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Games in the Language Classroom-To
Play is to Learn

Spel i språk-klassrummet-Att leka är att lära sig

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Abstract

This thesis investigated why games are a helpful tool in the teaching classroom and what methods could be used when teaching with the help of games. The research method was a small-scale research synthesis where former studies were summarized and compared. In addition to this, interviews (with two teachers who had focused on developing their teaching with the help of games) were conducted in order for the research to become as sufficient as possible. An overview of the ways in which games could be beneficial in the classroom has been provided and also the reasons to why they should be used.

The results indicated that games should be used in a more conscious way and that learners can benefit from learning with the help of games.

*Keywords:*) games, gaming, teaching method, teaching approach
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1. Introduction

Learning is constantly changing. This is also why we as teachers need to keep changing our teaching methods. To be able to educate students we need to find different approaches and salvations in doing so and this is why games are such an easy tool for us educators. When using games we already have the students’ interest with us and can focus more on the teaching itself. A massive research which was conducted in Berlin (2013) found that students that played games (videogames as well as other games) could actually increase their brain volumes in several regions of the brain.

The study which was conducted at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development showed that students that spent at least 30 minutes a day gaming, for a period of two months triggered increased in size in three main parts of the brain. The parts that were increased were: the right hippocampal formation, the right dorsolateral prefrontal cortex and the bilateral cerebellum. These three regions of the brain are all connected to functions such as memory formation, strategic planning and fine motor skills. In addition to this they found indications of increased brain volume amongst the participants of the study who played games for an amount of time a day when compared to the ones that did not (Reilly, 2013). This astonishing news was groundbreaking when it first came and indicated that games have been well-received in the classrooms.

According to Linda Jackson, professor of psychology in Michigan, games can also be used as a tool to increase creativity with students. Jackson has conducted a research study and stated that the more students played games of all sorts, the more creative they were in task such as drawing pictures and writing stories. In addition to this Jackson (2011) claimed that “games can be designed to optimize the development of creativity while retaining their entertainment values such that a new generation of games will blur the distinction between education and entertainment”. She argues that education and entertainment should be able to cooperate in a beneficial way which will give both learners and educators a newfound interest in teaching and learning.

When it comes to games in language learning, there have also been many studies that indicate the same positive impact on the learners. James Paul Gee (2005) suggests that in
In relation to language teaching and learning, we understand games as conceptual models or "doctrines" that work across formal and informal contexts of learning. In this specific aspect of teaching, games are often seen as a stimulator in the learning classroom since students seem to get more motivated by them. Games in the language classroom are considered as the "fun factor" of language learning and students seem to engage in a more communicative way when using games as a learning tool (Meyer, 2006). According to Mayer (2006), games have often been misunderstood since they are connected with informal situations that do not belong in the learning classroom and therefore gaming has never gotten the central activity in children's language development.

She continues saying that games should not be looked upon as simply an off-school practice but should instead be utilized as framework for providing a meaningful contest for language acquisitions.

There are many studies that show the benefits of using games in teaching and the increase of creativity is only one of them. Students that are using games in their learning also gain a broader social interaction and community awareness. Researchers show (Steinberg, 2013) that many games that have positive social messages can in fact influence players to act in a more positive way, both in school and at home. Some of these games that have encouraging messages give the participant of the game a more pro-social state of mind and a more helpful behavior. Other games that can be perceived as more "serious" are many times specifically designed to inform and teach gamers as well as give them knowledge that they can impact the world around them. Games with titles such as "United Nations Food Force" teach the players about real-life issues, humanitarianism and also about how they can be a part of changing the unfairness of poverty (only accurate for this specific game). With the help of these tools, games can easily be adapted to teaching and learning as well.

To be able to start using games for teaching, educators need to be convinced of the benefits that games provide us with and why they should be given to the learners. In addition to this they need to gain knowledge of how games should be used in teaching-contexts and how the learners benefit from them in the best way. This is something that needs to be focused on more because if the educators do not have a sufficient amount of knowledge of this teaching method than it cannot be used in the best way and gain learners as it is meant to. Games are tools that should not be used in the wrong way; instead they should be adapted to the learning situation and the learners themselves in
order for the game to become a teaching tool. The whole meaning of learning has shifted from being able to recall and repeat information to being able to find it, evaluate it and use it at the right time and in the right way (Corbett 2011). This way of learning is something that is supported by games and therefore they should become a part of the natural education, in as many ways possible. The advantages that gamers are given with the help of games are many and the Institute of Play in New York (2014) lists a couple of the most important ones on their website. They state that students are introduced to scaffolding and collection of data through gaming and that this is proved to be helpful in their future academic learning.

In conclusion, a great deal of research has been conducted around the world and many of the findings indicate that games may promote learning and knowledge. In many cases, students have found the games as a helpful tool in their learning, when used accurately by the educators. In addition to this, teachers should be provided with more information in order for the students to gain as much as possible from games in the classroom. However, this thesis will not have its main focus on the educators and their possible lack of understanding of games in the classroom but will instead explore the opportunities with games in learning situations and how they can be used.

1.1 Why Should We Use Games in Language Teaching?

The use of games in the language classroom is a disputed issue. Games have been used in language teaching for some time but have not been investigated until recent years. Research findings indicate that not only do games spark interest with students (Chen, 2005) but they also contribute with many beneficial factors that can be useful in future learning (not only language learning). Traditionally, games have been used as a positive reinforcement in classes to show the teachers’ satisfaction with the learners. On other times games have been conducted during warm-ups at the beginning of classes or fill-ins at the end of lessons to finish off a lesson in a playful and fun way. This way of using games are very good but games should also be able to fill a more substantial part of a language lesson and not simply be utilized as a fill-in. Language learners have in multiple studies indicated that they are very enthusiastic when it comes to using games in their learning (Gee, 2003) and this is a factor that should be taken into consideration when it comes to using games in learning situations. If
a learner already has a great interest in this type of learning, they are also more eager and willing to engage in a different way than if the interest is lacking (Gee, 2003). This is something that educators should take advantage of and try to turn into a teaching tool rather than dismissing it as a “non-serious-fun”. In addition to this, educators should carefully choose what games they are using in their teaching since many of the older students may worry that games in their education is to childish. Therefore it is of importance to explain the purpose of the specific game and to reassure them that “fun” can also be educational and that this is why the games are being used.

Another crucial factor in using games as a language teaching tool is to pay great attention to the difficulty level of the game being used. While part of the fascination of games lies in the difficulty of them, they should not be considered too difficult by the learners since this can easily discourage them and make them less enthusiastic about this new way of learning.

Bente Meyer and Birgitte Holm Sorensen (2004) are two professors working in the Danish University of Education, who have written a paper on the subject of games in language learning and with the help of their research they have concluded that games should be used more frequently in classrooms. They base their research on the development of Serious Games (digital games and equipment with an agenda of educational design and beyond entertainment) and claim that games are a crucial way of “informal learning” that takes place within the school. They explain that formal learning is often considered “the stereotypical learning way” in classrooms while “informal learning” is put in a context where the teaching is taken outside of learning educational centers and combines activities (such as creating blogs, chat or play video games) with learning. To be able to engage in activities they also have to learn something, in this way the learning becomes an integrated part of children’s play activities. Meyer and Sorensen continue explaining that the informal way of learning languages is an important element to be integrated since it involves playfulness and sparks the great interest with students; this contributes to the construction of the social learning process.

According to professor I-Jung Chen (2005, pp. 125) the benefit of using games in learning classrooms can be summed up in nine main points which are the following:

1. Games are learner-centered (the student is always in focus).
2. Games promote a communicative competence.
3. Games create a meaningful context for language use.
4. Games increase learning motivation.
5. Games reduce learning anxiety.
6. Games integrate many various linguistic skills.
7. Games encourage creativity and spontaneous usage of the language.
8. Games construct a cooperative learning environment.
9. Games foster participatory attitudes of the students.

In learning a new language all of the nine reasons above can be useful but not many of them can be achieved without the usage of games in learning environments. Chen also explains that based on the nine advantages he constructed an English-speaking-game which he used with his colleagues at his university and the results confirmed his thesis (his thesis was that games should be integrated as a part of teaching since the benefits learners). He constructed a game which he presented as a competition between the students. The subject of teaching was English and he wanted to integrate speaking, listening and reading all in the same task and make the students aware of how they were learning, while playing a game. He split the student groups into teams of five and the team that finished first was the winner. To make the game more complicated as well as interesting for the participants, Chen hid each station with tasks in different locations of the school and the gamers obtained directions to the next station after completing the present task (Chen, 2005). All students were given a map which added to the dynamic atmosphere but also introduced to their map-reading and problem-solving skills. Chen suggests that if this type of “game” would be used in a non-English-speaking country, the map itself as well as all the instructions should also be written in English in order for the students to practice their reading and comprehension of the language. At every station the participants were given a new task which they had to complete together to be able to move on (move up a level).

His conclusion of the tasks was that the students that participated showed clear indications of stimulation of their communicative skills. The students also claimed that they felt less afraid to use their knowledge in English during the game since they were eager to move on further and further within the game (move up levels). Chen also noted that the students were very willing to ask questions in English and think more creatively about how to use their language to achieve their goal. Their understanding of the written tasks was also improving since they helped each other in explaining the more complex sentences in the directions and they understood the context of the tasks (together). With the help of his study, Chen stated that
with the help of games, students get to see the true beauty of learning a foreign language instead of being intimated with the problems that seem overwhelming to them.
2. Purpose and Research Question

In this degree project, teaching with the help of different games will be discussed and compared to teaching without the usage of games. In addition to this, the focus will be on games in education and what they can contribute with in the learning classroom as a learning tool. The purpose with this research is show in what way games can benefit learners and educators and what benefits they provide the learners with. To be able to understand the benefits of using games in language learning, I interviewed 2 teachers who have focused their teaching on teaching with the help of games. In addition to this, a small-scale research synthesis will be conducted where former studies are summarized, compared and contrasted.

Therefore, the research questions are as follows:

1. In what way should games be used in language teaching?
2. What are the benefits of using games in language teaching?

2.1 Teaching with Games and Teaching without Games

The classical way of teaching has been efficient for many years but the problem with this type of teaching is that not all students are benefiting from it (P.Black & D.Williams, 1998) The way we educate learners today seem to draw them away from wanting to learn and instead makes them fear their own learning. This is why games are a good way of grasping the learner’s attention and showing them that learning can be fun and educational at the same time. They also need to understand that it does not matter whether they learn with the help of a game or with the help of something else; the main thing is that they gain new knowledge and develop their language skills. With this being said it is also important to emphasize that games do provide their participants with a lot of useful strategies and learning tools that can be helpful when it comes to language learning. Almost all games require strategies and logical
reasoning; many also contain counting and other mathematical skills that are being trained while playing. This is the main benefit of gaming; the students are learning while playing which makes them relaxed and not even thinking about the “stress-factor” of not understanding something or not being able to complete a task (Gee, 2005). In addition to this the players seem to use their language more freely since they stop focusing on speaking “correctly” and simply focus on making the others understand them, in order for the task (game) to be solved. This is something that develops their social skills and teaches them to speak more freely without thinking about grades, other students or being wrong.

2.2 Why is it Important for Educators to Use Games in their Teaching?

The importance of using games in the classrooms is often forgotten. The reasons behind this are many and the main one is according to Patricia Vanece (Sheffield, 2004), president of The Entertainment Software Raiting Bord (ESRB) the fact that gamers are good for the family. She argues that parents and teachers often wrongly assume that most games are negative tools since media has portrayed them as violent in most cases and that this publicity has caused a fear of using games in education. Vanece continues and claims that many of these games have redeeming qualities, even those that are considered as “violent” by society (Sheffield, 2004).

Her thesis, suported by Ian Bogost, associate professor at the Georgia Institute of Technology and founder of software maker Persuasive Games. He believes that even these games that are considered “violent” by most people such as World of Warcraft still provide its players with learning about delegation, responsibility, teamwork and steering groups towards a common goal. In his opinion, all games have a hidden purpose and all games can be considered as learning tools, if used correctly.

Many researchers share this opinion about games as learning tools and therefore it is also important to use computer games more frequently in the classrooms. It is important for educators to realize the learning opportunities which games provide and to start adjusting them to their personal teaching. All learners have a different learning style and even the ones that do not respond to the classic classroom-teaching should be given an alternative to this.
Using games as a teaching tool is a way of catching these students and giving them their own personal learning style while developing their knowledge in that specific subject. In addition to this, the learners are given a way to learn while having fun. This shows them that learning and having fun can be combined and do not always be separated.

According to Genevieve Roth, playing is a child’s natural way of learning. This is something that is often forgotten and not utilized enough. During many years, playing has actually been the natural learning strategy for children and it has been indicated that the games have contributed to a mental development in a more sufficient way than if not playing at all (Roth, 1998). Games should be used as a tool to turn subjects that are mostly seen as “boring” by learners (such as grammar perhaps) into something enjoyable and fun without the fear of ridicule. Furthermore, games in teaching have been proven to be beneficial for learners in many ways (Roth 1998).

2.3 What does Research say about Games in Teaching?

There have been many studies conducted on this subject and the usage of games has increased in the classrooms after seeing the positive affects they have on learners. Games have often been considered as “less serious” and therefore they have not received the right level of attention in classrooms. Both newer and older research indicates that using games in a learning environment is positive for both the learners as well as for the educators. In addition to this, games provide the gamers with a linguistic development (such as fluency in oral activities) that takes longer time to achieve without games.

According to Genevieve Roth (1998) games are a very useful tool for fluency in a language since learners tend to forget that they are learning and so they use their language abilities in a more spontaneous way. Roth claims that her research has made her draw the conclusion that if you are having fun doing something, you do not have the time or effort to get bored and frustrated with it and will therefore get more out of the activity. Furthermore, Roth argues that games are especially positive when it comes to language learning since the classroom may be the students’ only exposure to the foreign language. If using games during these times of learning, you turn the language acquisition into a positive experience which will motivate the students’ further learning. If students are kept motivated and engaged in a lesson, the end-results will be incredible. Games are tools that can make this possible (Roth, 1998). Roth also provides her readers with examples of games that can be used and that will benefit the
learners in the best way, she also claims that introducing the game in front of the class with the help of a few students, is crucial for their understanding. Since students are not as used to games in their learning they need to be introduced to it in a safe way. Therefore it is of importance to demonstrate the game as a fun denominator in the language learning classroom.

James Paul Gee (2007) is a researcher who has worked with bilingual education for over 20 years. His most recent research shows indications of the positive effects of video games on students learning abilities in the classroom. Gee argues very convincingly that video games are to be a crucial part of the future and therefore should also be integrated in our classrooms. Gee began playing videogames when his son needed help playing a problem-solving game named “Pajama Sam”. He quickly realized how much enjoyment and dedication his son put on this game and its problem-solving. This was the main reason that Gee started playing videogames on his own and while playing he saw indications of learning potential and linguistic struggles (Gee, 2007). In his book (Gee, 2007, pp. 108) he points out 6 important principles that are positive factors when playing a videogame with the agenda of learning at the same time. These principles are:

1. The Psychosocial Moratorium principle which allows learners to take greater risks.
2. The Committed Learning Principle which makes the learner feel a commitment to continue their effort and practice.
3. The Identity Principle where the learner is able to pick from multiple identities in such a way that it makes them reflect on their “new” and their “old” identity.
4. The Self-knowledge Principle which makes the learner more aware about themselves and their potential skills. The learners’ self-reflective process becomes more sufficient with the help of this principle.
5. The Amplification of Input Principle where the learner is able to put in a small amount of input but receive a much larger output. This principle shows the learner how much effort is needed to receive a reward.
6. The Achievement Principle where the learner needs intrinsic rewards that are put into specific levels (of the game).

With the help of these 6 principles Gee introduces the skills that are being developed by playing games (in this case videogames). With the help of these principles the learners can put these skills into practice when learning in the classroom as well. Therefore, Gee argues that videogames in particular are a positive teaching tool that should be utilized more frequently
by educators. He also mentions the positive mental effect it has on learners to simply mention “games” in a classroom context and that the level of enthusiasm rises when doing so. Learners connect games to something fun and therefore they decide that the task itself will be “fun”, regardless of what it may be. This is a way to stimulate learners’ interest in the subject that is usually very well-received.

2.4 Teaching Approaches and Methods

In this paper, different methods and teaching approaches will be discussed when it comes to using videogames in language classrooms. Several research results will be mentioned and compared to be able to understand what the meaning of using games in teaching, really is. In addition to this, teaching approaches will become evident and examples of what games are useful in learning will be brought up. What is meant by an approach and a method is crucial to be clarified in order for this research project to become clear. A method is when students are given specific instructional design based on language learning (Richards & Rodgers, 2001) whereas a teaching approach is something that is up to every individual educator to decide how it should be used (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). In addition to this, teaching approaches should be individually designed for the classes in order for the students to gain as much as possible from their learning. It is up to every educator to decide what type of teaching approach to apply on their students and what approach that fits their students the best.

This paper will mainly focus on the teaching approaches being used when learning with the help of games. Methods that regard the same subject will be touched upon as well but not to the same extent as the teaching approaches which are more relevant for this research project. It would be unfortunate to exclude the methods since they play a part in language learning as well.
3. Method

The method being used in this degree project is a small-scale research synthesis as well as two interviews with two educators at a school in Helsingborg, that have focused their language teaching on teaching with the help of games. Former research findings will be summarized and compared as well as the findings of this research project which will be compared to previous ones. In order to discuss games being used in teaching and learning languages, I have presented several different researches that indicate the positive effects on using games in the classroom.

The usage of games in learning activities has been described in different ways in this research project since the usage is very broad and varies from teacher to teacher. I have tried to narrow it down and to bring out relevant studies that show how gaming can become a beneficial tool in learning new languages and also show the clear purpose of this degree project. According to James Paul Gee (2005), video games and games are being mistreated as “entertainment” and not used as teaching and learning opportunities. This is the main reason for educators to doubt the great benefits that come with gaming. This degree project has showed the positive affects games provide learners with and also the reasons to why games should be used more frequently in language learning.

3.1. Inclusion criteria

In this research synthesis, I make use of books, articles and studies provided to me by teachers as well as from database searches and libraries. My starting point was to use Summon at Malmo University’s website and so I did. Summon is a database that searches through the library electronics and provides the searcher with the results. Here I was provided with many articles that were relevant to my degree project. My searches included words such as: learning with games, games and teaching, teaching learning games, negative games learning, positive games learning and playing games in classrooms. The results I was provided with were sufficient enough to start my degree project from and they were also relevant to my topic.
Not all of the found material was used since only the most relevant studies, books and articles were of usage when answering the research question for this paper (the research question is mentioned in the beginning of this degree project as well). Therefore I put a lot of time and effort into deciding what sources would be the best for this paper and what information was serving the purpose of answering the research question of this degree project.

3.2 Exclusion Criteria

My search identified a lot of interesting and valuable information about games within language learning. The information that has been used (books, articles and researches) has been the most relevant information for this research project and it has contributed in answering the research question that is stated in the beginning of this paper. The material which was not included in this paper was the material that was found to be un-relevant or that could not be accessed (for reasons regarding subscriptions). In addition to this, material where the authors could not be found was also excluded from this paper since the sources could not be determined. All of the sources that were used in this paper are fairly new (none of them were published later than the year 1990) and therefor the results of them are more reliable than if the information was published during the 1890’s where the outcome could have changed during the years between then and today.

3.3 Overview of Sources

The sources of this thesis consist of multiple research texts as well as some methodological text. The primary source of this paper has been the book by James Paul Gee (2005) named “What videogames have to teach us about learning and literacy” The book discusses different teaching approaches which are useful when teaching with the help of games and it also provides the reader with research results that support his thesis (that games should be used more frequently in the classrooms). Gee also demonstrates different games and shows the way they can be used in learning situations. In addition to this, he explains in detail the advantages of using games in learning and also how he got to his conclusion.
Several articles (Linda Jackson, 2011) and books (Gee, 2005) have shown the possibility of using games as a part of teaching and learning as well as the benefits from this. In addition to this they have provided the reader with examples of how games can be utilized in language learning (Chen, 2005) and given clear conclusions when doing so. The research that has been used in this paper has been very useful since it has examined the same subject that this paper focuses on and has helped answer the research question for this research project.

Lastly, a further primary source to this paper has been the research by professor I-Jung Chen (2005) where he points out nine important main advantages in learning with the help of games. Chen also talks about his research which he conducted and the results he found after doing so. He suggests that without using games in learning environments, all nine of his main points would be completely worthless to the students and they would not learn to develop these skills as thoroughly as they would now (with the help of games).

### 3.4 Participants

In addition to using information found in databases, books and articles I also conducted an interview with two high school-teachers (language teachers) that had focused their language teaching on teaching with the help of games. Both teachers had detected the similar difficulties in their classrooms since they were both L2-teachers and together they decided to find a solution which would hopefully increase these difficulties in their students’ learning. They were qualified for this interview since they had fully focused their teaching on teaching with the help of games and they had worked together in doing so. In addition to this they had also analyzed the positive and negative aspects of using games (with the help of former studies) as a teaching tool and summarized and discussed them before starting to use games themselves.

The positive aspect of using an interview in this type of study was that I was able to ask follow-up questions to the already prepared ones if an answer was unclear in some way. With the help of the follow-up questions the interviewee provided me with a full conclusive overview of their usage of games in their teaching. If a questionnaire would have been used instead of the interviews it would have been difficult to be able to see receive the complete answers from the participants of the interview since I would not have gotten the chance to ask them to clarify their answers or ask follow-up questions.
3.5 Interviews

The interviews which were conducted were face-to-face interviews which were semi-structured. According to Longhurst (2003, p. 103) a semi-structured interview is a verbal interchange where one person, the interviewer, attempts to elicit information from another person by asking them questions. In addition to this Longhurst mentions that the interviewer prepares a list of predetermined questions but lets the interview unfold in a conversation which offers the participant the chance to explore issues they feel are important. Therefore, the semi-structured interview is considered as “soft” and not as strict in its framework as other types of interviews (Longhurst, 2003).

A semi-structured interview is an interview which is best used when there is only one chance to interview the participant (since it is of importance to ask the right questions). This was one of the main reasons for choosing this type of interview for this study. Another reason for choosing a semi-structured interview was the fact that it allowed me to be prepared, ask follow-up questions and expresses my views in my own terms. This was also something that the participant got the chance to do. Also, the questions could not be misunderstood since I was there to clarify anything that could be understood as unclear by the participant. The questions which were being asked were prepared in advance and had to do with the usage of games in the classroom. They were mainly focused on negative and positive aspects of this usage and in what way games could be used when teaching L2. All the questions can be found at the end of this paper as an attachment.

In addition to this, the interviews were also recorded and the answers I got were supporting my thesis (games are beneficial for language learning). The interviews have also been transcribed and can be found at the end of this paper in the attachments.
4. Results and Discussion

The material found for this paper has included some teaching suggestions which have shown to be very useful in learning situations. There have been clear indications of positive reinforcement as well as development of social skills and learning strategies when using games in learning situations (Gee, 2007) and therefore, educators should try to integrate gaming in their teaching. The interviews which were conducted in this research project were done during two days and with two separate educators (the transcribed version of the interviews can be found at the end of this paper). The findings in this paper will be presented in this section.

4.1 Results of the Interviews

When conducting the interviews it was hard to focus as well as take notes. This was the main reason for recording both interviews in order for the results to become as sufficient as possible and in order for the dialogues to get transcribed afterwards. The two teachers were interviewed at two separate occasions and their answers were very helpful when answering the research question for this paper. The teachers that were interviewed were co-workers but stationed at two separate schools which are in cooperation with each other. This way, the teachers had different classes but put the same teaching method to practice and the outcome never became the same for them. Therefore they also got good feedback from each other and started to develop their teaching methods together after looking into what ways the students found educational. After working together in this way for several years they found that using games in teaching would be of benefit for the learners as well as educational for themselves.

The first interview which I conducted was with the male teacher. He claimed that his method of teaching had proven effective and that his students looked forward to his lessons every week. Therefore he had tried to find new ways of using games in his teaching, without it being too repetitive for the learning groups. He argued that games in learning had given his
students more interest for his subjects (which were English and French) and even working with grammar (which he claimed that the students detested) became more interesting and fun, with the simple help of games. When he was introducing games to his classes, not many were negative to the idea to start integrating them into their everyday lessons. The main reason for this was that the students were first under the impression that this teacher was going to let them to whatever they wanted during his lessons but as soon as this became clear to him, he began explaining to the students how they could learn more easily by the help of games. His students did not see games as a teaching tool; they were convinced that it was not possible to learn English and French by playing games. This was also commonly thought amongst parents of these students and therefore he had to bring his students and their parents to a mutual meeting where he could explain the perks and benefits of using games as frequently as he wanted in his teaching. When he got the parents and their children to understand the greatness (according to him) of using games in teaching, he felt ready to start and try this method in his classes.

In addition to this information, he argued that there were many ways of using games in educational purposes. From his own experience he encourages educators who are unsecure of using games as a part of their teaching, to test it out in a smaller scale before deciding on whether to use it or not. He suggests that using games as warm-ups at the beginning of lessons can be a productive way of finding out whether the students would appreciate this type of teaching or not. After using games as a small part of every lesson, it would soon become clear if this method of teaching and learning would be productive for this particular class and its teachers. If the teacher found gaming beneficial in language learning (which he claimed that most did) it would be easy to continue to develop this teaching method since the students had already gotten somehow used to it during the previous lessons.

When it came to give concrete examples of how to turn tasks into games, the interviewee explained that he not only used video games and other types of board games in his language teaching. He also designed all oral tasks which they were dealing with into games (in groups or separately) where students got a sense of playfulness. He stated that with the help of these types of games, the students were able to reach all the criteria written in the curriculum in the same way as they would have done during a typical classroom-task. The only difference was the method in doing so. One example that was given when asked if he could give a concrete example of how he designed tasks as games, was that he wrote down a road description on a piece of paper (in English) for each of the students to take. After the students got the
instructions (which were to follow the directions on the “map” and to get to that place in Helsingborg by foot) they were told to follow the map to a hidden treasure. The treasure varied from time to time but he tried to keep the students eager to reach their goal by focusing on finding the correct location with the help of this “map”. While using this map, the students were assessed on their oral competence, on their reading comprehension and on what tools they used when facing problems in understanding the language (since some of the words were deliberately more difficult than others). When using this type of method in language learning, the students did not see the tasks as something that would increase their anxiety in speaking but instead they put their main focus on the part of the task that was a game. When focusing on the game they simply forgot to become nervous about this task (which he claims that the students often got when it came to speaking another language than their native one) and their main focus was put on solving the task and finding the treasure. This method of language learning had proven to be positive in this particular class since they were a class who had difficulties in focusing and their thoughts often ran away and did not stay focused on the task itself. Therefore it was of importance to catch the students’ interest above all, and then incorporate language learning into this.

The second interview which was conducted was done with a female teacher who had started up this way of teaching during the last couple of years. She had found it very beneficial and had discovered a great deal of interest from her students when using this type of methods in her language classrooms. The main difference between these two interviewed teachers was that the male teacher (teacher 1) had used other types of games in his teaching which did not always include video games, computer games or board games while this female teacher (teacher 2) had not. She did not feel the need to design real-live-games when there were so many out there already who were just waiting to be used. She claimed that many computer games which had been developed for learning purposes, had never been used in classroom contexts since they were considered “unserious” by society. She did acknowledge that some games were not suitable for learning situations and that she had a hard time in finding a purpose with some of them, therefore she picked her games very precisely. When finding a game which she found appropriate she would examine it to that level that she understood its content and had a clear aim with it, this was information which was also given to her students before starting the lesson with this particular game. It was of importance that the students understood how they could use games in language learning and how they were learning a language while playing and enjoying them. Teacher 2 claims that the understanding from the
students was crucial since otherwise they would just think that they were wasting their time on the language lessons and this was not the case. She also put great emphasize on the contact with the parents of the students, when using such an unusual approach in teaching (with the help of games) which could sometimes be considered as “unserious” by some. Therefore it was important to get out a clear message which would be understandable by both adults and the students in order for their learning experience to become as beneficial as possible. If the purpose, the aim and the method was explained in a clear and concise way, it would be no problem to use gaming in the language classroom. Teacher 2 had also another way of interpreting games than teacher 1 did. She argued that games that were of benefit in the language learning classroom had to be connected to the curriculum for the language in particular to be able to benefit the learners. Teacher 2 on the other hand believed that the games did not have to be connected to the curriculum in the same way since building a students’ self-esteem was not in the curriculum for English but without their self-esteem they would never learn to develop their oral skills. In this particular question, their answers were different from each other since they had two different interpretations of how games should be used and what they were meant to develop the students’ language skills.

Both teachers agreed on stating that the usage of games in their classrooms had increased the learning motivation with their students and that they had gained a wider understanding of learning a new language. In addition to this their work with games had also suggested that their students had lowered their anxiousness when speaking their second (or in some cases third) language since their main focus often landed on the game itself instead of its learning purposes. In this case this was a positive thing and made the students’ anxiety increase in the classroom. Furthermore, both teachers had noticed a more spontaneous usage of the language after they started using game as a part of their teaching. Both teachers agreed that this was a great benefit from using games in the classrooms.

4.2 Results of the Small-Scale Research Synthesis

When conducting the small-scale research synthesis it became evident that the research which was used in this paper had brushed upon similar conclusions. The research which was of
interest for this paper was research that had games in language learning as its main subject and therefore other research articles were excluded from this paper. When using research material from the internet, it was of importance to know pick carefully since the research was going to be compared and discussed in this paper. Some of the research (Chen, 2005 and Roth 1998) showed the same indications of positive effects on students who had been exposed to games in language learning. It also made it clear and showed in which ways games could be integrated in classrooms (Chen, 2005) and which method could be of usage when turning to gaming as a teaching method. Chen also indicated nine main beneficial language developments when using games in the learning classroom which were also touched upon by Roths’ research conclusion (1998) where she claimed that games increase learners’ usage of their second language and their enthusiasm about that specific subject.

Chen’s (2005) nine main beneficial aspects of using games in language learning are:

1. Games are learner-centered (the student is always in focus).
2. Games promote communicative competence.
3. Games create meaningful context for language use.
4. Games increase learning motivation.
5. Games reduce learning anxiety.
6. Games integrate linguistic skills.
7. Games encourage creativity and spontaneous usage of the language.
8. Games construct a cooperative usage of the language.
9. Games foster participatory attitudes of the students.

Chen brings out these nine main aspects of games in language learning and his thesis (that using games in language learning context is of great benefit for its learners in various ways) is being backed up by many other researchers such as Gee (2007), Steinberg (2013), B.Mayer & B.Holm Sorensen (2004) and G.Roth (1998). Their main mutual opinion suggest that students which are using games in their language learning increase their learning motivation and they feel more free when using their new language. In addition to this it has been shown (Chen, 2005) that students who use games as a learning tool have increased their spontaneous usage of the language and that they turn to more creative solutions when facing language difficulties (instead of using their mother tongue for instance).

The research used in this paper, did not point to any negative aspects of using games in the language classroom. In contrast, the research (Chen, 2005) supported the thesis of games
being beneficial for language learning and that they increased and encouraged spontaneous use of their second language. Gee (2005) suggested that children who used games in their learning would also learn many other important aspects of life which would be useful further along the road. He argued that with the help of games, students would be introduced to not only academic advantages but also social ones as well. With social advantages he presented that with the help of gaming, children understood the meaning of consequences, input and output and the importance of obeying rules. Gee provided some examples of this when suggesting that when students played games, they were obliged to follow the rules of the games in order for them to move on (move up a level). If the rules were not followed, the game would either end or they would not have chance of proceeding with their digital task. Therefore the students adjusted their digital behavior to the rules of the game and got used to a certain way of conducting themselves, while playing. Gee believes that this is something that is portrayed in real life as well and that students learn accurate behavior by playing a various amount of games. In addition to this, Gee argues that by playing games for learning purposes the players are receiving a great amount of output while only giving a small amount of input. This increases learners’ motivation and makes them aware of what input and output really is, therefore they are prepared for real situations which will occur later in life. Gee (2007) also mentions that gamers that start using games in learning purposes, elaborate their way of receiving knowledge since they release the anxiety that is often connected with learning a second language and they learn to use their new language in a more spontaneous way. This is a benefit that Chen (2005) also mentions and that he suggest increases students’ learning abilities. In this way these two researches have indicated the same beneficial knowledge which students are given while using games in learning purposes. In addition to this, both research show positive outcomes with the usage of games and they show clearly how the student is always in focus during these types of task (games). When using games, students get a sense of understanding for their second language in a playful way which motivates them into continuing their learning and gives them a push forward in their learning.

4.3 Discussion about Games in Language Classrooms

When it comes to the usage of games in the language classroom, there have been many researchers who have indicated the positive outcome of this (James Paul Gee, I-Jung Chen &
Genevieve Roth). The discussions have been widely known and more educators are trying to incorporate games in their language learning today. According to students to the interviewed teachers, games have helped them feel more secure in their language abilities since the usage of games tones down the “seriousness” of the subject and the students get to feel more relaxed. In doing so their main focus lies on solving the task itself and not on the unsureness of using their new language. This reduces their anxiety and their level of understanding increases.

The importance of explaining how and why the games are being used in language learning is often forgotten. Both the interviewed teachers as well as published studies (Chen, 2005) have indicated that student need to understand how games are incorporated in their learning in order to benefit from them. It is also a good suggestion to explain to other teachers and parents about this method in language learning in order for them to understand this. When parents and educators work together in symbiosis, the outcome usually turns out extraordinary, therefore it is of importance to include them when using methods that are not as commonly known as others. To use games in language learning has been discussed by many but teachers seem to agree when it comes to the benefits that come with gaming. Therefore it has become a more frequently used method in teaching. Resent research (Chen, 2007) seems to indicate similar benefits with gaming and teachers who are using games have increased during the last couple of years.

Some schools have gone even further when using this method in learning. For example, the principal at Patrick Henry Elementary School in Alexandria, Virginia; Marcia Baldanza has started a process to integrate games in the schools’ curriculum. Baldanza claims that:

"Both parents and students have responded to the games with enthusiasm. Students like gaming because they have fun and learn at the same time, and having their teacher play along is motivating. Teachers like the games because they're always looking for ways to build personal relationships with students, along with ways to build academic confidence and skill. Playing games is effective, efficient, and fun! Therefore we will do everything in our power to integrate games to a greater extend in our current curriculum" (Bafie, 2004).

With this statement Baldanza shows her dedication to the usage of games in the classrooms and that her experience has shown her that games need to be integrated more frequently in the language classrooms. According to Baldanza she quickly understood the great interest of games, no matter what age the students were and she decided to try to teach while using
something that was of such a great interest for them; games. She also claimed that her students learned best when the content of a subject is relevant to them and when they can have the possibility to connect their new knowledge to their old one. This connection was something she felt games could help her with and therefore she started to adapt her task and make them into games instead. Furthermore, Baldanza explains that she often found students from different classes and backgrounds, playing games together during the recesses and when she detected their motivation towards this game, she knew that she had to integrate this into her schools’ teaching. Also, when doing so she suggests that students who are using games during classes develop a newfound respect for themselves as well as for the games they are using. They are given a responsibility which is to return the game in the same condition as they found it in. When doing so, they gain respect towards other peoples’ property and they also increase their understanding of responsibility at the same time. Lastly, Baldanza mentions that she has seen a growth in social and problem solving skills as well since the students are getting more motivated by the usage of games in their learning. This was a great benefit for both the teachers as well as for their students (Bafile, 2004).

To use games in language teaching has been debated and the research which has been brought up in this paper has commonly discussed that there have been proven to be more benefits than negative aspects in using games as a teaching method. In order for games to become a beneficial teaching method, it is of importance that they are used in a correct way and have a clear aim ahead of them. Therefore it is significant that teachers educate each other about this method of teaching in order for it to be able to expand and become more useful for both the students and their educators.
5. Conclusion

This research paper has investigated how games can be used and be helpful in (language) teaching context and what methods could be used when teaching with the help of games. It has been a small-scale research synthesis where former studies have been mentioned and discussed. In addition to this, two interviews have been conducted with two teachers that have integrated games in their teaching. The research questions formulated were:

1. In what way should games be used in language teaching?
2. What are the benefits of this usage (in language teaching)?

The results have indicated that games should be used in a more conscious way and that learners truly can benefit from learning with the help of games. The different beneficial parts of learning with games have been mentioned and discussed in this paper.

Several different aspects of using games in educational purpose have been presented in order to give multiple suggestions in how games can be used in language teaching. Chen (2005) is a concrete example of how games can be integrated in language learning classrooms and how they benefit learners. Chen showed a clear, oral assignment (conducted as a game) where the students got to develop their language abilities in groups in a way that would not be possible in a classroom environment. In addition to this, the research by Chen showed clear indications of reduced anxiety and increased language motivation and Chen argues that this is a fact in every task which is designed as a game. He claims that the learners felt more secure in a non-educational environment and that they therefor did not focus on the difficulties with the language but instead on the task-solving (moving up a level).

In addition to this it has been presented that learners seem to engage more enthusiastically in learning when the tasks are designed as games where they learn while having fun. Gee (2005) also suggests that when students are not aware of that they are supposed to learn something that they learn in a more effective way since they are not given expectations to achieve.
The interviews with the two teachers have also provided this paper with meaningful information and have helped answer the research questions. These teachers suggested that games in language learning have proven to be very effective in their classes. They also claim that students (who previous to the introduction of games as learning tool) had a negative attitude towards their subject, started to come around and their interest for the language increased. This was something they found very rewarding and when the learners increased their interest for learning, they became more accepting of the new knowledge and their language abilities developed. Both teachers agreed that the introduction of gaming in classroom context, needed to be explained in a very clear way (both to the students and their parents) since it was easily misinterpreted as a “waste of time”. If this was not done in a productive way, it would not be possible to use games in their learning and benefit from this usage. In order for the games to provide the students with knowledge, it was crucial to explain the goals and methods used and also why they were being used. If this was not done in a clear way, the purpose of using games in language learning would be lost.

The benefits of using games in their teaching had been that their students had developed a more relaxed attitude towards using their new language (in this case English and French). Their students showed clear indications of increased motivation and when facing language difficulties, they used other solutions than turning to their native language. This was a huge benefit since the students in their classes did not realize that their usage of these particular languages (English and French) had increased and that they spoke more freely. They were too involved with playing the games provided and determined to win or reach a new level (move up a step).

There has not been any study which has been used in this paper that has indicated negative aspects of using games as a teaching tool in the L2-classrooms. This can perhaps have to do with the limited amount of studies that were looked at when conducting this research project and that there was not enough time to conduct a more detailed research during this project. Had there been less limited amount of time, a lot more studies could have been included and the results would have reflected this as well. This was the main limitation of this paper. Another limitation of this project was the lack of interviews with students who had used games in their learning. The investigation would have been even more extended if the opinions of the students who had used games during their lessons had been interviewed and their answers presented in this paper. As mentioned earlier, there was a limited amount of
time for this investigation and therefore were interviews with students excluded from this paper.

During the investigation of this topic, other questions for further research have been raised and looked upon. Future investigations could focus on how games can be integrated in everyday activities, outside of school environments since games have shown to increase social skills as well (Gee, 2007). In this thesis, this subject has not been looked into and it was not the purpose of the paper.
References


Attachment 1.

Interview questions.

1. Tell me your name and your profession.
2. How long have you worked in this field?
3. What made you decide on using games in your teaching?
4. How did parents and students react to this unusual teaching method? Follow-up question: 4.1 What did you do to decrease negative opinions about games in teaching? (If there were any).
5. What other reactions have you gotten when using games in teaching?
6. How long have you used games as a teaching tool in your classroom?
7. Why do you consider games as a teaching tool?
8. What are the benefits (which you have detected) with using games in teaching?
9. Have you discovered any negative aspects of using games with your students?
10. What is the main positive aspect (according to you) in using games as a teaching method?
11. Have you detected any areas of improvement with the students since you started using games in your teaching?
12. What types of games have you used in your teaching?
13. Why do you think it is important to use games in teaching?
14. Why would you recommend other teachers to use games in their classrooms?
Attachment 2.

Transcribed interview with teacher 1.

**Me:** Thank you for meeting with me, hopefully this will not take much of your time.

**Teacher 1:** Oh it’s no problem at all; I was on my way to see Martin before you arrived but there is no rush, I will finish our task later on after the interview.

**Interviewer:** That’s quite nice of you. This was my only opportunity to meet up and hopefully it will not take long. I know that this topic we are about to discuss is very dear to you, that’s also why I felt it was important for you to be a part of this degree project.

**Teacher 1:** Yes, you do know how I work with languages don’t you? Ha ha… I’m glad you allowed me to give you some input from a teacher perspective and I will gladly answer all your questions.

**Interviewer:** Great! Should we get started?

**Teacher 1:** Mm, I’m ready when you are.

**Interviewer:** You can start by telling me about yourself, where do you work and how long have you been working in this field? With teaching that is.

**Teacher 1:** Well, as you know I am a teacher. I teach students between the seventh and the ninth grade and have been doing so for a long time. Sometimes it’s hard to keep track of the years since they pass so quickly but roughly about 15 years. During these years I have seen similar indications of difficulties that L2-students have and these difficulties seemed to center around the oral parts of the subject. This is also the main reason why I started to think about how I could introduce my students to a different way of learning in order for their difficulties to be dealt with. Games became the solution to all of this.

**Interviewer:** Interesting... you answered my second question already so we’ll move on with the interview. You see, this is going smoothly?

**Teacher 1:** It sure is! *laughter*

**Interviewer:** *laughter* But it sure is an interesting subject to discuss. How were games in the classroom received? Did you get any strange reactions from students and teachers?

**Teacher 1:** Well, you never like something that you haven’t tried and this was also the case in my classrooms. Students that were high-achievers were not happy to start playing games during their lessons, they felt that it was too childish and they were very worried about their grades. For some reason they did not see the connection between gaming and learning at all from the beginning. As for the parents, they were just as skeptical as their children. That was the main reason for arranging a parent-teacher-conference and bringing this subject to the
light. During this meeting where I and my colleague both attended, we gave the parents examples of games which could be used in their children’s language learning. They were able to get answers to all their questions and to try out our new method. After that we had very little complaints regarding our games.

**Interviewer:** Aha, smart. So you recruited the parents as well?

**Teacher 1:** Exactly. Once they understood the purpose, goals and improvements we were aiming for with our games, they quickly became positively surprised.

**Interviewer:** I bet they did, not many understand the great beneficial parts of gaming in the classroom context. Have you gotten any other reactions from co-workers or others when using games in your teaching?

**Teacher 1:** From the beginning people (besides me and my colleague) were a little skeptical to this kind of teaching approach. Not many had tried it themselves but they were happy to assist during our classes and to participate during our lessons to understand better how we used game in a teaching purpose. They were inspired I think. Sometimes when you have been teaching for a long time, it is hard to think outside the box. I believe we pushed the limits somehow.

**Interviewer:** Mm, I see. Have you been using games in your teaching for a long time now?

**Teacher 1:** It depends on how you define “long time” but we have put our main focus on this type of teaching for the last couple of years and have gotten very positive feedback from our students. Many of them did not see games as a teaching tool until they were introduced to it properly by us.

**Interviewer:** OK. That’s normal; I don’t think many students would consider gaming as a learning moment. Why do you consider it to be a teaching tool? Games I mean.

**Teacher 1:** Well as long as students can use this method in order to learn, I will consider it a teaching tool. All students adapt differently to certain ways of learning and this is just another perspective for them to use. It is no different from using pictures or music in our lessons; this is just a compact way of integrating these two as one. There is an enormous amount of ways to use game in language learning and by doing so we combine students’ interest with their learning abilities. It’s just as fun as it sounds.

**Interviewer:** *laughter* I believe you. I can’t wait to start using it myself and to see what benefits my students gain from it. What are the benefits or positive aspect and also negative aspects which you have detected during your usage of games in teaching?

**Teacher 1:** Well there have been more pros than cons; I can tell you that right from the beginning. I saw that students looked forward to my subject in a way that I had not noticed
earlier. They seemed more engaged during the so called hard parts of my subject, that being grammar and with the help of grammatical computer-games they started to overcome their fear of speaking and learning. At the beginning they were convinced that my upcoming lessons would be real easy for them and that they would just sit around and not do anything, they simply didn’t understand that they could have fun and learn at the same time.

**Interviewer:** So you simply found a way to make them have fun and unaware of the fact that they were learning?

**Teacher 1:** As simple as it may sound, it was quite a challenge in many ways. But the great benefit that the students got was the fact that they became more relaxed and comfortable in their language usage during the lessons. They became so obsessed with the game itself that they started asking each other questions in English and explaining gaming terms to each other, all in English. This was a tremendous achievement if you think about the fact that these students started from not speaking to each other at all in English due to their anxieties. As soon as their focus shifted from thinking about grammatical terms and pronunciation, they language improved as well.

**Interviewer:** Aha, so the anxiety reduced when using games?

**Teacher 1:** Well, not simply by using games but as soon as their focus shifted to understanding rules and gaming term in English, they became unaware of the fact that they were actually using their L2 when expressing themselves.

**Interviewer:** That is really clever; you use a method which makes them unaware of their actual progress.

**Teacher 1:** In some ways yes.

**Interviewer:** I only have some last questions left and then we’re done. I was thinking about the importance of using games in teaching and whether you would recommend it to other teacher who haven’t yet tried this type of teaching method?

**Teacher 1:** For me it has been an important step which has made the students more interested in this subject which is language. It is now up to other teachers around me to embrace this type of learning method and to at least give it a chance to prove itself before rejecting it because of personal opinions. There is plenty of research which indicates the importance and the great possibilities of using gaming in teaching purposes when it comes to language learning. Another thing which is important to remember is that even if some teachers do not want to use games during a whole lesson, they can try it out for a period of the lesson. It does not need to take more than 15-20 minutes and you will see the improvements. I have for example not only used videogames and board games in my teaching but I have also designed
oral tasks and made them into games. Every oral task can be constructed to become a game simply by adding rules, levels and scores. In this way the students get the sense of moving forward as well as they get to use their language. Another example can be to write down a road description and to include a map for the students to use when reading the instructions. In this way they practice their vocabulary, oral skills as well as their reading skills just by playing a game. By kind of tricking the students’ minds they start to use their language in a more unconscious way and they lose the anxiety. Don’t you agree?

Interviewer: I agree. Thank you for your answers and we’ll keep in touch!

Teacher 1: We sure will! Thank you for including me and be sure to send your paper to me when you finish it.

Interviewer: I will!
Attachment 2.
Transcribed interview with teacher 2.

Interviewer: Thank you for taking your time to meet up with me and conduct this interview. Games in teaching has been a passion of mine for quite some time now and your colleague told me about your cooperation so I decided to include you both in this research paper.

Teacher 2: It’s my pleasure, I’m happy to help. I can almost hear the passion in your voice as we speak; this is a great subject to write a paper about. There can never be enough attention when it comes to games in teaching contexts.

Interviewer: I agree. Have you worked as a teacher all your life?

Teacher 2: Yes, I graduated in 2000 and have been in this field of work since then.

Interviewer: I see, then it truly is a passion of yours. What made you take the step and integrate games in your teaching?

Teacher 2: Well, I and my colleague had both discovered the same negative comments when it came to our subject and we decided to something about it. Many of our students were complaining about their anxiety in using their second language and how they were afraid to say the wrong word or pronounce something wrongly. This was the main reason for us to try to find some kind of solution for this great anxiety they seemed to have. But some students and parents were not as happy as we thought they would be.

Interviewer: Really? Why do you say that?

Teacher 2: Well, people were overall very skeptical of using games in their learning or at school at all. They were under the impression that games were not as serious as they wanted their education to be and they did not understand that we combined these two things and made them learn while playing. That’s also why we decided to involve the parents and make them understand how we used games in order for the students to learn. We conducted a meeting where both I and my colleague participated and our goal was to make them understand the reasons behind using gaming in our classrooms. After the meeting we had very little complaints regarding our teaching method.

Interviewer: Yes I heard that you had a meeting. That’s a great idea since people are often not that positive when it comes to new teaching methods and especially with a controversial thing like games involved. Did you get any other reactions from your surrounding about using games in school?

Teacher 2: Besides the parents and the students, our colleges gave us some great feedback when we presented this idea in the first place. Many were hesitant to use it themselves but
they were very engaging in our work and after a period of time, more and more started to ask if they could join us during our classes or brainstorm ideas with us. We found it helpful ourselves since neither I nor my colleague were experts within this subject, we needed as much feedback as the next person.

**Interviewer:** Well of course. It’s important for everybody to understand the goals behind using games as a teaching method; otherwise it simply becomes a way to kill off time.

**Teacher 2:** Exactly my point. As soon as everybody understood our plan, they became more supportive as well. If we had not gotten as much support as we did towards the end, we may have not continued on to work with games. Who knows?

**Interviewer:** Well then it’s a good thing that you got the support you did. Have you used games in your classroom for a long time?

**Teacher 2:** No, only during the last couple of years since I found many interesting research papers who all indicated similar things; the benefits of using games in language learning that is. I also discovered the huge interest from my students when I mentioned using games in our learning. That was the main reason for starting up this type of teaching I believe.

**Interviewer:** Mm, I can bet that the students were happy to hear that they would be using games in their English-learning. The great struggle is to make them understand that games can actually be used as a teaching method I think. Why do you consider it to be a teaching tool?

**Teacher 2:** I believe that every method you try on your students and that actually works and benefits their learning can be called a teaching tool. It doesn’t matter if it is a game, a movie or a book. They all serve the common aim of educating students and making them develop their language skills. This is also the case with games.

**Interviewer:** What are these benefits that you mention exactly?

**Teacher 2:** I use games in my teaching which have already been evaluated, conducted and created by others. My colleague on the other hand constructs his own games and combines them with already created videogames or computer games. I believe that there are many computer games out there that are yet to be used but that have been developed strictly for educational purposes and why not take advantage of them? So the benefits which I was referring to are the ones that have to do with understanding of a language, oral skills, increase of interest and they started to use their language in a more spontaneous way I believe. They stopped thinking about rules and pronunciation because they became so absorbed by the game itself. Am I making any sense?

**Interviewer:** Completely! I understand what you mean. This is a really interesting topic to discuss but I would also like to know if you spotted any negative aspects of using games?
Teacher 2: Hm. No I can’t really say that I have besides the lack of support from the beginning of this all. Some students were concerned about their grades and if these games would jeopardize this but when I explained the learning perspective of this, they calmed down. If you ask me I think that these students didn’t consider games as serious enough for them, they were convinced that they had to read all the heaviest books in order for them to achieve a high grade. So this became an eye-opener for them.

Interviewer: I see. So the students were concerned, that’s something new.

Teacher 2: Yes, for me too!

Interviewer: Interesting. But to summarize this; would you like to tell me why you think this way of teaching with games is important and why you would recommend other teachers to the same thing?

Teacher 2: Well let’s see. For me it was really inspiring to see how the students’ oral comprehension and skill was constantly increasing with these games. They also started using their language in a more frequent and relaxed way which indicated to me that they were less anxious when speaking. Another important factor was that the level of interest became higher; the students became more excited and were always asking me what we were going to play on next lesson and so on. This was totally chocking to me since they had not been great fans of English before this. Since I use games that are not as connected to the curriculum as they should be perhaps, I have had to connect them there myself since there are so many things that are touched upon with one simple game. I would absolutely recommend other teachers to try a similar teaching approach and to contact us if they are in need of inspiration. Good enough?

Interviewer: Great. Thank you for the answers and your cooperation.

Teacher 2: You are very welcome, would be kind and send me your paper when you finish it?

Interviewer: Absolutely.