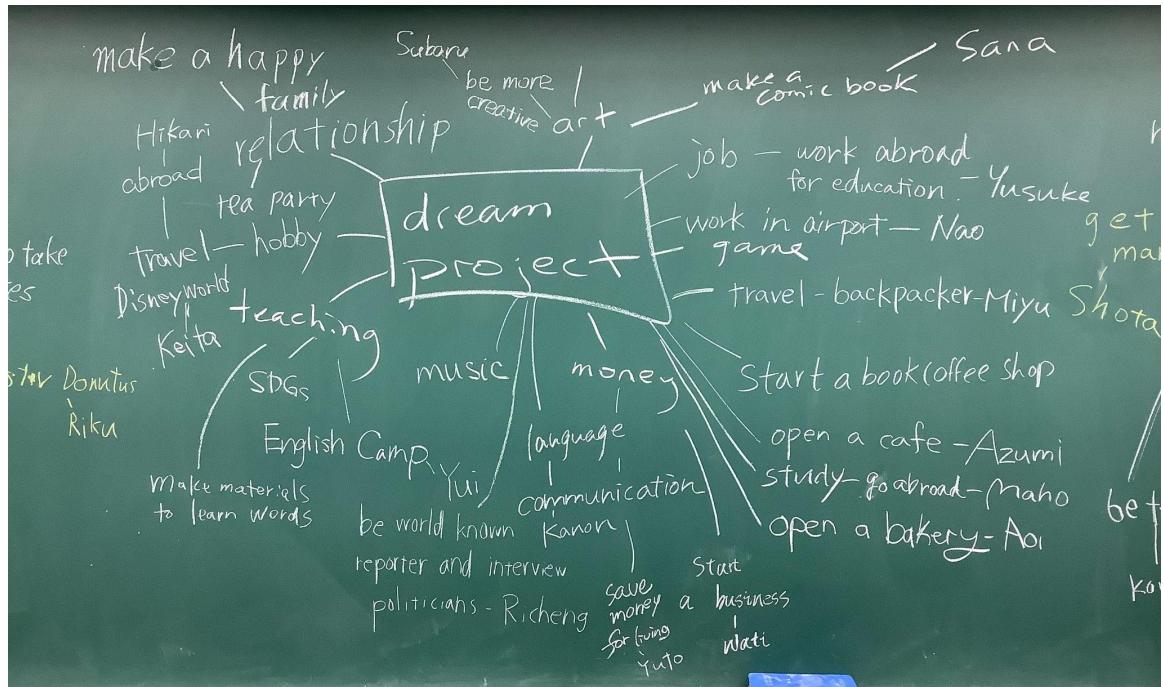


Figure 15: Their ideas for dream projects to do in the class or in life

I do not give specific language, vocabulary or grammar instruction in this activity since students at this level have the skills to complete this introductory activity.

Following the completion of the concept map, I take 3-5 minutes to point at and show my enthusiasm for common themes that appear in the concept maps. I look at what they share about themselves in their workbooks and on the board, (Figures 1-4) and publicly highlight¹¹ (with chalk on the board, and by explaining verbally) similarities and differences in current selves and future goals.

I also look at what students say about themselves on their name plates and keep thinking about their future goals. I tell students that I value what they want to do. For example, one student wrote about subtitles and a coffee shop in (3) on her worksheet (See Figure 16).

I tell students that I value what they want to do.

¹¹ **Comment from DM Jones:** "Do you have the students do this as well (individually, in pairs, or both)? Or is this mainly a teacher-led whole-class activity? I guess I am trying to understand if this is first modeled and then students do it. Also, I am curious if you have ever had push-back against your interpretations or outright resistance from students about engaging in this process. I think it is REALLY cool and I am guessing that most students are keen to engage. :)" (December 11, 2022, 3:17). **Reply from Jonathan:** I haven't noticed students reacting strongly to my interpretations, though I think having students react to my reactions would be a great step to focus them even more on what their classmates have said, and what I as the teacher am thinking. And, I don't have students make observations about the similarities, differences and trends, though I think that could be a wonderful thing to add to the course! :) I'll try these two things next year and let you know how it goes! :)

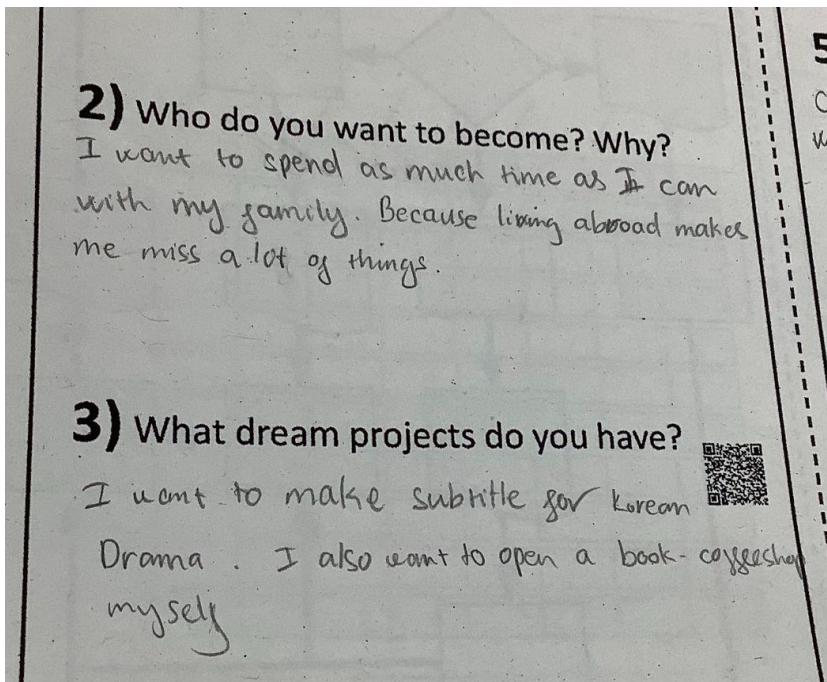


Figure 16: One student's future goals and dream projects

I said to her, in front of the class:

"That's really cool – when I was a university student I wanted to start my own coffee shop, too! ... I still kind of do... mmm ... coffee, pancakes, board games ... :)"

I also try to continuously give students examples of projects that could be slightly beyond their ability level or experience in school so far, but also not too big for the amount of time that they have in the class. After noticing the ideas in Figure 16, I explained to the students:

"If someone wants to make subtitles, she could record gameplay and add different language subtitles and share it on YouTube. This would be good practice for translation and subtitle timing on videos."

"If someone wants to start a coffee shop, she could use my office for an afternoon and serve drinks and teach guests how to play the game while sipping coffee that she makes."

I saw many students nodding and smiling as I explained these simple ideas to connect gameplay to future selves and participatory goals. I understood that I was mediating in this way to support students' ideas and to keep helping them get closer to their goals and futures.

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2. Choosing a game

I explained each game and how it connects to the various student goals.

I explained each game and how it connects to the various student goals.

3. Play the game

Before the students played the game, I gave feedback on their shared understanding of the game rules and gameplay. I wanted to make sure that they could start and play the game as smoothly as possible (in order to lead to successful subsequent discussions and activities). Figure 17 shows the students' shared understanding of the game and my notes, in pink, of additional information regarding rules, turn taking, winning and points.

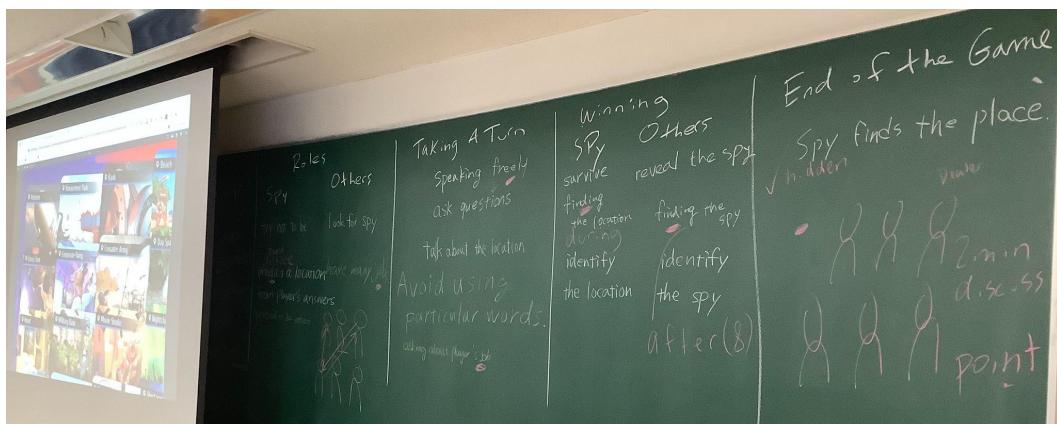


Figure 17: My additions to students' shared understanding of the game rules

4. Students discuss the games; connect the game to society

After seeing what students had written about the game in their workbook (by walking around the class and looking at their writing), I realized that their notes were quite simple. Students wrote words like "fun" or "good spy" or "got better."

Students need to discuss ideas more deeply in order to uncover more interesting concepts that can connect to academic or participatory project ideas (see deHaan, 2019 and deHaan, 2020 for examples of how teacher mediation uncovers or develops students' ideas).

I told students that I wanted them to discuss ideas in a "deeper" way. See Figure 18.

I told students that I wanted them to discuss ideas in a "deeper" way.



Figure 18: Mediation to help students discuss ideas more deeply.

In Figure 18, Bloom's Taxonomy of learning activities can be seen. I "image.google'd" this quickly and told students that I wanted them to get to the middle or advanced verbs (analyze, critique, create) in the class and that better discussions would help them do that.

On the spot, I told students I wanted them to ask each other "so what?" or "who cares?" questions as well as other questions using English question words such as "who, what, when, where, how, why?"

"So what?"

"Who cares?"

Before students started their discussions, I told them "so what?" or "who cares?" are blunt questions and could be considered rude in most contexts, but that I wanted them to be a bit rude and blunt in this activity to make the other person seriously consider what their experience of the game might mean or how it might be interesting, and to have to struggle a bit to explain it to other students.

4. (continued) Connect the game to society

I continued to use "so what?" or "who cares?" questions in the next class in which I wanted students to think about how the game or their experience could be connected to society or their participatory goals. Figure 19 shows these questions as well as other mediating example questions from me to help students engage in a deeper discussion with their classmates.

I wanted students to think about how the game or their experience could be connected to society or their participatory goals.

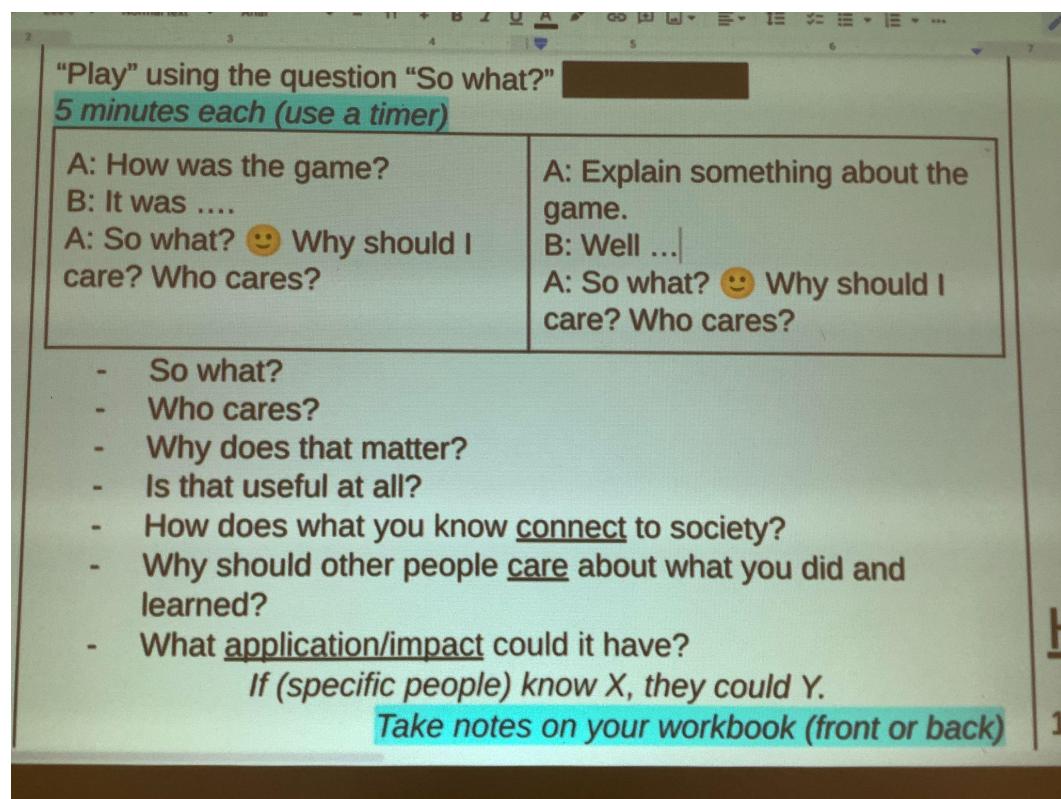


Figure 19: Mediating example questions shown to students before their discussions

"So what" began appearing on students' workbooks (see Figures 20 and 21).

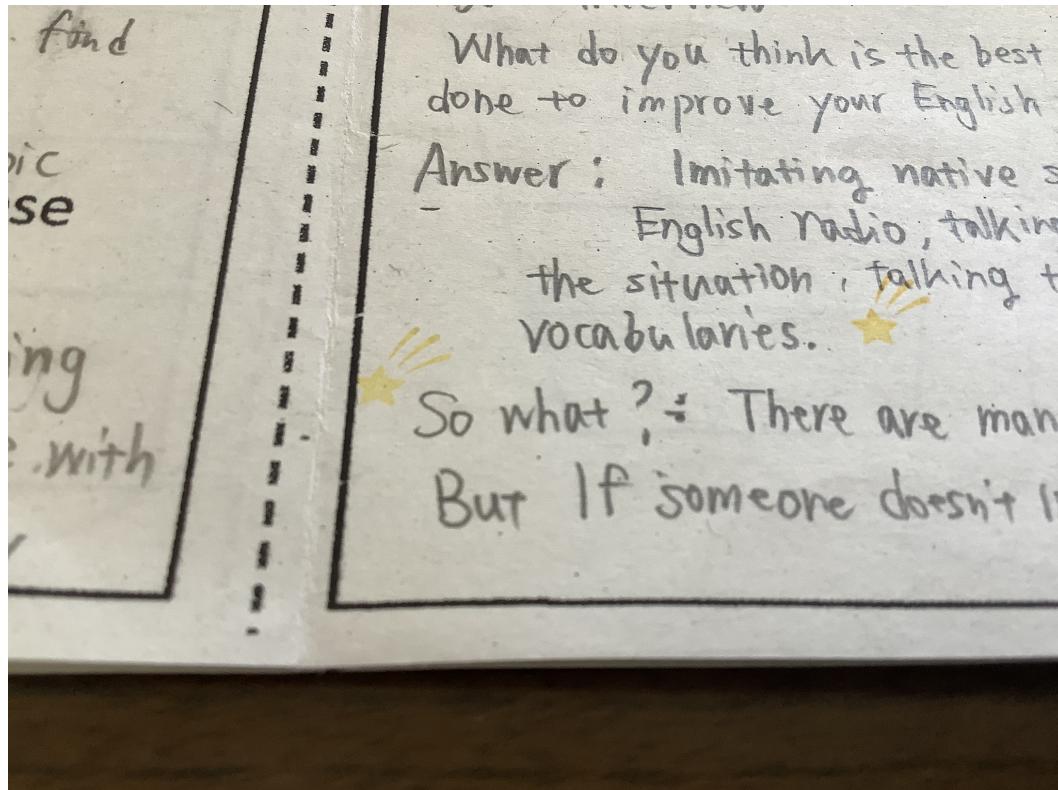


Figure 20: "So what?" on a student's workbook

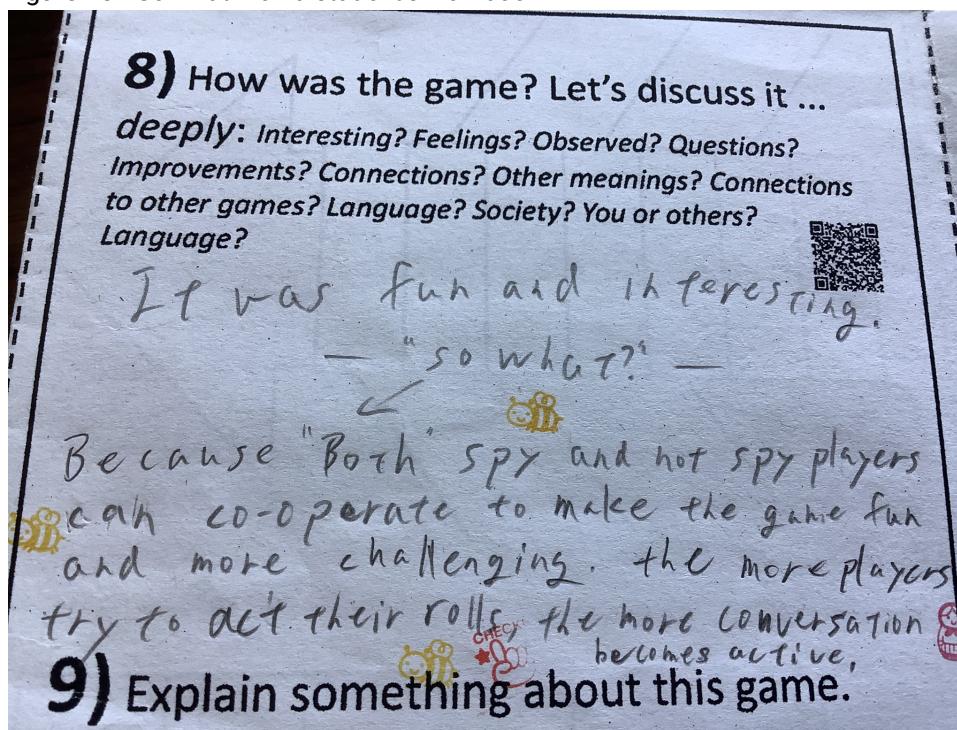


Figure 21: "So what?" on a student's workbook

I also took the simple concepts (fun, good spy, got better) from their worksheets and asked "so what?" in front of the class. I modeled how to think about ideas. I tried to connect possible ways to apply these concepts/opinions. I said: "If you understand fun, you can make a game that's fun." and also "You got better at the game? You can turn that on its head and think about how you can be a good teacher and help other people learn things more effectively." Figure 22 shows my blackboard notes.

I modeled how to think about ideas.

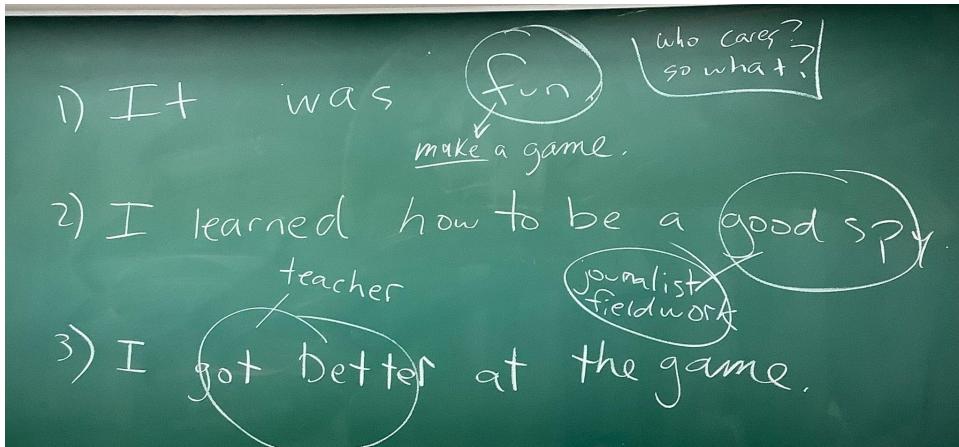


Figure 22: Connecting concepts with social connections and participatory project ideas

5. A short research project

After asking students to brainstorm things they were curious about, I had them create a shared concept map under the topics of “language, education, games, society, other” on the board. I then pointed out questions on similar topics. See Figure 23. I then listed types of research methods that are commonly used to answer research questions, and showed how various questions could be answered in various ways.

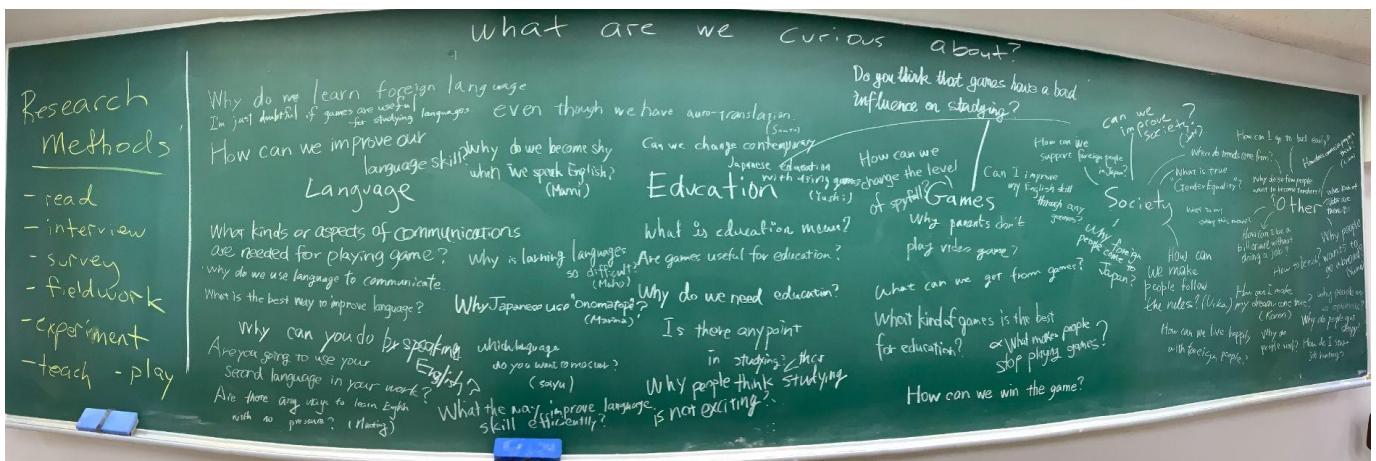


Figure 23: What the students were curious about, as well as research methods for answering their questions

6. Plan and conduct a participatory project

Before students brainstormed participatory projects for homework, I told students that I wanted them to think of these projects as “a step to your future selves” and that “if you want to be a teacher, for example, and then teach a short lesson in your project, then you become a teacher.” I taught them the expression “fake it till you make it.” I told them to think about different roles in society when brainstorming.

I told students that I wanted them to think of these projects as “a step to your future selves.” I taught them the expression “fake it till you make it.”

When they came to class, I wrote the different aspects of society (personal, public, civic, professional) on the board as well as various roles. See Figure 24.

Participatory projects

- A step to your future (pic above)
 - Playing a role



Figure 24: Areas of life, and roles in life, that participatory projects can connect to

I then had them write their ideas on the board near these concepts. See Figure 25.

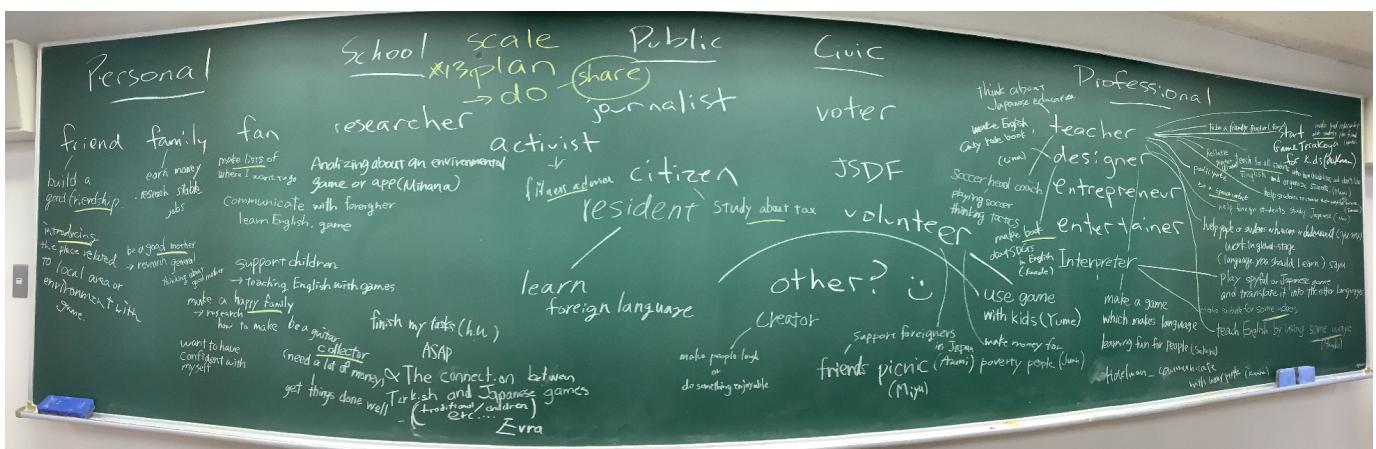


Figure 25: Students' participatory project ideas, connected to different areas and roles in life

I stressed (yellow chalk in Figure 25) that students should carefully “scale down” and “plan” their project using the worksheet prompts (who, what, when, where, how) in order to think about a project that was at their level, and would be manageable in a 1 to 2 week project. Over the project, I worked with each student to ask how their project was going and if they needed help.¹²

“scale down” “plan”

7. **Reflections** on who students have become

To introduce this final reflective activity, I show examples from previous classes and also research projects in which students have visually reflected on their learning. I often show my thesis seminar students' work:

<https://sites.google.com/site/gamelabshizuoka/graduation-theses> . I often show Yume's and Nozomi's reflections (Figures 26 and 27) because these visual reflections clearly show skills or interests being added, being discarded, being combined, or being developed.

¹² I did not take notes this time – I was too busy as a teacher with 55 students doing projects simultaneously. I will turn on a camera in the room or carry some audio recorder with me to research subsequent classes.

I show examples from previous classes and also research projects.

I displayed these reflections using the projector, and talked students through the themes of the reflection (e.g., English, confidence, happiness), showed how the topics change in the diagram, and compared the students' reflections on the left of the diagram with the reflections on the right of the diagram.

I also emphasized to students that these reflections were completed at the end of a two-year learning journey, and that they should not feel any pressure to do their reflections in the same way, or to the same degree of detail as these visual reflections.



Figure 26: Yume Yorita's visual journey reflection

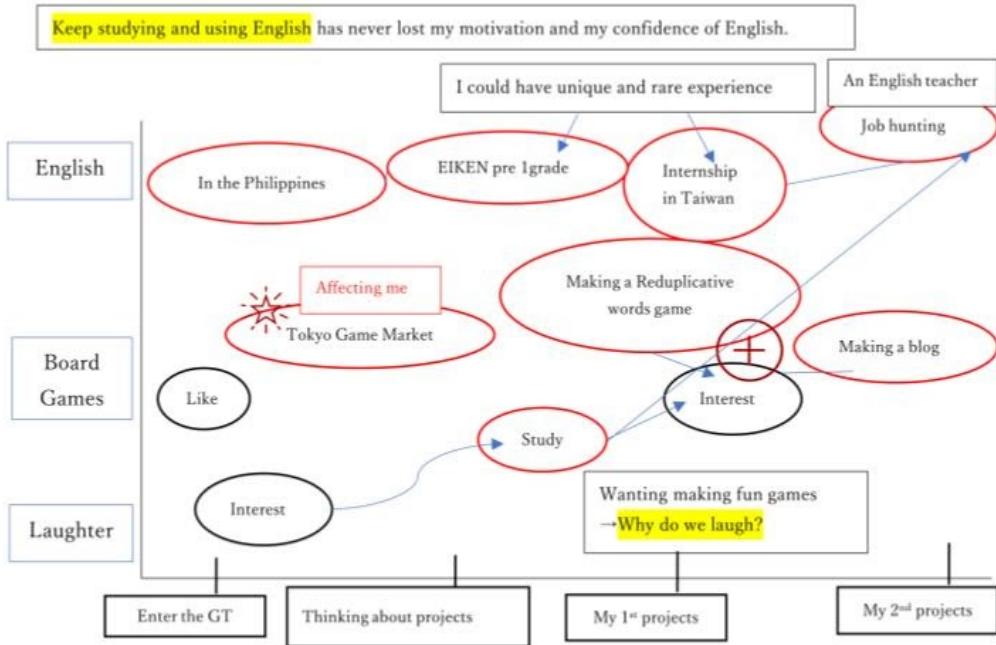


Figure 27: Nozomi Nakahara's visual journey reflection

Grading

To evaluate their work, I collected all of the workbooks. I found some cute stamps (Figure 28) in my office (that I and some students used at a public event years ago).



Figure 28: Cute stamps for giving feedback

I created a simple key for how I would use the stamps.

RED: "I see you've answered the question."

YELLOW: "Wow! This is your best work!"

BLUE: "You haven't answered this question."

ORANGE: "You've made a spelling or grammar or logical error here."

I read all of the workbook, and stamped things appropriately. I handed the workbooks back to the students in class, showed and explained my key, and stated several times that I would let anyone revise their workbook and hand it in for me to re-grade their work if they saw any BLUE or ORANGE marks on their paper.

I stated several times that I would let anyone revise their workbook and hand it in for me to re-grade their work.

Thank you for reading this paper.

The idea of "participatory goals" and "method - materials - mediation" transformed my teaching with games.

I hope you learned something new or are inspired in some way.

The next pages have some worksheets for you to play with.

3. Worksheets for teachers

3.1 Think about goals for a moment

Do you have goals other than students' social participation?

1. Honestly: 🤔 Really?

Do you **not** think that transformation and participation are what we should be doing as teachers?

Or do you think that way but you do **not** have freedom to play?

Either way, would you like to chat with me? Or others?

Perhaps use the space here to reflect on your perspective on the relationship of language teaching, games, participation in society, or any other "big idea" from the paper.



2. Honestly: 👍 ok. Just make sure your methods, materials and mediation are connected to your goals in your context. I'm still happy to chat about your other goals and your other **delicious ludic language pedagogy!**

This is a multiplayer game

If you'd like to share your goal, method, material and mediation brainstorming and plans with someone before you teach your lesson, course or workshop, you can share things with us on the LLP Discord.¹³

¹³ <https://discord.gg/je9QZsntf>

3.2 Plan a lesson

Use the space below to sketch out your delicious MMM-driven Ludic Language Pedagogy!

What game will you use? _____

What is your goal? _____

*** Did you write “just to play games?” If you did, consider changing it.

How will you reach the goal?

Method:

Make a list of activities that will get you and your students to that goal.

If you’re having trouble thinking of methods/activities, look at Spano et al. (2021).

Materials

What will students need help with? What materials will organize their learning?

Make a list of materials that you need to find or make.

If you’re having trouble thinking of or finding activities, the [LLP Compendium](#) has lots of activities and worksheets that you can use as-is, or remix.¹⁴

Mediation

What will students have trouble with?

What can you do as a teacher to help them before, during and after gameplay?

What teacher mediation will support the methods and materials to get students to your goal?

If you’re having trouble thinking about mediation, Appendix 2 provides a handy list (from York et al., 2022)

	Method	Material	Mediation
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			

After you teach the class: did you reach that goal?

(Consider sharing your MMM and outcomes in the LLP Journal!)

¹⁴ One Material you might find useful is my worksheet ([Google Document](#)) that asks students to brainstorm games, goals, and activities that link them. I ask students to first start with the goal and work backwards to games, and then start with games and explore what activities might uncover about participatory opportunities.

3.3 Get a bit playful

How about making your own zine for your Ludic Language Pedagogy? Sketch something out here. Don't forget that the text in the top row should be upside-down so that it reads right when your zine is printed and cut and folded.

Acknowledgements

I am incredibly indebted to the reviewers: DM Jones, Marc Jones, Haoting Shi and James York. I submitted a very rough playground with a few organizing ideas (method, materials, mediation) and some photos and notes, and these four colleagues kindly waded through my horrific mess leaving dozens of questions, praise, suggestions, notes of confusion and ideas for improvement. I took all of their words to heart, and mind, and this paper is (hopefully) a much more organized piece of writing with better examples and resources that helps other teachers see the "good stuff" and take and remix aspects of the method, materials and mediation for their own teaching context. Gentlemen: THANK YOU so much for your time, effort, care and consideration of these ideas and my teaching and writing.

Peter Hourdequin: Thank you for your suggestion to include more about the class, its syllabus and context. Your comments helped me recognize the freedom I found to play in my class.

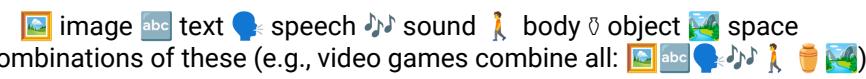
This paper was written while listening repeatedly to My Bloody Valentine's "Loveless" album.

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Appendix 1: The Pedagogy of Multiliteracies (from deHaan, 2022)

<p>① It's about literacy (think "reading" → "writing") but more like: ① "experiencing" → "understanding" → "applying" ② It's about the multi (because more is better!) of the ② What, Where, How, Why and Who</p>								
What	<p>③ Societies, technologies, & language are always changing; there are many realities. ④ Meaning/communication is created & received in many modes (ways, purposes, cultures, techs):  (+ combinations of these (e.g., video games combine all: many different "lifeworlds" personal academic school public professional online spaces local communities</p>							
How	<p>⑨ Deep literacy involves</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="214 707 1486 831"> <tr> <td>"available designs" → Reading, experiencing, examining "modes" (see ④)</td><td>"designing" → Researching, creating meaning via "modes"</td><td>"The redesigned" "modes," learners and society change due to new designs</td></tr> </table> <p>⑩ Good teaching is neither 'sage on the stage' (traditional & analytic) nor 'guide on the side' (progressive & experiential). Both have pros and cons. Combine the pros, and weave the stages back and forth to create a "reflexive pedagogy" of these 4 stages: ("complimentary" colors are used! 😊)</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="214 932 1486 1145"> <tr> <td>Situated Practice "Learning in personal ways" Experience known and new things to get vivid tacit understandings</td><td>Overt Instruction "Learning in school ways" Describe & discuss experiences using names, theories and metalanguage</td><td>Critical Framing "Learning in school ways" Analyze & connect experiences & society critically & functionally</td><td>Transformed Practice "Learning in personal, school and social ways" Apply, create and participate appropriately and creatively + ...</td></tr> </table>	"available designs" → Reading, experiencing, examining "modes" (see ④)	"designing" → Researching, creating meaning via "modes"	"The redesigned" "modes," learners and society change due to new designs	Situated Practice "Learning in personal ways" Experience known and new things to get vivid tacit understandings	Overt Instruction "Learning in school ways" Describe & discuss experiences using names, theories and metalanguage	Critical Framing "Learning in school ways" Analyze & connect experiences & society critically & functionally	Transformed Practice "Learning in personal, school and social ways" Apply, create and participate appropriately and creatively + ...
"available designs" → Reading, experiencing, examining "modes" (see ④)	"designing" → Researching, creating meaning via "modes"	"The redesigned" "modes," learners and society change due to new designs						
Situated Practice "Learning in personal ways" Experience known and new things to get vivid tacit understandings	Overt Instruction "Learning in school ways" Describe & discuss experiences using names, theories and metalanguage	Critical Framing "Learning in school ways" Analyze & connect experiences & society critically & functionally	Transformed Practice "Learning in personal, school and social ways" Apply, create and participate appropriately and creatively + ...					
Why	<p>⑪ Teaching & learning in PedML focuses on transformation of students, teachers, schools and society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving students & teachers agency & choice; liberation (freedom) from systems of oppression • Learning new ways of teaching and learning and being ("extending repertoires") • Making a difference in the lives of students in front of us, in schools, and in society around us • Understanding meanings & contributing meaningfully (i.e., participating) in personal, academic, public & professional ways (And "weaving" between lifeworlds is additive, facilitating transfer!) 							
Who	<p>⑫ Teachers are important. They ask questions, design tasks, model work, push and motivate, draw attention, share knowledge, give feedback, guide and connect, require revision</p> <p>⑬ Students are important. Their individual and collective interests, skills, and differences help them choose, think, learn, play, act and become who they want to be</p> <p>⑭ Communities are important. Classrooms, neighborhoods, organizations, families, civics, online groups, social media ... all have systems, practices and knowledge</p>							
Proof	<p>Does it work? ⑮ Yes (my research articles) ⑯ Yes (my students' awesome journeys) I love focusing on the "how & why," my students always achieve and surprise in terms of "what" they do.</p>							
Read	<p>⑰ Pair this with your favorite beverage: New London Group. (1996). A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing social futures. Harvard Educational Review, 66, 60-93. URL</p> <p>⑱ I didn't understand PedML until I read this: Cope, W. & Kalantzis, M. (2015). The Things You Do to Know: An Introduction to the Pedagogy of Multiliteracies. (p.1-36) URL</p> <p>⑲ So many PedML crossovers for teachers ("critical consumption and reflective creation!"): Buckingham, D. (2013). Media education: Literacy, learning & contemporary culture. John Wiley. URL</p> <p>⑳ My games x PedML manifesto and deep dive, ahem: deHaan, J. (2019). Teaching language and literacy with games: What? How? Why? Ludic Language Pedagogy, 1, 1-57. URL</p>							

Appendix 2: Teacher mediation ways and examples (From York et al., 2022)

Ways Teachers Can Influence Learning	Examples of Teacher Actions
choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> choose lesson goals choose a game choose a teaching approach choose materials intend to interact with students intend to lead development
design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> create materials create activities make a game make supplemental materials (e.g., word list, website) create a lecture
before gameplay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> pre-teach language give a lecture to give students background information about the game orient the students to a specific aspect of work
during gameplay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> participate in the learning make adjustments to the lesson on the fly react to students' actions ask students questions give advice help students inspire students administrate games or technologies organize groups observe students correct students give feedback give "just in time" instruction discuss work with students draw students' attention to aspects of the game draw students' attention to connections between the game and society evaluate students model work for students
after gameplay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> facilitate a discussion or debriefing (discuss the game, plan for future actions) ask students questions give feedback discuss work with students have students' repeat work draw students' attention to aspects of the game draw students' attention to connections between the game and society evaluate students

Appendix 3: Additional teaching resources

The Student and Teacher Zine workbooks can be downloaded here:

<https://sites.google.com/site/gamelabshizuoka/gameterakoya/gameterakoya-zines>.

There are additional materials and references on that page, too.

- **This is particularly relevant to the current paper.**
 - Worksheet for connecting students' goals and games - [Google Document](#)

The following project-related teaching materials are available in the [Ludic Language Pedagogy Compendium](#):

- 4-week multiliteracies and games lesson plan and materials (play a known and a new game, discuss them, analyze them, remix one, make a poster and post work to Twitter) - [Google Document](#)
- Additional participation project ideas and examples - [Google Document](#)
- Post-game discussion activity for larger groups - [Google Document](#)
- Checklist for playing new games - [Google Document](#)
- Revised textual analysis worksheet - [Google Document](#)
- Post-game analysis and participation assignment - [Google Document](#)
- Post-game reading and research report assignment - [Google Document](#)
- Game-based participatory project:
 - proposal - [Google Document](#)
 - tasks and timeline worksheet - [Google Document](#)
 - planning, recording, doing - [Google Document](#)
 - evaluating and reporting - [Google Document](#)